

Memorandum

To: Mississippi Field Staff

From: Dona

Re: Tougaloo Work-Study Project

Tougaloo College has been fortunate enough to get a \$40,000 grant from the Field Foundation for the continuance and expansion of the Tougaloo Work-Study Project. This means that SNCC will have 30 more field secretaries in Mississippi in the Fall, COFO will be able to further extend itself and SNCC will have succeeded in accomplishing one of its main objectives; that of affording potential indigenous leadership the opportunity to develop itself.

Because of the vast implications of next year's project our job of recruiting is made both difficult and crucial. Every staff person in each project area has got to look out for college-aged men and women who are not merely "interested" in the movement but are seeking a way out of the dilemma of getting a higher education and being on the "front lines" at the same time. In order to get 30 of the best people the state has to offer we've got to receive more than 30 applications. This means that you may recruit someone who is eventually turned down either because there were 30 other applicants who we felt were better able to participate in the program or because he has been rejected by Tougaloo College itself. At this point we have no applications for next year's project so that you should not neglect to recruit people because of their possible rejection.

I understand that most of the staff is presently deeply immersed in the task of holding their various projects together. It is nevertheless crucial that we all keep the Work-Study Project constantly in mind with a view to getting interested people to fill out applications and return them to the Jackson office. This means that each staff person will have to read the enclosed material carefully in order to be able to explain the details of the project to prospective participants. The application is long but it was written in the hope that it would help us to determine which people will, on the one hand, be able to benefit from the Tougaloo experience, and on the other, have done some serious thinking about the movement and their relation to it.

Important: People who are now currently on staff and want to commit themselves to attending Tougaloo in the academic year of '65-'66 are eligible for the Work-Study project. It should be pointed out that in no way will the program be too "amaturish" for them, and is of course, an ideal opportunity for staff members who have been worrying about the continuance of their academic careers.

Any further questions should be addressed to Jesse Morris or myself.

Tougaloo Work-Study Project

I. Purpose of the Work-Study Project:

The Work-Study project is sponsored by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Tougaloo College. SNCC has found that there are many students who want to work in the civil rights movement but are afraid to take time out from school for fear that they will never return. SNCC is also faced with the problems of its present staff not completing their college educations. There is the ever present problem of losing scholarships and not being able to earn the money to return to school while working in the movement. SNCC and Tougaloo College, which is interested in both the civil rights movement and preparing people for good jobs and graduate school, have initiated the Work-Study Project in the hope that it will help to solve these problems. People who are in the project take a year out of school and work on Voter-Registration. They are field Secretaries for SNCC and receive the regular \$9.64 living wage, in addition to room and board. The Field Foundation provides a year's scholarship to Tougaloo College for each participant.

II. Description of the Project:

The program is called the "Work-Study" Project because during their year of Voter Registration work people in the program also have discussions and classes. The discussions are planned to introduce issues that most Mississippians would not cover in school. It is hoped that the discussions will also give people a broader understanding of the importance of the civil rights movement and its relation to other national and international movements. Among the topics discussed will be Negro History, the relation of Government to the economy, Congress and the Committee system and a very general introduction to philosophies, ideas, and literature of the great minds in our history which have been ignored in the average southern education.

The program will have thirty participants who will be divided into groups of five members each. The groups will separate during "work" periods (going to different areas of Mississippi) and come together for "study" institutes.

A. Work Program:

The work part of the program will consist of approximately month-long periods in which people will only work on Voter Registration. Each group will go to a Project Area in the state and become involved in a SNCC voter registration project in cooperation with the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO). This will require leadership ability and strong commitment to the movement. Voter registration workers are always threatened with false arrests and other forms of harrassment from the local authorities. A large part of their job also consists of trying to convince local Negroes of the importance of the franchise. Running a voter

registration drive requires imagination and initiative, as it is not usually easy to make contacts in the local community. It is difficult, at first, to organize a community alone but the people in the program are expected, as are other SNCC field secretaries to put all their energies into learning and carrying out the mechanics of voter registration work.

B. Study Program:

For the study periods all thirty participants in the program will come together for institutes. The institutes will consist of discussions and lectures by a qualified staff. There will also be reading, research, and essay assignments. These assignments, and discussions will be required just as the voter registration work will be. The books that we will use will not be textbooks-but interesting novels and other works not generally used in Mississippi schools. Participants will be expected to participate fully in discussions as it is in this way that they will acquire the ability to articulate and express themselves on important issues.

III. Requirements of the project:

1. The program is for Mississippians and travel is limited to locations within the state. All participants must be from the state of Mississippi and plan to go to Tougaloo College the following year.
2. An application must be filed with Tougaloo College (Admissions, Tougaloo College, Tougaloo, Mississippi) and the applicant must be accepted by Tougaloo before he can be accepted by the Work-Study Project.
3. An Application must be filed with the Tougaloo Work-Study Project. They can be obtained at any COFO office or by writing to Work-Study Project, 1017 Lynch St., Jackson, Mississippi. Since the Project has provisions for only thirty participants it is suggested that you write as soon as possible.

Applications will be considered and you will receive word from us as soon as possible. We hope that all applicants will receive replies by the end of July.

COUNCIL OF FEDERATED ORGANIZATIONS
1017 Lynch Street
Jackson, Mississippi

WORK STUDY PROJECT

THE REASONS FOR A "WORK STUDY" PROJECT

The Work Study project was devised to provide a meaningful solution to the conflict which now exists between the inclinations of young people to continue their education and to become involved in the civil rights movement, with its pressing needs for manpower. The program seeks to resolve this conflict by integrating the two activities of field work in civil rights, and academic training in the form of study led by graduate students and other well qualified people. Many who would otherwise have taken a year out of school to work in the movement have not been willing to do so because of their fear of losing scholarships or not being able to earn money for the following year's tuition. For this reason the program also offers scholarships to its participants in order that they might be assured the following year's tuition.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE PRESENT PROGRAM:

There are several very positive aspects of the project as it has operated so far. Close observers can testify to the growth of the participants in the program. They are much more resourceful and responsible as workers than they were at the beginning of the program. They show initiative and can be relied on to begin and carry through projects. One of the most impressive aspects of growth has been in their ever-increasing ability to express themselves concerning the current political, social and economic issues. The project has been unquestionably successful in its ability to supply the civil rights movement with additional staff to carry out its activities. The participants themselves speak of having a new incentive for continuing their higher education. Taken together these achievements of the program add up to the beginning of a new value and concept in our society; that of the creation of a more meaningful form of education which does not separate the practical and the theoretical, but rather realizes that for study to have meaning and pertinence it must grow out of and remain close to the real life, field situation.

PLANS FOR AN EXPANDED PROGRAM:

This coming academic year SNCC would like to expand the program in order to reach many more students and involve more Negro colleges across the nation.

- A. Work program: The participants would be divided into teams in order to man various SNCC projects across the South.
- B. Study Institutes: They would come together for four study institutes to be planned by the SNCC educational staff.

CURRICULUM FOR THE STUDY INSTITUTES:

An example of a particularly stimulating group of discussions in this year's program were those centered around the issue of Free Speech. Mr. J.R. Actermann, of the Tougaloo History Department, and Mendy Samstein, who has an M.A. in history from Cornell University, led discussions of the history of Free Speech in Europe. Oscar Chase, graduate of Yale Law school, gave a quick summary of some of the more famous Free Speech cases in American History, while Dona Richards Moses, who has a B.A. in philosophy from the University of Chicago led discussions of the opinions of Justices Brandeis and Holmes in some of the more relevant cases. (The last three discussion leaders mentioned are SNCC field secretaries.) In this discussion John Stuart Mill's philosophy was introduced as having been influential on the American view of Free Speech and the First Amendment in the Bill of Rights. This series of classes culminated in a very successful discussion in which the group participated enthusiastically. They expressed opinions on such issues as why Freedom of Speech is desirable or crucial in a democracy. They were encouraged to explore the questions in terms of the relationship of liberty to order. Spontaneous discussions have led to the groups' awareness of some very broad and philosophical questions relevant to their lives.

We hope the staff of the Institutes will develop new approaches to understanding the complex problems which face these students. (e.g. See the attached outline for classes at the Summer Freedom Schhols for Mississippi.)

PLANS FOR WORK PROGRAMS:

The students will be divided into teams. Each team will work under the direction of an experienced SNCC field secretary. This year's participants helped organize for the Hattiesburg Freedom Day and remained there afterwards to continue to rally around the picket line. (The picket line still continues.) Some of the members of the group are working to organize the Mississippi Student Union as a result of their work in Hattiesburg. Others are doing research and writing speeches and organizing for the Freedom campaigns of the candidates for the U.S. Congress and the Senate. In other words, their activities will by no means be concentrated solely around demonstrations. They will learn to be organizers for the increasingly complicated work of the civil rights movement.

SOME GOALS OF THE WORK STUDY PROJECT:

In general what we are interested in doing is creating among the participants an awareness of themselves in relation to the very large complex problems of the society in which they live. Economics, Politics, Sociology and History

among other things will show themselves in the form of real problems instead of as "disciplines" unrelated to life in general and more specifically, to the lives of the student workers involved. We can anticipate on the basis of this year's program that our most substantial achievement will be to whet the appetite of these young people for further study, along with providing a new incentive and added meaning to the learning experience. It is for this reason and the fact that the Work Study project affords colleges involved an opportunity to become involved in the community, that Tougaloo College and SNCC initiated such a program, and that other Colleges have now expressed interest.