

# Social Media Frenzy

Contributed by Shanica Johnson -- Black College Wire  
Monday, 05 December 2011

Students online still support FAMU's band

Despite the controversy surrounding FAMU's Marching 100, former members, friends and fans are speaking out on behalf of former Band Director Julian White and the band.

After drum major Robert Champion's death, Twitter traffic immediately speculated allegations of hazing. The hashtag #M100 was the number one trending topic in the Tallahassee area. Residents used social media to express their opinions about the situation.

A week later, positive feedback about White and the Marching 100 surpassed the negative allegations on social media outlets. After the former band director's dismissal from the university by President James Ammons, students and alumni rallied in support. "We support Dr. White and Marching 100" is a fan-based Facebook page where people can share testimonies about the band and/or White.

The page creator, an adamant Marching 100 fan, Ray Land, said the purpose of the page is to reveal the good White and the band has done for members.

"I want to highlight the many students the band has saved," Land said. "Being a part of this organization molded their character and gave them extracurricular activities."

Land is the manager of Fabulous Coach transportation and said he has served White and the band for the past three years.

"I have seen him give speech after speech about hazing and how it is not okay," he said.

Land said he is a third party member of this situation with no ties to the incident nor White and the Marching 100 but is simply a fan speaking on behalf of what he feels is right.

He hopes to build a strong number of people in favor of White and the Marching 100 to prove to authorities that discarding the band is not the right thing to do.

"I do believe hazing needs to end, but that doesn't start with ending the band and I know a lot of people share my opinion," Land said.

"I support Doc," said former band member Dontre Biggins. "The Marching 100 provides a place where young bandsmen are polished to become leaders in every endeavor they pursue."

With more than 800 likes and 606 discussions, Biggins is not the only person who supports White and the band. Former Miss FAMU Amanda Byrd and local emcee DJ KD are also fans.

Former clarinet player from fall 1984 Valencia Fowler-Floyd said she joined the page to show her support for her bandleader.

"I can truly say that I came to FAMU as a meek individual, but left as a strong young lady," said Fowler-Floyd. "Even with obstacles in my way, Dr. White gave me support and tools to make it through."

The Marching 100 has performed all over the world, including at President Barak Obama's and former President Bill Clinton's inaugural parades, and have performed at the Grammys, the Super Bowl and other professional football half-time shows.

Shanica Johnson writes for The Famuan, the Florida A&M University student newspaper, which originally published this article.[moshaloscan](#)