East Carolina University Chancellor Steve Ballard will lead a new task force on academics and athletics for the 17-campus University of North Carolina system.

New UNC system President Tom Ross announced Ballard's appointment at last week's Board of Governors meeting. The task force is being formed as UNC-Chapel Hill's football team is undergoing an investigation for academic misconduct and players receiving improper benefits.

The task force's formal name and charge have not been issued, but it will develop best practices in academic services for athletes. Other members and the first meeting date have not been announced.

“He (Ross) asked if I was willing to chair, and I said I would,” Ballard said. “Any time the UNC president asks you to chair something I think you need to step up.”

Ballard said ECU has an excellent reputation for managing risk in athletics and academics.

“I think this recognizes ECU's proactive stance in this area,” Ballard said.

ECU has one self-reported case of academic misconduct from last year for which a disposition is concluding with the NCAA. Ballard said he was not aware of any others during his tenure.

Ballard said his first priority will be to carry out the official charge, but “I would like to make sure that all UNC schools, regardless of division, are aware of best practices and share experiences.

“There's so much competition to have the best athletes,” he said. “This (task force) is more than appropriate and very timely to be asking these questions.”

Contact Jackie Drake at jdrake@reflector.com or (252) 329-9567.
The loud complaints are commonplace — society is divided, angry, bitter, partisan, petty — and as so terribly witnessed by the shootings in Arizona, certainly violent. It is a malaise that covers our world, country and our Pitt County communities — we all share its dreaded sense of shattered serenity.

Falkland native and University of North Carolina faculty member James H. Johnson Jr. described it as a time of “growing incivility.” Johnson, who directs the Urban Investment Strategies Center at UNC’s Kenan-Flagler School of Business, spoke at Monday's 14th annual Community Unity Breakfast, sponsored by the Greenville-Pitt County Chamber of Commerce and the office of Greenville Mayor Pat Dunn.

So what is left for us to do? Can anything be done really or is it simply out of our hands, out of our control? Johnson thinks not.

Speaking to a group of about 300 on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Johnson said our city and county have the “audacity and foresight” to go from simply talking about our common problems to doing something about them.

Outlining ways to promote what he called, “unity work,” Johnson emphasized the importance of utilizing the information soon to be available from the recently completed U.S. Census.

These included aggressively embracing our diverse population, especially the increasing number of Hispanic and other minorities which he said have grown 19 percent over the last decade. He urged county citizens and legislators to carefully engage in the redrawing of state voting districts based on these numbers.
Also, he suggested more local emphasis be placed on the eroding job prospects in our depressed economy for males, especially African-American males; and that increased assistance also is needed for the growing number of grandparents raising their grandchildren. Those numbers, he said, have increased from 2.2 million households nationwide in 1970 to 4.9 million in 2009.

All of these ways, each dealing with specific demographic and economic factors, would help us seize the initiative to build a “more attractive place to do business,” Johnson said. Such a result — matching the theme of Monday's event, “a rising tide lifts all boats” — is the key to pulling ourselves from the malaise we find ourselves in.

Simple talk without action to follow will leave us stranded — only acting on the things that will move our economy, local and otherwise, will lift those boats. It's really the only way to lift them. But in an important addition to this scenario, Chamber President Susanne Sartrelle suggested the importance of applying Martin Luther King's capacity for forgiveness to both personal and professional lives.

Simply stated, identifying the right things to do and acting upon them with kindness and regard for others will form the basis of any successful recovery, economic and otherwise.
About 125 East Carolina University students worked Monday through their Volunteer and Service-Learning Center to help nonprofit organizations in the community as part of the 2011 MLK Day Challenge. They worked with Give2TheTroops, the Humane Society of Eastern Carolina, Fairytale Boutique, Sylvan Heights Waterfowl Park, the Food Bank of Central and Eastern N.C., the Little Willie Center, Greenville Community Shelters, RHA-Howell Center Tar River, Spring Arbor and Red Oak Assisted Living.

The event began on campus with breakfast and an orientation program to prepare students for their service projects.
Marsh named CFO of ECU Physicians

Cheryl Marsh has been named chief financial officer of ECU Physicians, the group medical practice of the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University. Marsh, who has worked at ECU since 2001, previously was an administrator in the ECU Department of Pediatrics and Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. A certified public accountant, Marsh has a master's degree in business administration from the State University of New York at Buffalo and a bachelor's degree in travel and hotel management from Rochester (N.Y.) Institute of Technology. Before coming to ECU in 2001, Marsh worked in public accounting for more than three years and spent seven years at the State University of Buffalo School of Medicine in New York.
Students and supports march down College Hill during a candlelight vigil and march held for Martin Luther King Day on Monday, Jan. 17, 2011. (Aileen Devlin/The Daily Reflector)

Rain doesn’t dampen ECU vigil
By Ginger Livingston
The Daily Reflector
Tuesday, January 18, 2011

Continuous rain and temperatures in the low 40s did little to dampen the spirit of East Carolina University students paying tribute to the 25th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

More than 100 students participated in the nearly one-mile march from College Hill to Mendenhall Student Center.

“I know it's cold, it's wet, and some of us are tired,” Tremayne Smith, ECU Student Government Association president, said. “But I turn to Dr. King, who knew the conditions of our environment didn't matter as long as we are huddled together.”

The celebration was sponsored by the East Carolina University chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha, King's fraternity.

“We are here to march as they once did before, but not for the same reasons,” chapter President Sean Bowen said. The mixed-race group standing before him marched to pay tribute and show gratitude to the individuals who struggled before them, he said.

Arriving at Mendenhall, the marchers and others listened to the evening's keynote speaker, Kengie Bass, principal of Wake County's Knightdale High School and a former member of ECU's Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity. About 200 people were at that event, including members of ECU Gospel Choir.

Bass talked about a recent poll that showed 49 percent of blacks believed King's vision had been fulfilled, and only 46 percent of whites believed the same.
With a black president and what Bass considers a more amazing achievement, Ruffin McNeill, ECU's first black head football coach, it's easy to believe King's dream has come true, he said.

However, racism remains prevalent in society, he said, illustrated by the statements of popular culture figures such as John Mayer, Mel Gibson and Don Imus.

There also is the continued problem of black-on-black violence, Bass said. “Can we truly be upset that others hate on us when we hate each other?” he asked.

Bass asked the audience to contemplate why Wal-Mart, parties with alcohol and drugs, and crack houses are among the few places in society where people of all races and economic statuses are treated equally.

Fully realizing King's dream will require the work of everyone in Monday's audience, Bass said. “Be the change you want to see,” he said. “Believe that you can and will make a difference.”

There needs to be a statement of purpose, a sense of community and strong leadership, he said. Bass was critical of moral failings among black leaders on the national level.

“Each person in the audience are the leaders we are waiting for,” he said.

The night was poignant for Quentin Powell, the choir's director, who led his last performance of the group. Powell is leaving the university to pursue an advanced degree at Longy School of Music in Boston.

“I am glad to have this opportunity because there are so many opportunities that have been opened up for African-Americans and other minorities,” Powell said. “I'm just so proud to share my last moments with my choir at such an auspicious event.”

Contact Ginger Livingston at glivingston@reflector.com or (252) 329-9570.
Letter: ECU a school, not an ad agency
Monday, January 17, 2011

In Spanish we say “Aunque la mona se vista de seda mona se queda” (“Even though the monkey wears silk it is still a monkey”), and that is exactly what is happening with ECU’s electronic sign. No matter what Associate Vice Chancellor Bagnell says in his Jan. 14 letter — “I hope you will agree at that time that it is an architecturally pleasing addition to our campus” — there is still a potential for traffic accidents to happen.

The city does not allow private businesses to operate signs the way ECU is doing because they can distract the drivers.

But because ECU’s sign is on state property, it can do it. I suggest ECU form a committee to discuss and give us a proper justification as to why ECU can do it and private businesses cannot.

Since ECU is a university and not an advertising agency and the drivers on Greenville and Charles boulevards will be distracted anyway, show us scenes of university activity or better show us sports highlights or even better, surgeries using the daVinci robot.

In the meantime, “Aunque la mona se vista de seda mona se queda.”

JAVIER CASTILLO
Greenville
Studies show that pregnancy isn't the happiest time in every woman's life. As a result, an East Carolina University researcher is studying the effectiveness of a program for low-income women in reducing their risk of prenatal, also called antepartum, depression, which is depression that occurs during pregnancy.

Dr. D. Elizabeth Jesse, ECU associate professor of graduate nursing science in the College of Nursing and assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology in the Brody School of Medicine, has been awarded a National Institute of Mental Health grant that will provide support for pregnant women at risk of depression.

The three-year, $640,742 grant will allow Jesse, a certified nurse midwife, to work with patients at the Pitt County Health Department and ECU Physicians' Regional Perinatal Center. Expectant mothers are already screened for risk of depression, and those with a certain score on the assessment will be invited to enroll in Jesse's study and the program, called Insight Plus.

Each year, up to 50 percent of pregnant women experience depressive symptoms and about 13 percent develop antepartum depression, which can mimic typical pregnancy symptoms from mood swings to fatigue or a change in sleep patterns. Up to 50 percent of women who suffer from antepartum depression also will have postpartum depression, so early intervention is important, Jesse said.

“Women who experience high stress, lack support from family and friends, have lower levels of self-esteem, suffer domestic violence, and think more negatively about themselves can be more at risk for antepartum depression,” Jesse said. “They begin to feel sad and useless.”

Women often are reluctant to talk about depression during pregnancy or ask for help because of the stigma surrounding it, and they don't want to appear weak or risk being called a “bad mother,” Jesse said.

Insight Plus is a culturally tailored intervention to help expectant mothers build emotional support from family and friends, set goals, reduce stress, increase positive thinking and improve self-esteem. It includes spiritual-related material for those who value it.

“It is my theory that by decreasing risks and increasing resources these women will improve,” Jesse said.
Those enrolled in the program will meet once a week for six weeks with a social worker and a lay assistant, called a “resource mom.” The social worker, resource mom and women will work together to identify and solve problems. Transportation and child care will be offered. Each woman will receive an MP3 player programmed with relaxation and stress reduction exercises and other homework assignments, called positive affirmations, Jesse said.

“Should the Insight Plus program prove to be feasible and effective, it will be a model for delivering care by public health staff and lay helpers,” Jesse said.

The NIH review panel said findings from the study will be highly relevant for public health because the intervention is integrated within rural prenatal clinics, including the local health department, where access to mental health resources for treating and preventing antepartum depression is limited. The panel also said the intervention is sensitive to the cultural needs of low-income African-American, Caucasian and Hispanic women, a population that has been underrepresented in previous studies.

Co-investigators at ECU are Dr. Melvin Swanson, professor of nursing; Dr. Sheila Bunch, professor of social work; and Dr. Edward Newton, chair and professor of obstetrics and gynecology. Jesse also will collaborate with colleagues at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Vanderbilt University and the University of Virginia.

ECU offers the only nurse midwifery curriculum in North Carolina. A special intent is for graduates to assume care provider roles in rural areas to meet the needs of underserved women and infants.

**ECU to host 2011 Blue Heron Bowl**

ECU's Institute for Coastal Science and Policy and the Division of Continuing Studies will host the 2011 Blue Heron Bowl, which is the regional competition for the National Ocean Sciences Bowl.

This is the first year ECU will host North Carolina's competition, which will now rotate every second year between ECU, UNC Wilmington and UNC Chapel Hill. The Blue Heron Bowl will be held Feb. 26, 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., with opening remarks beginning at 8 a.m. in Bate 1032.

Coordinated by the Consortium for Ocean Leadership, NOSB is a national academic competition that quizzes high school students on topics related to the study of the oceans and Great Lakes.

The competition consists of 18 teams competing in timed, round-robin and double-elimination sessions that include multiple choice and short answer questions. Questions are drawn from the scientific and technical disciplines used in studying the oceans, including physics, chemistry, geology, atmospheric science and biology, as well as from topics on the contributions of the oceans to national and international economics, history and culture.
Teams include four students, one alternate and a coach. The round-robin portion of the competition will be held beginning at 8:30 a.m. in Bate. Semi-final, double-elimination rounds will continue in the afternoon with the final round at 5:30 p.m. in Bate 1031; the awards ceremony will follow at 6.

One winning team, two runner-up teams and a “most sportsmanlike” team from the Blue Heron Bowl will each receive a prize and will be provided transportation and room and board to the NOSB competition April 29—May 1 in Galveston, Texas, where they will compete against 24 other regional winners.

Winning team members of the national competition also will receive a prize. Past prizes have included trips to Southampton Oceanography Centre in England; the Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies on Catalina Island, Calif.; the Florida Keys; cruises on research vessels; visits to oceanographic institutions; scholarships; scientific equipment and books.

Goals of the NOSB competition are to increase knowledge of the oceans and to raise visibility and public understanding of the national investment in ocean-related research. The competition also gives oceanographic research programs the opportunity to develop new connections with their local pre-college community and to open students' eyes to ocean-related careers.

Ultimately, the success of the Blue Heron Bowl requires the concerted efforts of many volunteer staff and sponsors. Sponsors help offset the costs incurred, while volunteers serve as moderators, scientific judges, rules judges, timekeepers and scorekeepers. Sponsorships and volunteer opportunities are still available for the Blue Heron Bowl.

Interested parties should contact Dr. Jeffery Alejandro, Division of Continuing Studies, at 328-9197 or by e-mail at alejandroj@ecu.edu, or Kay Evans, Institute for Coastal Science and Policy, at 328-6220 or by e-mail at evanssu@ecu.edu.

For additional information about the Blue Heron Bowl, go to www.ecu.edu/icsp/bhb/2011.

15th Annual Polar Bear Plunge planned
The 15th annual Polar Bear Plunge is set for 7 p.m. Thursday at the ECU Student Recreation Center.

All ECU students, faculty and staff are invited to jump into the icy waters of the outdoor pool. The first 700 jumpers will receive a free T-shirt. Students will be entered into a drawing for prizes including the grand prize, a 3-foot stuffed Polar Bear donated by Coca-Cola.

All jumpers are encouraged to bring a canned food item for a Feed the Bear campaign with all donations going to the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina. Participants who bring a canned food item with them will receive an additional raffle ticket to double their chances of winning prizes.
The Polar Bear Plunge started as a part of the grand opening of the Student Recreation Center in 1997 with 35 students taking the plunge. The event has grown each year with more than 500 jumpers in 2008 and 700 plungers in 2010. Organizers are anticipating as many as 900-1,000 participants will hit the chilly water this year.

Following the jump, food will be available for all jumpers on the Student Recreation Center Concourse and prizes will be awarded. Campus radio station WZMB-FM will be broadcasting live from the event. Students will also get a chance to learn about the programs, activities and organizations at ECU through the Get A Clue involvement fair, which will be held on the basketball courts inside SRC.

Registration begins at 6:30 p.m. on SRC Court No. 1. All participants must bring their ECU One Card to sign up. Prize drawings are expected to begin at 8:15. The event is sponsored by Campus Recreation & Wellness, Campus Living & Dining, American Campus Communities, Coca-Cola, and Student Involvement and Leadership.

For more information call 328-6387 or stop by 128 Student Recreation Center. Pictures and videos are also available on the ECU Polar Bear Plunge Facebook event page at http://ht.ly/3zw3n.

**Piano Performance Team at ECU Jan. 23**
ECU School of Music will present a concert by the Piano Performance Team of North Carolina on Sunday, Jan. 23 at 2 p.m., in A. J. Fletcher Recital Hall, School of Music.

The Piano Performance Team is a select group of four-to-six middle and high school piano students from North Carolina selected by audition each year. It was created to give talented pianists various opportunities to perform. They have performed in North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, and Tennessee, including at The Palace Theatre in Myrtle Beach and Wake Forest University.

The program will include works by Bach, Mozart, Schumann, Chopin, Liszt, Field, de Falla, and Kabalevsky. Admission is free.

**Upcoming Events:**

Monday: MLK Jr. Vigil, March, and Tribute, 6 p.m. The march will begin at the top of College Hill and continue to Hendrix Theatre, where a short program will be held.

Wednesday: Lecture by writer Kevin Powell, “Looking for Martin: Dr. King's Dream in the 21st Century,” 6:30 p.m., Mendenhall Student Center Great Rooms. Free. See www.ecu.edu/cs-ecu/calendar.cfm for times, places and more information on these events and other ECU upcoming activities.
ECU to launch learning program
By Ginger Livingston
The Daily Reflector
Sunday, January 16, 2011

Learning doesn't end with the turn of a tassel or a work-mandated training class, according to officials at East Carolina University.

The university's Division of Continuing Studies is planning to launch a Lifelong Learning Program starting this fall. Modeled after the Elderhostel program that formed in the mid-1970s, Lifelong Learning will offer adults 50 and older learning opportunities in a relaxed atmosphere that doesn't involve entrance requirements, exams or grades.

“It's not a novel idea but it's new to eastern North Carolina,” said Ron Kemp, a volunteer and chairman of the program's advisory panel.

North Carolina State University has operated a similar program, called Encore, for about 20 years. Last fall Encore classes explored topics such as modern Christianity, learning digital photography, investing, opera, gardening and multiple book discussions.

“The whole idea of lifelong learning is most people are well past their normal years of going to college,” said Clayton Sessoms, director of East Carolina University's Division of Continuing Studies. They are curious about topics and want to learn new things, but don't want to invest the time or money in pursing a degree.

“Seniors are the one who so often say there is nothing for me to do. I'm retired but I still want to learn,” he said.

The local program is launching later this week with a series of meetings scheduled Thursday, Friday and Saturday at various locations in Greenville, Farmville and Washington, N.C.
Staff will summarize the philosophy of the Lifelong Learning Program and then ask participants what type of classes and programming they would like to participate in or lead, Sessoms said.

“The town hall meetings are a place for input,” he said. No one will be asked to join the program although volunteer instructors and event organizers will be sought.

The program will be funded through workshop fees that Sessoms described as modest. There also are plans to seek long-term grants.

They already have a corporate funding commitment and an individual contribution to fund the project's start up, Sessoms said. Both the company and the individual have asked to remain anonymous.

The planning committee plans to reveal the schedule and courses May 21.

“This brings out the very heart of ECU, to serve,” Sessoms said. “We are attempting to reach out to a population that wants ECU to serve them.”

Pitt Community College, the Council on Aging, Cooperative Extension Service and community groups offer programming and events geared to the county's older 50-plus population.

Lifelong Learning won't compete with those programs, Sessoms said.

While lifelong learning targets individuals age 50 and above, most people taking classes are age 70 and beyond. There are plans to host day trips and weekend activities to ensure working adults have an opportunity to participate, Sessoms said.

Individuals interested in participating in the event are encouraged to register by calling 328-9198 or e-mailing the Division of Continuing Studies at cpe@ecu.edu.

Contact Ginger Livingston at glivingston@reflector.com or (252) 329-9570.
Murder trial will stay in Pitt County
By Michael Abramowitz
The Daily Reflector
Saturday, January 15, 2011

Jury selection in the trial of a Greenville double-murder suspect will be time consuming, officials said after a decision to keep the trial in Pitt County.

Superior Court Judge W. Russell Duke ruled Friday against a request to move the capital case of James Earl Richardson and directed attorneys to be ready for trial March 14.

Richardson is accused in the June 30, 2009, drive-by shooting deaths of East Carolina University student Landon Blackley and restaurant manager Andrew Kirby outside The Other Place nightclub. District Attorney Clark Everett is seeking the death penalty.

Everett said he expected pre-trial motions to be heard in February, after which the jury selection process will begin.

A list of prospective jurors will be generated by the county. There likely will be more summoned to court than usual, Everett said.

The judge probably will have them come to the court in groups because of the volume of jurors likely to be interviewed, he said.

“Most capital cases take longer to seat juries because there are more issues to deal with and more peremptory challenges,” Everett said.

Peremptory challenges allow an attorney to reject a prospective juror without giving a reason. Normal criminal cases allow an attorney six peremptory challenges, but capital cases allow 14.
The screening process, including questions that will be asked of prospective jurors, must be reviewed and approved by the trial judge.

Duke said Friday he will have to wait until a trial judge is named before attorneys can proceed with some procedural motions, saying he is uncertain whether he or another judge will hear the trial.

Duke ruled Friday that a defense change of venue motion failed to meet the burden necessary to move the case to another county. Evidence presented by the defense included a survey of 470 county residents that showed 82 percent had heard about the case.

Obviously some potential jurors have been exposed to publicity, Duke said, but media accounts appear to be factual, not inflammatory. “There is not a reasonable likelihood the defendant can't receive a fair and impartial trial in Pitt County.”

Richardson, 33, sat in the courtroom in a green prison uniform and took notes as Thomas J. Moore of Rocky Mount and Jeff Cutler of Wendell detailed the “media blitz” surrounding the case, including what they called pervasive and inflammatory commenting on local Internet sites.

The shooting prompted increased security measures by city officials in the downtown club district, and the defense motion said news coverage and the controversial nature of publicity about the case “infected prospective jurors with preconceived impressions.”

Moore called two ECU faculty members and a member of the Greenville Crime Task Force as witnesses to support moving the trial. He told Duke the case struck at the very heart of Pitt County because it happened in the heart of the county. He said people in all parts of the county paid attention to the case.

“We've talked about the legal points, but judge, you can just feel it that it needs to be moved. We need to start with a clean slate.”

Everett called the ECU student body president to the stand to support his argument that pretrial publicity had no significant impact on the campus community.

Everett attacked the statistical integrity of the survey done on behalf of the Richardson defense by the Durham-based Fair Trial Initiative. William Durham, who oversaw the survey, also testified during the hearing at the Pitt County Courthouse.

Everett said it was not a quality survey and told Duke he should not consider it as valid. He also said information the defense accumulated about Internet commenting was unreliable because of its anonymous nature.

“These bloggers could be in Bangladesh for all you know,” Everett told Duke. “Don't place any emphasis on them.”
He also said the defendant contributed to pretrial publicity by participating in a radio interview and attempting to place an advertisement in The Daily Reflector.

Richardson is being held in Central Prison in Raleigh and transported to Greenville for legal proceedings. Last month Judge Duke denied Richardson's request to lower his $5 million bond.

Contact Michael Abramowitz at mabramowitz@reflector.com or (252) 329-9571.
Clyde Naylor plans to enter a local fitness challenge again this year.

His team of Pitt County Memorial Hospital employees took first place last year for the most hours of activity during the Live Health Greenville-Pitt 100-day challenge.

The employees plan on forming two teams of four this year. Thursday is the deadline to sign up for the Greenville-Pitt County Chamber of Commerce event, which ends April 29.

The cost is $20 per team member, and teams of between two to 10 people face off against other teams to earn the most activity hours or lose the most weight. The Iowa-based nonprofit Live Healthy America created the Web-based event to encourage healthy habits.

Naylor, a 52-year-old pharmacist, said he helped lead his team to victory by sending out motivational e-mails, and encouraging them at work.

“We all lost pounds,” he said. “I lost about 15 to 16 pounds.”

The Twilight Pharmers team was so-named because it included nine night-shift pharmacy employees along with a spouse.

“It was good, I enjoyed it,” Naylor said of the experience. “It definitely got me to be more active. That's for sure.”

People who work together can form teams, or family members and friends can create teams. Team members go online to log in their activity hours or weight loss weekly, and regular updates on team standings are posted.

Those standings include national rankings for Scott Senatore, the chamber's senior vice-president, who said this is the event's third year.

“We were the first chamber in North Carolina to start it.” Since then, the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce has begun the annual challenge, which is jointly sponsored by the Greater Raleigh Sports Council.

“We have a little friendly competition with Raleigh,” Senatore said, adding Greenville-Pitt County surpassed Raleigh last year.
The idea for the Live Healthy Wellness Challenge was brought to the chamber by a former coach at East Carolina University, and the chamber got behind the idea as a way to foster a healthier, more productive workforce.

Since 2009, local participants have lost nearly 8,000 pounds and logged about 72,000 activity hours, Senatore said. He said participation has grown each year.

“One reason is more and more people are starting to become more conscious of and wanting to become healthier.”

The chamber hosted a 5K event at the end last year, and will again after this third challenge.

“We wanted to make sure that the folks in the program stay motivated and stayed engaged in the program so we thought that the 5K event would be something that would help them do that,” Senatore said.

The winning teams are awarded plaques and passes to four facilities: Gold's Gym, Greenville Aquatics and Fitness Center, Snap Fitness and ViQuest Center.

The online program for recording weight loss helped keep Tracey Hinton on track.

“I had to be responsible for something. I had to plug in my numbers every week,” she said.

Naylor said his hospital team logged in their activity hours.

“Everybody did it separately,” he said. “A lot of people did household chores, but most of it was biking and walking and exercises.”

Now, it's a year later, and time for the next 100-day challenge.

“I kept most of it off,” he said of the weight he lost. “I gained a little bit of it back.”

An added bonus is the hospital's policy of sweetening the pot for a winning team's members by offering a day off work.

Sign up a team online at www.livehealthygreenville-pitt.org. Each team member receives items, including a training T-shirt, a one-year subscription to a national lifestyle magazine, along with weekly e-mails offering health tips.

Contact K.J. Williams at kwilliams@reflector.com or (252) 329-9588.
Ross searches out duplication at UNC

BY ERIC FERRERI - Staff Writer
CHAPEL HILL–UNC President Tom Ross has ordered a sweeping review of academics across the public university system - an attempt to become more efficient by rooting out duplication.

The exercise will be neither quick nor popular. It will challenge faculty, staff and administrators to prioritize, surrender some ground and think more broadly than has long been the custom.

But this must be done, Ross said Friday, for the university to survive what is expected to be another round of severe budget cuts next year and to create future economic stability.

"It does have some pain, and we'll have controversy," Ross said of the exercise, which will kick off in the next couple months. "Change is hard." Ross has enlisted former UNC Charlotte Chancellor James Woodward to head up the review. Woodward, who served as interim chancellor at N.C. State University before Randy Woodson assumed that position, will start in a month or two and will eventually issue recommendations, Ross said.
The length of the study isn't clear, and Ross was wary Friday of jumping to conclusions about where duplication may lie. He and other university leaders said the exercise may not lead to mass program eliminations. Not all duplication is bad, he said.

"We probably imagine there's more unnecessary duplication than we'll probably find," said Hannah Gage, chairwoman of the UNC system's Board of Governors. "There may not be immediate savings from this. But it's the right thing to do."

Ross, a former Davidson College president, assumed the UNC system presidency Jan. 1 from Erskine Bowles, who spent five years paring down the administrative side of the university, saving money in purchasing and other off-the-radar areas.

In taking the baton, Ross turns the focus to academics and promises an approach that may be difficult for some faculty and staff. If too many campuses offer the same major, it may be eliminated in some places. Or programs offered at two or three institutions close to each other may be grouped under one umbrella. Or a program on one campus might be shut down, with its students shifted to an online equivalent offered at another university.

The task will be lengthy because campuses offer hundreds of programs. For example, UNC Charlotte alone offers 91 bachelor's degree programs, 59 master's degree programs and 18 doctoral degree programs.

**Focus on strengths**

Campus leaders say the introspection will be challenging.

"It's one of the hardest things for an academic institution to do," said Steve Ballard, chancellor at East Carolina University. "Do we need 15 political science departments or 15 English departments? I would argue we do. But beyond that, how much duplication do we need?"

Campuses are being encouraged to focus more clearly on their core missions and areas of strength. At N.C. Central University, those strengths include biotechnology, the sciences, health education and public administration, said Chancellor Charlie Nelms.
"I'm well-acquainted with what we do well, and I want to preserve it," Nelms said.

At UNC Charlotte, student body president Megan Smith fears her institution may lose out if it has to fight larger, older campuses for programs.

"Nothing at Charlotte is established; we're 60 years old," said Smith, a senior English major from Monroe. "For us, the idea of paring down overlapping programs is troubling. It means giving opportunities to the more established schools like Chapel Hill or [N.C.] State and taking away opportunities for other schools."

**Cooperate more**

Campuses will be encouraged to work together more often, even if that means ceding turf at times. The process will likely bruise egos as departments and programs are prioritized, said Sandie Gravett, chairwoman of the UNC system's Faculty Assembly, which represents public university professors.

"You're talking about people's jobs and livelihoods," Gravett said. "There's a lot of concern, but faculty understand the budget situation we're in."

The UNC system has cut $620 million in the past four years, with more expected this year. The analysis won't save money in the short term, but it may point to new, cheaper ways of educating students. It will have to, Ross said, because those cuts won't ever come back.

"This isn't a temporary economic downturn," he said. "This is an economic restructuring."

eric.ferreri@newsobserver.com or 919-932-2008
N.C. Hall of Fame class announced

BY CAULTON TUDOR - Staff writer

RALEIGH–Legendary high school basketball coach Larry Lindsey and stock car racing icon Dale Jarrett are among seven new members of the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame in Raleigh.

The 2011 class announced Monday also includes former Wake Forest University and NFL wide receiver Ricky Proehl; tennis coach Tom Parham; sports training pioneer Al Proctor; former East Carolina football player and Elon coach Jerry Tolley; and the late Gene Overby, the longtime radio voice of Wake Forest University sports.

The 48th Hall of Fame group will be inducted on May 12 at the North Raleigh Hilton Hotel.

Lindsey, in a long career at Youngsville and Wake Forest, coached eight N.C. High School Athletic Association championship basketball teams in three competitive classes. In 28 seasons, his teams won 80 percent of their games.

Jarrett, son of NASCAR great Ned Jarrett, won three Daytona 500 races and was the Cup series champion in 1999.

Overby, who died in 1989, was twice voted as the state's Sportscaster of the Year and called Deacons football and basketball games for 17 years. Proctor was the state's first nationally certified high school athletic trainer and established the first student trainer clinic in the nation. He spent two years in the job for the New York Yankees in the early 1960s.

Proehl was a standout for the Arizona Cardinals, St. Louis Rams, Seattle Seahawks, Chicago Bears and later with the Carolina Panthers during his 17-season pro career. He had the game-winning touchdown pass for the Rams in the 1999 NFC championship game and played a key role in the Rams' 23-16 win over the Tennessee Titans in Super Bowl XXXIV in 2000.
Tolley set football and track records for the Pirates and later coached Elon to four South Atlantic Conference championships. He also is a member of the NAIA Hall of Fame.

Parham coached championship collegiate tennis teams at Barton and Elon in a career than spanned more than 40 years. He coached 16 All-Americans at the two North Carolina schools and was awarded the Elon Medallion, the school's highest honor, in 2004.

caulton.tudor@newsobserver.com or 919-829-8946
Drinking linked to student's fatal fall

From Staff Reports

DURHAM–Duke University student Drew Everson had been drinking before he died in an accidental fall in October.

According to a toxicology report released Friday, Everson had a blood-alcohol content of 0.133. By North Carolina law, 0.08 is the point at which a person is considered intoxicated.

Everson had been out with friends but went his own way and wasn't seen again until he was found the next day behind the student union on Duke's East Campus. He was found at the foot of a steep concrete stairwell behind the building. He later died.

According to a medical examiner's report, Everson died of blunt trauma to the head as the result of a fall.

His organs were donated, according to the medical examiner's report.

"The medical examiner's report released today provides finality to the extensive investigation by the Duke Police, which has concluded that Drew Everson's death occurred as a result of an accidental fall into an open stairwell," said Michael Schoenfeld, a Duke spokesman. "The Duke community is deeply saddened by this tragedy and continues to mourn Drew's death. His legacy at Duke will be long-lasting, and we offer our thoughts and prayers to Drew's many family and friends."

Everson, 21, was a popular student who friends said had an uncanny knack for bringing people together. The university held a memorial service to honor him in Duke Chapel; it attracted more than 1,000 mourners.
NCCU fees aid band's trip

BY ERIC FERRERI - Staff Writer

DURHAM–Though it wasn't as expensive as anticipated, the N.C. Central University marching band's big moment at the Tournament of Roses parade still cost more than the university was able to raise.

So NCCU used about $130,000 in student fee money to pay for what campus officials have called a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

The total cost for the trip to Pasadena was $430,950, less than the $500,000 officials had estimated after learning in late 2009 that they had earned the coveted invitation to the New Year's Day parade. Sending 300 band members across the country with their uniforms, trumpets, flutes and tubas isn't cheap, and NCCU went on a frantic fundraising drive.

The university raised about $300,000. That included a $100,000 in-kind gift from Wal-Mart Stores, the retailing giant that used its trucks to haul band equipment across the country. The difference, $129,345, came from an activity fee all students pay to fund a variety of student organizations and efforts like the band, student groups and intramural sports.

Chancellor Charlie Nelms said it's a perfectly suitable use of the money. "There's a range of things it supports," he said of the student fee fund. "It's like your household budget. You might spend a little less on something and a little more on something, depending on your needs."

This year, each of NCCU's more than 8,500 students paid a student activity fee of $407.93, netting the university more than $3 million.

The Pasadena trip had some hiccups. Winter weather in North Carolina caused some travel headaches, and the band didn't make live national television because the telecast cut away before the Marching Sound Machine reached the network cameras.
Still, Nelms and others at NCCU say the trip provided an immeasurable feel-good moment for the university. The payoff, Nelms said, will be far down the road - in the hoped-for uptick in applications, greater interest in the band program, and perhaps a spike in fundraising.

"It may be a parent watching the parade with a child in the eighth or ninth grade," Nelms said. "It's like athletics. People don't enroll because a team wins, but it elevates the university."

**WCU is 'Best Band'**

Meanwhile, the other UNC system representative in the Rose Bowl parade, the band at Western Carolina University, returned from Pasadena with an even greater success story to tell. The Pride of the Mountains Marching Band, 390 members strong, was voted "Best Band" in the parade.

Western Carolina is a public university of about 9,400 students tucked into the mountains of Cullowhee, about 50 miles west of Asheville.

Like the NCCU band, Western Carolina's group did everything it could to raise the $650,000 it needed for the trip. Band members raised about half, with the university picking up the balance, said WCU Chancellor John Bardo.

"They did everything from car washes to asking relatives to help," Bardo said. "These kids really wanted to go."

At WCU, the marching band is serious business. It's a formal class, rather than a student organization, and in 2009 it won the Sudler Trophy, an annual honor considered the "Heisman Trophy" for marching bands.

The Rose Bowl parade, viewed by an estimated 150 million people in about 40 countries, provides the sort of public relations boost you can't buy, Bardo said. And as at NCCU, the folks at WCU expect it to pay off through fundraising, admissions interest and in other ways.

"The alums have been really proud of it; it's something they noticed," he said. "That will be measurable in the long run."

eric.ferreri@newsobserver.com or 919-932-2008
Peace clings to its character amid unsettling times

BY JANE STANCILL - Staff Writer

RALEIGH—The new semester is far from tranquil at Peace College, the downtown women's college steeped in rich history and loyal sisterhood.

Firings and buyouts of faculty members have come in waves since last fall, with longtime instructors and staff members leaving in significant numbers as the college reorganizes its academic programs. Last week, Debra Townsley, Peace's new president, announced that the college would expand its night school, which is open to male students. New degrees will be offered, including online-only options meant to accommodate working adults.

Meanwhile, traditions are falling by the wayside. The college has dropped its major in music and cut loose its music faculty. Chapel will still be offered, but attendance will no longer be required at the school, which has a historic association with the Presbyterian Church. The full-time chaplain was dismissed.

In December, college leaders announced that 13 professors - about one-quarter of the faculty - would take buyouts to leave Peace, including some of the most well-known and popular instructors. Six faculty members were let go last week. Some administrators have left for positions at other Triangle universities.

And more departures may be on the way. Several students said they are prepared to seek degrees elsewhere.

Ashtyn Mizelle, a first-year student from Windsor, has already started an application to N.C. State University for next year. A history major, she just learned that Peace would fold its history program into a more general liberal studies major.

"I really like it here, but all these changes - it's just too much," she said, having noticed at least one empty dorm room when she returned after the holidays. "I just know a lot of people aren't happy, and they are transferring out."

Townsley said the recent moves are designed to realign academic programs and move toward areas that have higher demand.
"Students are certainly interested in being prepared for their careers ... and that's why they came to Peace," she said last week. "They want to make sure we're keeping up with the times."

Losing its character?
The changes also have many alumnae stunned and saddened.

Some have turned to the Internet to commiserate. They set up a Facebook page called "Peace College ... Sad News for our Faculty!" It has more than 700 members.

Of those, some fear Peace could lose its identity, possibly go fully coed and become another "generic" private college. Others questioned the secrecy behind the moves and the lack of communication with students and alumnae. One woman said she was disgusted; another, simply heartbroken.

Such reaction is not unexpected at a venerable institution founded before the Civil War. Many alumnae still call themselves "Peace Girls" and remember fondly their graduation day, when they wore white dresses and tossed red roses into the campus fountain.

Much of the anger has been directed at Townsley, who arrived last summer from Nichols College in Massachusetts. Shortly after she came to Peace, she warned that shifts would be painful, but necessary.

Peace is no stranger to adapting to change. The school was founded in 1857 as an institute for girls starting in kindergarten. During a growth spurt in the 1960s and '70s, Peace ended its high school program to operate solely as a two-year junior college. Then in the mid-1990s, Peace became a four-year institution that granted bachelor's degrees.

It's unclear how large the night program will become. Townsley said it makes sense to broaden Peace's programs to appeal to adult working students, a growing segment of college-degree seekers.

"There's a big shift in higher education," said Townsley, whose husband, Michael Townsley, also has been a college administrator and wrote a book titled "Weathering Turbulent Times: The Small College Guide to Financial Health."

'Nobody's happy'
Trustees insist they are not out to remake Peace or alter its mission.

"We didn't give her marching orders," said Beth Cherry, trustee vice chairwoman and a 1972 Peace alumna from Wilmington. "Peace is a strong institution, but we wanted it to be stronger. I believe Debra has the background, knowledge, energy and expertise to take us to the next level."
Townsley, who holds a doctorate and an MBA, is credited with turning around the financial fortunes at Nichols, a business college that grew from 620 to 1,150 students in a decade. Part of the transformation included an evening and online program that offers graduate studies.

Peac will not become an online campus, said trustee Chairman Todd Robinson of Raleigh. But it is clear Peace faces deeper and longer-lasting financial challenges because of the economy, he said, and online programs can bolster the bottom line.

Robinson also stressed that Peace isn't moving to a coed model for its daytime program. "That has not been on the table, and I don't expect it will be on the table," he said. "We think we can be successful as a women's undergraduate institution."

Alexis Joynes, a first-year student from Durham, isn't convinced. She noticed a group of young men touring the campus recently and immediately suspected they were prospective students.

"It was my choice to come to an all-girls school so I could focus," she said. "If guys are coming, it kind of defeats the purpose."

First-year student Caroline Beaver isn't sure what to do. A music performance major from Salisbury, she learned from Facebook and a newspaper story that the music major would be dropped. College leaders have said any student now enrolled can finish out a degree in her major. But the full-time music faculty is gone, and Beaver said she has no interest in the new musical theater major to be offered.

And, she wonders, what will become of her $3,000 music scholarship? "I honestly don't know," Beaver said of the return to campus this week. "I just know everyone's upset; nobody's happy."

**Giving change a chance**

Penny Spangler-Lambert of Charlotte, a 1979 alumna and trustee, said she worried at first about all the upheaval. So she drove to Raleigh in a driving rainstorm last year to meet with Townsley, whom she described as smart and tough. She left the meeting convinced that economic forces have caused Peace's leaders to re-evaluate everything.

"We've got to give this person a chance," Spangler-Lambert said of Townsley. "We need to embrace change versus criticizing change."

Spangler-Lambert acknowledged that the message has not been communicated clearly enough to alumnae and students. And she pointed out that Peace's previous president, Laura Carpenter Bingham, was popular and well connected in North Carolina.

Bingham, a Peace alumna who stepped down last year after 12 years as president, declined to comment for this story.
Peace, like most private colleges, is heavily dependent on tuition from its students and income from its invested endowment fund. As stock markets fell during the recession, so did the fortunes of private colleges and universities across the U.S. Peace's endowment dropped 21 percent between 2008 and 2009 - from $48 million to $38 million, according to a study of endowments from the National Association of College and University Business Officers.

The investments have begun to recover, but trustees say the college must adapt to long-term financial challenges.

Alumnae understand about the financial challenges, said 2000 Peace graduate Jamie Averette Mitchell of Zebulon, and they're not averse to some adjustments. But, she said, "this much change is a lot to swallow."

Mitchell's former music professor sang at her wedding. It's hard to think of so many faculty departures at once, she said.

"At this point, we don't know what the vision is for Peace," she said. "We want to understand where this is going to end up."

jane.stancill@newsobserver.com or 919-829-4559
Student tracking finds limited learning in college

(AP) – Jan. 18, 2011; 9:35 a.m.

You are told that to make it life, you must go to college. You work hard to get there. You or your parents drain savings or take out huge loans to pay for it all.

And you end up learning ... not much.

A study of more than 2,300 undergraduates found 45 percent of students show no significant improvement in the key measures of critical thinking, complex reasoning and writing by the end of their sophomore years.

Not much is asked of students, either. Half did not take a single course requiring 20 pages of writing during their prior semester, and one-third did not take a single course requiring even 40 pages of reading per week.

The findings are in a new book, "Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses," by sociologists Richard Arum of New York University and Josipa Roksa of the University of Virginia. An accompanying report argues against federal mandates holding schools accountable, a prospect long feared in American higher education.

"The great thing — if you can call it that — is that it's going to spark a dialogue and focus on the actual learning issue," said David Paris, president of the New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability, which is pressing the cause in higher education. "What kind of intellectual growth are we seeing in college?"

The study, an unusually large-scale effort to track student learning over time, comes as the federal government, reformers and others argue that the U.S. must produce more college graduates to remain competitive globally. But if students aren't learning much, that calls into question whether boosting graduation rates will provide that edge.
"It's not the case that giving out more credentials is going to make the U.S. more economically competitive," Arum said in an interview. "It requires academic rigor ... You can't just get it through osmosis at these institutions."

The findings also will likely spark a debate over what helps and hurts students learn. To sum up, it's good to lead a monk's existence: Students who study alone and have heavier reading and writing loads do well.

The book is based on information from 24 schools, meant to be a representative sample, that provided Collegiate Learning Assessment data on students who took the standardized test in their first semester in fall 2005 and at the end of their sophomore years in spring 2007. The schools took part on the condition that their institutions not be identified.

The Collegiate Learning Assessment has its share of critics who say it doesn't capture learning in specialized majors or isn't a reliable measure of college performance because so many factors are beyond their control.

The research found an average-scoring student in fall 2005 scored seven percentage points higher in spring of 2007 on the assessment. In other words, those who entered college in the 50th percentile would rise to the equivalent of the 57th after their sophomore years.

Among the findings outlined in the book and report, which tracked students through four years of college:

—Overall, the picture doesn't brighten much over four years. After four years, 36 percent of students did not demonstrate significant improvement, compared to 45 percent after two.

—Students who studied alone, read and wrote more, attended more selective schools and majored in traditional arts and sciences majors posted greater learning gains.

—Social engagement generally does not help student performance. Students who spent more time studying with peers showed diminishing growth and students who spent more time in the Greek system had decreased rates of learning, while activities such as working off campus, participating in campus clubs and volunteering did not impact learning.
—Students from families with different levels of parental education enter college with different learning levels but learn at about the same rates while attending college. The racial gap between black and white students going in, however, widens: Black students improve their assessment scores at lower levels than whites.

Arum and Roksa spread the blame, pointing to students who don't study much and seek easy courses and a culture at colleges and universities that values research over good teaching.

Subsequent research found students one year out of college are not faring well: One-third moved back home, and 10 percent were unemployed. The findings are troubling news for an engaged citizenry, Arum said. Almost half of those surveyed said they rarely if ever discuss politics or public affairs with others either in person or online.

The report warns that federally mandated fixes similar to "No Child Left Behind" in K-12 education would be "counterproductive," in part because researchers are still learning how to measure learning. But it does make clear that accountability should be emphasized more at the institutional level, starting with college presidents.

Some colleges and universities do not need convincing. The University of Charleston, in West Virginia, has beefed up writing assignments in disciplines such as nursing and biology to improve learning.

President Edwin Welch is among more than 70 college and university presidents pledging to take steps to improve student learning, use evidence to improve instruction and publicize results.

"I think we do need more transparency," Welch said. "I think a student at a private institution who might go into debt for $40,000 or $50,000 has the right to know what he can learn at the institution."

Copyright © 2011 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.