

Texas Southern University stunned by deans murder

HOUSTON (AP) — Irma Malloy, who headed the college of education at Texas Southern University, was a down-to-earth woman who treated her employees like friends, staffers recalled Thursday.

Ms. Malloy, 61, was shot and killed Wednesday night at a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant. Police say she had placed her order and was the second car in line at the drive-thru when a dark blue car pulled up behind her.

Two men got out of the car and walked up to the driver's side of Ms. Malloy's car. Ms. Malloy got out of the car. There was a confrontation, a scream and a gunshot, police reported. Ms. Malloy, who was shot in the head, died at the scene.

Witnesses said three men were involved in the shooting. Police had not made any arrests in the killing Tuesday.

Gloria Tapscott, Ms. Malloy's administrative assistant since 1995, said the dean always tried to steer young people in the right direction. Ms. Malloy had been a social worker with juvenile offenders and would sometimes have students who confided with TSU students who she

thought might not project the right image outside the school.

Ms. Tapscott wondered if that concern surfaced during the confrontation Wednesday night and if Ms. Malloy tried to talk the men out of committing a crime.

"She worked with youth so it would have been like her to try to counsel with them, to tell them 'This road won't lead you to any good,'" Ms. Tapscott said.

Co-workers also remembered Ms. Malloy as an administrator who put herself on equal footing with everyone in her office, visiting co-workers who were in the hospital and calling those who were sick at home.

"Even though she was your boss, she never treated you that way," said Patsy Godine, budget administrator for the college of education. "You were expected to do your work, but if there was ever a time that you needed her personally, she was there for you."

She was also dedicated to the college of education, Ms. Tapscott said, waking up at four in the morning and starting her work day before coming into the office at 10 a.m.

"She worked practically all day for the college of education and Texas Southern," Ms. Tapscott said.

Students were tops on Ms. Malloy's priority list, Ms. Godine said.

"She talked to them any time," Ms. Godine said. "Sometimes she would be late for her meetings, but she always had an open door for the students and the faculty and staff."

During her tenure, Ms. Malloy oversaw the opening of programs that included the HIV/AIDS Center and the Center for Development and Studies for African American Learners.

Ms. Malloy had also been working with the State Board for Educator Certification, which is developing rules for an accountability system for educator preparation programs.

No TSU students who took the test to pass secondary English passed, according to 1995-96 results. Ms. Malloy talked to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in April about tactics TSU was using to help faculty who were preparing students for teacher certification exams.

Texas educator preparation

Program faces day of reckoning

AUSTIN (AP) — Teacher preparation programs are facing a day of reckoning in Texas.

Beginning next year, the programs will be rated in an accountability system required by state law and being implemented by the State Board for Educator Certification.

If too many of a program's graduates fail the state exam for certifying teachers, it will be placed under review and a state team will be sent to help.

If the program doesn't improve after three years, it will lose its state accreditation. That means it no longer would be recognized and people who attend it couldn't be certified as teachers, said Mark Littleton, executive director of the certification board.

"If graduates of institution 'X' consistently fail the English ExCET (Exam for Certification of Educators in Texas), we will not allow them to continue to prepare teachers in that academic area," he said.

"After three years, they lose their program."

If an institution offering a teacher education program loses its accreditation to offer English, for example, it could continue

preparing teachers in other areas if it meets state criteria.

The accountability system is required under a 1995 law that overhauled Texas education. The certification board, which meets Friday, is responsible for rules to put the system in place.

Proposed rules so far detail how the system would operate, but don't yet set the ExCET passing rate considered acceptable. The first rankings under the accountability system will be released Sept. 1, 1998.

The state eventually will look not only at the ExCET but at graduates' performance as beginning teachers.

Universities, school districts and education service centers offer teacher preparation programs. The ExCET includes sections on the subject areas prospective educators want to teach as well as on whether they know how to teach.

The percentage of prospective teachers who pass the content-area tests ranges from zero to 100 percent, according to certification board figures. Between 34.8 percent and 100 percent pass the professional development part.

Extremely low passing rates

can be due to just a small number of people taking the test. At the college at which no one passed the content area, fewer than five students took the test. Littleton said that's something the board can consider.

Concerns also have been expressed by institutions that provide teacher preparation to those who earned their bachelor's degrees at other universities, Littleton said.

"There's a lot of discussion about that — who's really your student, and who isn't?" said Marilyn Kameen, associate dean for teacher education and student affairs at the College of Education at the University of Texas at Austin.

But Ms. Kameen, who is part of a group that has worked on the accountability system, called it a necessary step.

"It's important to give institutions the credibility they need and also to police the profession," she said.

Ken Craycraft, dean of the College of Education at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, said teachers for the most part are well-prepared but agreed the system is needed.

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