

**Gene Patterson, NG '42**

*Speaking at North Georgia College & State University  
in Hoag Auditorium on Feb. 12, 2004 for a  
Black History Month campus lecture*

**Pulitzer Prize winner turns the pages of his years at North Georgia and after**

After serving as a tank platoon commander with General George S. Patton's Third Army in Europe during World War II, where he earned the Silver Star for gallantry in action and the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster and Combat V for heroic achievement, Gene Patterson, NG '42, began his career as a journalist, winning the Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing in 1967 for his columns and editorials championing civil rights as editor of The Atlanta Constitution.

After 12 years as editor in Atlanta, Patterson left his native Georgia to serve as managing editor of The Washington Post. Then he became chairman and chief executive officer of Florida's largest newspaper, the St. Petersburg Times, and its Washington publication Congressional Quarterly. Patterson simultaneously served as founding chairman and CEO of The Poynter Institute, an international school for journalists in St. Petersburg.

His alma mater, NGCSU, awarded him the university's first honorary doctorate in 1999, which he said he treasured more than his 14 other honorary degrees from institutions that included Harvard, Duke, Emory and Indiana universities, due to his special love of this place and the debt he feels for all it did to form him.

In introducing Patterson for a Black History Month campus lecture in Hoag Auditorium on Feb. 12, Dr. Jennifer Smith, who teaches history at NGCSU, said, "During his life and career, Gene Patterson has consistently demonstrated an involvement in American politics and social issues – speaking out against injustice, no doubt ruffling feathers, but insisting on educating and challenging Americans to think about the world in which they live."