THE DAILY CLIPS

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D. Jordan (Jordy) Whichard III announced today that he will retire from The Daily Reflector, effective immediately, according to Cox Media Group, the newly formed subsidiary of Cox Enterprises, which includes Cox Newspapers.

Whichard serves as group publisher of Cox North Carolina Publications Inc. and as publisher of The Daily Reflector in Greenville. Employees reporting to Whichard will now report to Brian Cooper, executive vice president of Cox Newspapers and interim publisher of Cox North Carolina Publications.

"Jordy has played a pivotal role in the success of The Daily Reflector," said Sandy Schwartz, president of Cox Media Group. "Under his leadership, the paper has excelled in civic responsibility and its uncompromising commitment to good journalism, two of the values upon which his great-grandfather founded the paper. As Jordy's role grew to include additional publications in North Carolina, he ensured that they, too, embraced this rich legacy. We'll miss Jordy's commitment to the community, appreciation for heritage and his dedication toward growth."

Whichard said, "It has been my privilege to serve in these roles over the past 23 years. I have especially appreciated the support of Cox Newspapers, which succeeded my family as the owner of many of these properties in 1996. Cox's recent announcement that it will seek a buyer of the North Carolina company in 2009 affords me a timely opportunity to step aside and pursue some long-deferred interests in a variety of fields.

"The hard work of our associates and the support of our customers have these businesses well-positioned for the future. Brian Cooper has championed our growth initiatives from his corporate role and will be an excellent leader throughout this transition."


In his recent role, Whichard was responsible for the operations of The Daily Reflector, daily newspapers in Rocky Mount and Elizabeth City, and 10 non-daily newspapers throughout eastern North Carolina.

He also oversaw Saving Source Direct, a direct-mail marketing firm in Tarboro. Under Whichard's leadership, a new multimillion-dollar production facility was completed, consolidating the printing for Cox's multiple N.C. publications and creating financial efficiencies. The building's production equipment also is used for commercial contract printing.

Just as The Daily Reflector has contributed much to its community, region and state, so has Whichard. He serves as chairman of the North Carolina Economic Development Board and on the boards of the University of North Carolina Health Care System and the Research Triangle Foundation of North Carolina. He is also a member of the Advisory Committee for Biotechnology in Eastern N.C. and is first vice chairman of the University of North Carolina General Alumni Association.

He is also a past chair of the board of the Greenville-Pitt Chamber of Commerce, past president and former campaign chairman of the United Way of Pitt County and a past president of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Pitt County. In addition, he is a past chairman of the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association (SNPA) and the N.C. Center for Public Policy and Research Inc., a former trustee of East Carolina University and the University of North Carolina Center for Public Television. He recently served on North Carolina's 21st Century Transportation Committee.
Whichard received his bachelor's degree in industrial relations and political science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH). He also completed the Young Executives Institute at the UNC-CH School of Business Administration.

Cox Media Group includes 17 daily and 26 non-daily newspaper publications, 15 television broadcast stations, 86 radio stations, more than a hundred digital services associated with these businesses. Along with print and broadcast operations, Cox Media Group focuses on digital growth through online and mobile products. Cox Media Group is a newly formed subsidiary of Atlanta-based Cox Enterprises.

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Singing the back-to-school blues

By Josh Humphries
The Daily Reflector

Monday, January 05, 2009

The halls of East Carolina University and Pitt Community College are full again this week as students return for spring semester.

Enrollment at both schools is on the rise.

“Our spring enrollment is up as much as fall of 2008 was up over fall of 2007,” said Judi Bailey, senior executive director of enrollment management at ECU.

Official numbers will not be available for a few weeks, but it looks like total enrollment will be between 25,000 and 25,500, Bailey said.

The university's growth has been rapid over the last few years with an influx of online-only students. The freshman class in the fall of 2008 was the largest ever at 4,500.

Though numbers always go down between the semesters, Bailey said, the university, overall, is growing.

ECU will lose around 1,500 students who will drop out of school or not be able to afford to continue. Another factor this year is a move by ECU officials to limit growth this spring and next fall.

For the fall of next year, those students with scores between 850-890 and a predicted grade point average (GPA) of 2.10-2.45 will be evaluated further before being accepted. Previously, students who made above 850 on the SAT and had a predicted GPA of 2.35 were accepted.

Requirements for new acceptance this spring were also increased. The university accepted students who were eligible in the fall but turned in materials late and were deferred to the spring semester, but students who wanted to readmit in poor academic standing were not likely to be accepted, she said.

For transfer students, the university gave priority to applicants who already had an associates degree or had completed the core diplomas and a 2.5 or better in a North Carolina community college, Bailey said.

ECU's limitation of new students directly affects the number of students who choose to go to PCC, said Joanne Ceres, director of enrollment management and registrar at PCC.

She said students who could not get into ECU are registering for classes at PCC.

The community college is also seeing growth due to the economy, Ceres said.

"Any time the economy is down, enrollment goes up at community colleges," she said. "In talking to students, it seems like a lot of them are first-time students and a lot of them may have just gotten laid off."

PCC's walk-in registration began Monday and continues today. By 5 p.m., the community college had enrolled 767 new students.

Ceres said it was the busiest walk-in registration day that she has seen in her three years.

Ceres said that enrollment will certainly be up over last year, but exact numbers will not be available until later.

Josh Humphries can be contacted at jhumphries@coxnc.com or (252) 329-9565.
ECU spring schedule

- Jan. 9: Classes begin
- Jan. 19: MLK holiday
- Jan. 23: Graduation applications
- March 8-15: Spring break
- April 10: Easter; no classes
- April 27: Last day of class
- April 30: Exams begin
- May 8: Graduation

PCC spring schedule

- Jan. 7: Classes begin
- Jan. 19: MLK holiday; campus closed
- March 9-15: Spring break
- April 10: Easter holiday; campus closed
- May 6: Exams begin
- May 13: Graduation

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New guidelines set for heart treatments

Duke doctor leads panel on criteria

SARAH AVERY, Staff Writer

Comment on this story

Patients with heart blockages will be assessed for surgery on a new set of guidelines designed to bring more consistency to who gets the interventions.

More than 1 million Americans have angioplasties, in which a balloon is used to open blockage in an artery, and another 500,000 have the more invasive heart bypass surgery to restore blood flow.

But the nation's largest professional groups of heart doctors, including the American College of Cardiology, said Monday that some patients are getting the procedures unnecessarily, while others who need them may be denied. As a result, the groups wrote a new set of guidelines to rate patients based on their symptoms and the severity of their condition.

Dr. Manesh Patel, a cardiologist at Duke University School of Medicine, led the group that wrote the criteria. Patel said the first question patients need answered is whether they should undergo a procedure to restore blood flow to the heart.

"What we tried to do is assess when it's reasonable to undergo this procedure to improve health, symptoms or length of time that patients live," Patel said.

HOW ARE PATIENTS RATED? Doctors look at a patient's symptoms, plus the results of tests and imaging scans to determine the extent of the blockage and how severe the damage is. Using a grading system, patients are given a score between 1 and 9. Those who score high are most appropriate for surgical interventions. Those with lower scores are not recommended for the procedure, while the middle group is uncertain.

WHO BENEFITS FROM THE NEW SYSTEM? Patel said patients, insurers and doctors should see more consistency in who gets surgical interventions.

WHAT'S THE DOWN SIDE? Some doctors may chafe at a set of guidelines that may not account for a patient's entire situation, while others may find the criteria too subjective.

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BY THE NUMBERS

1,271,000 angioplasties were done in the United States in 2005, the last year for which data has been compiled.

874,000 men and 397,000 women had angioplasties.

469,000 coronary artery bypass graft operations were done in the United States in 2005.
325,000 bypass surgeries were performed on men and 145,000 on women.

SOURCE: AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

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UNC-CH graduate student hurt in flask explosion in lab

From Staff Reports
Comment on this story

CHAPEL HILL - A graduate student at UNC-Chapel Hill suffered minor injuries Monday morning in a mishap in a campus laboratory.

The female student suffered minor cuts and abrasions when a flask of nitric acid pressurized and exploded in a research lab inside Kenan Labs on South Road. She was awake, alert and smiling when loaded into an ambulance, with a small bandage over a part of her chin and cheek.

The student, whose identity was not released Monday, had some contact with the chemical but suffered no serious wounds, said Randy Young, a spokesman for the university's Public Safety Department.

The building was not evacuated.

"It was well-contained in that one area," Young said.

Kenan Labs is one of the university's major chemical research facilities.

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N.C. State may run campus in S. Korea

NCSU to seek OK for feasibility study

JAY PRICE, Staff Writer
Comment on this story

RALEIGH - The South Korean government is offering N.C. State University $1 million to study the feasibility of building a campus at a city-size economic development park near the port city of Incheon. On Thursday, university officials are expected to ask the UNC Board of Governors for permission to accept.

NCSU has international programs in a host of countries -- including one that has a rented building in Prague -- but this would be NCSU’s first overseas campus, said a university spokesman. The Korean campus eventually could accommodate about 3,000 students, according to a news release.

The campus would be built in a new park called the Incheon Free Economic Zone, which NCSU’s proposal to the board of governors describes as a $200 billion next-generation version of Research Triangle Park.

The feasibility study would include developing a business plan so that the new campus wouldn't need any financial support from North Carolina. The South Korean government would pay at least $1 million annually for five years for planning and startup costs and would build the campus, including laboratories, research facilities and housing for students and faculty.

South Korea has become a leader in technology, and university officials think the country is a good fit for tech-oriented NCSU and would provide a strong base of operations in Asia. The country has had one of the world’s most vigorous economies in recent years, and North Carolina -- which has an economic development office in Seoul -- sells more than $400 million a year in goods and services there, according to NCSU’s proposal.

The study is expected to take a year. It would be some time before the first buildings could go up, but students from the university could be taking classes in South Korea as soon as this summer. One of the earliest steps would be building a biotechnology research laboratory for continuing and expanding current programs.

The idea of a new campus began more than a year ago. It’s not clear how the recent global economic downturn would affect the project. South Korea just notched its first annual trade deficit in 11 years.

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Industry desperately seeking nurses

RN's offered prizes just to interview

BY DINESH RAMDE
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MILWAUKEE — Please, please accept a high-paying job with us. In fact, just swing by for an interview and we'll give you a chance to win cash and prizes.

Sounds too good to be true, especially in an economy riddled with job cuts in nearly every industry. But applicants for nursing jobs are still so scarce that recruiters have been forced to get increasingly inventive.

One Michigan company literally rolled out a red carpet at a recent hiring event. Residential Home Health, which provides in-home nursing for seniors on Medicare, lavished registered nurses and other health care workers with free champagne and a trivia contest. Prizes included a one-year lease for a 2009 SUV, hotel stays and dinners.

"We're committed to finding ways to creatively engage with passive job seekers," said David Curtis, company president.

Recruiters may have little choice. The longstanding U.S. nurse shortage has led to chronic understaffing that can threaten patient care and nurses' job satisfaction, and the problem is expected to worsen.

"We recently had a hiring event where, for experienced nurses to interview — just to interview — we gave them $50 gas cards," said Tom Zinda, recruiter at Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare in the Milwaukee-area city of Glendale. "We really try to get as creative as we can. It's a tough position to fill."

Recruiters across the country have tried similar techniques, offering massages, lavish catering and contests for flat-screen TVs, GPS devices and shopping sprees worth as much as $1,000.

Even strong salaries aren't doing the trick. Registered nurses made an average of $62,480 in 2007, ranging from a mean of $78,550 in California to a mean of $49,140 in Iowa, according to government statistics. Including overtime, experienced nurses can earn more than $100,000.

Wages haven't kept up

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts about 233,000 additional jobs will open for registered nurses each year through 2016, on top of about 2.5 million existing positions. But only about 200,000 candidates passed the Registered Nurse licensing exam last year, and thousands of nurses leave the profession each year.

Several factors are in play: a lack of qualified instructors, lack of funding for training programs, difficult working conditions and the need for expertise in many key nursing positions.

Cheryl Peterson, the director of nursing practice and policy for the American Nurses Association in Silver Spring, Md., said employers must raise salaries and improve working conditions.

"The wages haven't kept up with the level of responsibility and accountability nurses have," Peterson said. Chronic understaffing means nurses are overworked, and as burned-out nurses leave, the situation gets worse for the colleagues they leave behind.

Some hospital departments where experience is vital, such as the emergency room or intensive care, cannot hire newly minted nurses. So managers have fewer staffing choices.

Nurses for teaching positions are scarce because they can make at least 20 percent more working at a hospital, experts said.

"It can be hard to turn down that extra money," said Robert Rosseter, the associate executive director of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing in Washington, D.C.

Recruiters have looked overseas; one-fifth of the nurses who earned their licenses in 2007 were educated internationally, most in the Philippines or India.

Generating a buzz

Zinda, the Milwaukee-area recruiter, said creativity helps. Besides offering gas cards, he has provided $100 gift cards to the local mall and created a Facebook page to target younger nurses.

Attracting good candidates is about offering good working conditions, he said, but creative recruiting goes a long way in generating buzz.

"Bottom line, you need to get people excited about what you're offering," he said. "If you don't, they can easily go elsewhere."

CYCLE OF SCARCITY

Since World War II, nursing shortages have been operating on an eight- to 10-year cycle, industry experts say.

Each time the number of nurses reaches a critical low, the government adds funding and hospitals upgrade working conditions. But as the deficit eases, those retention efforts fade, and eventually the old conditions return, often driving nurses into other professions.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
January 1, 2009

THE DEBT TRAP

Colleges Profit as Banks Market Credit Cards to Students

By JONATHAN D. GLATER

EAST LANSING, Mich. — When Ryan T. Muneio was tailgating with his parents at a Michigan State football game this fall, he noticed a big tent emblazoned with a Bank of America logo. Inside, bank representatives were offering free T-shirts and other merchandise to those who applied for credit cards and other banking products.

“They did a good job,” Mr. Muneio, 21 and a junior at Michigan State, said of the tactic. “It was good advertising.”

Bank of America’s relationship with the university extends well beyond marketing at sports events. The bank has an $8.4 million, seven-year contract with Michigan State giving it access to students’ names and addresses and use of the university’s logo. The more students who take the banks’ credit cards, the more money the university gets. Under certain circumstances, Michigan State even stands to receive more money if students carry a balance on these cards.

Hundreds of colleges have contracts with lenders. But at a time of rising concern about student debt — and overall consumer debt — the arrangements have sounded alarm bells, and some student groups are starting to push back.

The relationships are reminiscent of those uncovered two years ago between student loan companies and universities. In those, some lenders offered universities an incentive to steer potential borrowers their way.

Here at Michigan State, the editors of the student newspaper wrote this fall that “it doesn’t take a giant leap for someone to ask why the university should encourage responsible spending when it receives a cut of every purchase.”

At Arizona State University, students set up a table on campus last spring to warn of the danger of debt and urge students to support limits on on-campus marketing.

The contracts, whose terms vary but usually involve payments to colleges or alumni associations that agree to provide lists of students’ names, have come under harsh criticism in Washington.
“That is absolutely outrageous, the sharing of students’ information with the banks,” Representative Carolyn B. Maloney, Democrat of New York, who oversaw a June hearing on campus credit card marketing, said in a recent interview. “That should be outlawed.”

College campuses are one place that young Americans are introduced to credit and the possibility of spending beyond their means, a problem now confronting the nation as a whole. For banks, the relationships are a golden marketing opportunity. For colleges, they are a revenue source at a time of declining public funding. And for students, they help pay the bills and allow more shopping.

But debt incurred in college becomes a serious burden at graduation, especially in a recession in which jobs are scarce. A survey of more than 1,500 college students by US PIRG in Washington found that two-thirds had at least one credit card. Seniors with balances had an average debt of $2,623 on their cards.

University officials say that their agreements with card issuers comply with the law and bring in valuable revenue.

“It provides money for scholarships and other programs,” said Terry R. Livermore, manager of licensing programs at Michigan State. He said that the program was aimed primarily at alumni and the university would not include sharing student information in future credit card contracts. “The students are such a minuscule portion of this program.”

Jennifer Holsman, executive director of the alumni association at Arizona State, said the association tried to teach students about responsible uses of credit. “We work closely with Bank of America to provide educational seminars to students in terms of being able to get information about how to pay off credit cards, how not to keep balances,” she said.

Credit card issuers say that they try to educate students to use cards responsibly and that the cards they offer on campus have more restrictive terms than cards offered to alumni.

“The available credit for undergraduates is capped at $2,500,” said Betty Riess, a spokeswoman for Bank of America. “We want to take a fair and responsible approach to lending because we want to build the foundation for a longer-term banking relationship.”

Ms. Riess said the bank had agreements with about 700 colleges and alumni associations, making it one of the biggest, if not the biggest, card issuer on campuses. She said that only 2 percent of the open accounts under those agreements belonged to students, but also said it was not possible to determine what percentage of program revenue resulted from fees and charges on those student cards.

Stephanie Jacobson, a spokeswoman for JPMorgan Chase, wrote in an e-mail message that the bank had fewer than 25 contracts with colleges or alumni associations and that while some of the contracts gave it the right to ask for and use lists of student names and addresses, the bank had not done so since 2007.
That may be because football games present a marketing opportunity that requires no address information. Abigail D. Molina, a second-year law student at the University of Oregon, applied in 2007 for a Chase Visa offered at a tent outside a football game. In exchange, she received a blanket.

“I mostly wanted the blanket,” Ms. Molina said. She added that this was her second university credit card. In 1994, when she was an undergraduate at the university, she applied for a card at a booth on campus and then accumulated about $30,000 in debt, almost all of it on the card. In 2001 she filed for bankruptcy. Looking back, she said it was “shockingly easy” to get the card, even as a first-year student.

Mr. Muneio, the Michigan State student, said he did not apply for a Bank of America card because he already had two Visa cards. “The last thing I need is another account to keep track of.”

Many students are unaware of the contracts that universities have with credit card issuers and do not question the presence of marketers on campus or applications in their mailboxes, despite recent protests on a few campuses.

Sometimes, the contracts have confidentiality provisions. Universities may try to distance themselves, stating that the contracts are only between alumni associations and banks. But the universities provide alumni groups with lists of current students’ names, addresses and telephone numbers, which the groups pass on to banks.

The New York Times obtained information about and, in some cases, copies of contracts between lenders, public colleges and their alumni associations using open records requests. Because private colleges are not subject to open records laws, they are not included.

While most universities contacted for this article did not provide detailed financial information on the contracts — the University of Pittsburgh, for example, confirmed only that it had an agreement — two did share numbers.

The alumni association of the University of Michigan is guaranteed $25.5 million over the term of its 11-year agreement with Bank of America. Under the agreement, the association agreed to provide lists of names and addresses of students, alumni, faculty, staff, donors and holders of season tickets to athletic events.

Much of the money goes toward scholarships, said Jerry Sigler, vice president and chief financial officer of the alumni association. He was unsure what students were told about the program.

“Students are generally told how they can opt out of having their information publicly displayed in directories or provided in response to requests like this,” Mr. Sigler added. “But it’s not to my knowledge specific to the credit card program.”

Michigan State University gets $1.2 million a year but is guaranteed at least $8.4 million over seven years, according to its agreement. The contract calls for a $1 royalty to the university for every new card account that
remains open for at least 90 days, $3 for every card whose holder pays an annual fee, and a payment of a half percent of the amount of all retail purchases using the cards.

For cards that do not have an annual fee, the bank pays $3 if the holder has a balance at the end of the 12th month after opening an account, a provision that appears to give the university an incentive to get cardholders into debt.

A few schools have adopted policies that prohibit sharing student contact information.

Ball State University’s alumni association, which has a contract with JPMorgan Chase, does not provide information on students, said Ed Shipley, executive director of the association. “Who we market to is our alumni because that’s our purpose,” he said. However, the bank is permitted to set up marketing tables at athletic events.

The University of Oregon, whose alumni association also has a marketing agreement with Chase, stopped providing student addresses as concern grew about student debt, according to Julie Brown, a university spokeswoman. The university still permits marketing booths at athletic events.

Some research suggests that students may be using credit cards less frequently, in favor of debit cards linked to their bank accounts. A survey last spring by Student Monitor, a Ridgewood, N.J., company that tracks trends on campus, found that 59 percent of undergraduate students had debit cards, up from 51 percent in 2000.

But universities have arrangements with banks that offer debit cards too, perhaps raising some of the same issues that the credit card deals do.

At New Mexico State University, for example, students are given the option of opening a bank account with Wells Fargo if they want to convert their campus identification into a debit card.

The accounts are not mandatory, said Angela Throneberry, assistant vice president for auxiliary services at the university. But, she said, “There’s some revenue sharing that happens as part of this.”