THE DAILY CLIPS

January 24, 2008

News, commentary, and opinion
compiled by the East Carolina University News Bureau from:

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The New York Times
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Music meets faith

ECU organizes three-day religious arts festival at St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

By Josh Humphries
The Daily Reflector

Religious music lovers will have a chance to hear some of the country’s premiere musicians this weekend during the East Carolina Religious Arts Festival.

The three-day festival is organized by East Carolina University music professor Janette Fishell.

Free performances by Stephen Hamilton and David Briggs are set at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, where all festival events will be held. Hamilton is to perform at 8 p.m. today and Briggs at 8 p.m. Friday.

Hamilton is minister of music at the historic Church of the Holy Trinity in New York City, where he conducts the semiprofessional Holy Trinity Choir.

He is a member of the artist faculties at Hunter, Mannes, and Queens colleges.

“It is a great honor to be at this prestigious conference,” Hamilton said Wednesday before rehearsing on the large pipe organ at St. Paul’s.

“Coming from New York City, it is a great honor to play such a great instrument,” he said.

Hamilton will perform at the opening concert. He will play along with spoken word and art as part of “Le Chemin de la Croix” by Marcel Dupre.

Briggs’ performance will include improvisation on the organ during a screening of “King of Kings,” the 1927 silent film directed by Cecil B. DeMille that follows the last weeks of the life of Jesus before his crucifixion.

East Carolina University School of Music spokesman Michael Crain said that the festival, in its 12th year, draws people from as far away as Washington, D.C., and Atlanta.

Crain said typical attendees, usually around 50 people, include clergy, organists and music directors. The performances draw local music lovers and St. Paul’s parishioners, he said.

“See MUSIC, A9”

MUSIC
Continued from A1

Some church members have driven from as far away as Chapel Hill to hear performances at past religious arts festivals.

The festival will culminate in a performance Saturday led by Briggs, Leigh Sympawka, Charles Chamberlain, Tony Breuer, Ann Bonner-Stewart and other religious arts festival participants.

The festival includes workshops on conducting, organ and chorus. Registration begins today at noon.

A three-day pass is $150 for all of the festival events.

Josh Humphries can be contacted at jhumphries@coxnc.com and 329-9565.

FREE EVENTS

- 8 p.m. today — Opening festival recital: "Stations of the Cross," by Maizel-Dupre, Stephen Hamilton, recitalist

- 5 p.m. Friday — "A Feather on the Breath of God," a one-woman play about Hildegard von Bingen, Carol Anderson, actor

- 8 p.m. Friday — Silent Movie Extravaganza: Cecil B. DeMille's "King of Kings" improved organ by David Briggs

- 1:30 p.m. Saturday — Closing festival service: "King of Kings, Queen of Heaven: The Many Faces of God Celebrated in Lessons and Carols"
As super-rich get richer, some colleges feel heat

By Justin Pope
The Associated Press

New figures on university endowments confirm it's not just the "haves" and "have nots" in academe these days. Beyond the great majority of colleges, there's a growing group of the newly rich schools, and - at the top of the heap - a tiny cadre of ultra-wealthy institutions.

Among North Carolina colleges on the list, Duke was No. 15 with $3.9 billion and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and its foundations were No. 30 with $2.2 billion. Wake Forest was No. 58 with $1.2 billion and Davidson was No. 143 with $428 million.

The latest endowment figures from NACUBO, a college business officers' group, highlight the growing prosperity but also the stratification among elite universities. That development is creating tension.

There are now 76 colleges and universities with endowments that have passed $1 billion - including 16 new members of that club like Georgetown and the Universities of Oklahoma and Missouri.

But five at the top each have nearly $6 billion more than any school outside that group: Harvard ($35.6 billion), Yale ($22.5 billion), Stanford ($17.2 billion), Princeton ($15.5 billion) and the University of Texas system ($15.6 billion). The survey marks the end of the most recent fiscal year, which at most schools ended last June 30, so the numbers don't reflect the recent downturn in the stock market.

Among them, Harvard's endowment - the largest overall - expanded by an amount last year that's more than Ivy League rival Cornell has altogether. Princeton now has over $2 million in the bank for every student. Stanford raised nearly $1 billion during its last reported fiscal year alone.

There is a "tremendous dispersion in wealth from the people right at the top to the lesser ones," said Ronald Ehrenberg, an expert on higher education economics at Cornell. "It falls off very, very quickly."

The figures come at a time when the advantages of that small group of superrich schools have been a contentious topic.

There's been growing criticism from the public and some in Congress that the wealthiest schools should be dipping deep into their savings to hold down prices. But when Harvard and Yale recently announced they would do so by boosting aid for families earning well into six figures, they were criticized.

Other schools complained they would be forced to keep up by spending more on aid for wealthier students and less on students who need it most.

Harvard President Drew Gilpin Faust added to the tension by getting into an exchange with Big Ten provosts over whether ambitious science research should be left to the most elite universities. Some objected to her suggestion that it would be better for some institutions to focus on social sciences and humanities.

There's also rising resentment in higher education over faculty raiding, with wealthier schools offering salaries that poorer schools can't match.

"It's not just the very richest schools - prosperous public universities raid poorer peers, too. Some argue there's a public benefit when talented scholars gather in one place and collaborate. But there's also a cost when the schools that educate the most people lose their stars. Harvard now pays full professors on average about $177,000, compared to about $106,000 at the average public research university."

"The publics lag woefully behind the prestigious private not only in terms of faculty salaries, but in terms of their ability to attract the best graduates students and pay them competitive stipends," said Mark Yudof, chancellor of the University of Texas.

Yudof says he doesn't mind competition, and his system is better off than most - its $15.6 billion endowment is the largest by far of any public school.

But for a big university, the money doesn't go as far. Texas' funds support 900,000 students, more than 10 times the number at Harvard or Yale.

The NACUBO survey reports colleges earned on average 17.2 percent on their investments last year, with schools with $1 billion or more returning 21.3 percent, compared to 14.1 percent for schools under $25 million. Those figures are comparable to a similar survey released earlier this month by the Commonfund Institute.

Overall, institutions spent on average 46 percent of their endowments to support their operations, about the same as last year.

"I agree the anxiety is there," he said. "I think the magnitude (of wealth at the richest colleges), the scale is sometimes exaggerated because of the visibility of the schools. That doesn't mean it doesn't have a perceptual impact that's very powerful. That's what we're dealing with."

Sen. Charles Grassley, the Iowa Republican who has pressured wealthy colleges to spend more, called on them to do just that in a statement responding to the survey.

"Based on the new numbers, a 5 percent payout requirement wouldn't break the bank," he said. "It seems a lot of these schools could go beyond 5 percent and consider a payout commensurate with their rate of endowment growth over time. That would offer real relief for low- and middle-income families."

David Ward, outgoing president of the American Council on Education, an umbrella group that lobbies for colleges in Washington, said he worries the focus on the wealthiest schools distracts the public. In fact, most colleges are much more hand-to-mouth, and state funding will likely take a hit this year with the economic slowdown.

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PCC construction projects moving on schedule

By Jimmy Ryals
The Daily Reflector

Construction on a series of projects continues at Pitt Community College.

The Craig Goess Student Center is on schedule and within its budget, with work 9 percent complete, according to a construction update given Tuesday to the PCC Board of Trustees at its regular meeting.

Officials broke ground on the Goess center, a $5.7 million facility, in November. Workers are pouring concrete on the building’s foundation, and the steel structure should begin taking shape in the coming weeks, said Susan Everett, vice president of administrative services.

Work finished on a renovation of the Greenville Center — the former MacThrift Building on Memorial Boulevard — last week, in other PCC construction news.

Something to say?
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The face-lift, which cost more than $200,000, added seven classrooms to the center, which houses many of PCC’s continuing education programs.

The renovation “greatly enhances what we can do with continuing (education) classes,” Vice President for Institutional Advancement Susan Nobles said Wednesday. “We are so pleased with that facility.”

Classes at the Greenville Center will resume Feb. 1, and an open house will follow at 1 p.m. Feb. 15, Everett said.

With Pitt County Commissioner Beth Ward in attendance, the facilities discussion Tuesday also touched on forthcoming revenue from a half-cent sales tax increase approved by county voters in November.

It’s unclear how much funding PCC will get from the increase, which goes into effect April 1.

The county will raise some $4 to $5 million annually for public school and PCC construction, according to county estimates.

PCC officials haven’t made a proposal for funding to County Manager Scott Elliott, but “we hope to have an opportunity to do that this spring,” Everett said.

PCC has $89 million in construction needs, according to an August 2008 facility analysis.

Jimmy Ryals can be contacted at fryals@coxnc.com and 329-9568.
Immigrants' medicines a common cause of lead poisoning in children
By Monica Rhor
The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Maria didn’t mean to poison her children. Quite the opposite.

Worried about her daughters’ lack of appetite, the young Houston mother was merely following her grandmother’s advice when she gave the two girls and a niece a dose of “greta” — a Mexican folk medicine used to treat children’s stomach ailments.

What Maria, who asked that her last name not be used, did not know then, but now will never forget, is that the bright orange powder is nearly 90 percent lead.

Fortunately, doctors detected the dangerously high levels of the toxic metal in the little girls’ blood during a routine checkup a week later.

But others are not so lucky. Health departments around the country say traditional medicines used by many immigrants from Latin America, India and other parts of Asia are the second most common source of lead poisoning in the U.S. — surpassed only by lead paint — and may account for tens of thousands of such cases among children each year.

Dozens of adults and children have become gravely ill or died after taking lead-laden medicine over the past eight years, according to federal and local health officials.

The dangerous medicines are manufactured outside the United States and sold in the U.S. by folk healers known as curanderas and in ethnic grocery stores and neighborhood shops that offer herbs and charms. They are usually brought into the country by travelers in their suitcases, thereby slipping past government regulators.

“No one’s testing these medications,” said Dr. Stefanos Kales, an assistant professor of environmental health at the Harvard School of Public Health who researched the problem. “There’s no guarantee it doesn’t have dangerous levels of lead.”

Lead is added to many of the concoctions because of its supposed curative properties, even though doctors say it has no proven medical benefits. In other cases, powders and pills become contaminated with lead from soil or through the manufacturing process.

“Instead of doing something good for them, I did them more harm,” said Maria, whose children have shown no ill effects. “I was so afraid of all the things that could happen to them. It was a terrible experience.”

In Harris County, which includes Houston, traditional medicines are blamed for nearly one-fifth of all cases in which children were found to have high levels of lead. In Arizona, home remedies account for one-fourth of childhood lead poisoning cases.

In Texas, California and Arizona, lead poisoning has been traced to Mexican remedies such as greta, azarcon and rueda — powders that are given to treat constipation in children and contain as much as 90 percent lead. In New York City and Rhode Island, high lead levels in the blood have been tied to litargirio, a powder containing up to 79 percent lead. It is used by Dominican immigrants for such ills as foot fungus and body odor.

Dangerous amounts of lead have also been found in ayurvedic medicines, which are used in India and commonly found in South Asian immigrant communities in New York, Chicago and Houston. These medicines include ghasarad, a brown powder given to relieve constipation in babies, and mahayogaja guggulu, for high blood pressure.

Traditional medicines may account for up to 30 percent of all childhood lead poisoning cases in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates 240,000 U.S. children were diagnosed with high blood lead levels in 2004 to 2006.

Many more cases are almost certainly going undetected. Only 14 percent of children are tested for lead nationwide. And the source of lead often cannot be traced in cases where paint is not the culprit.

“I don’t think anyone has a good handle on the exact prevalence of use,” Kales said. “I’m sure it’s underreported because doctors don’t generally ask about this and patients don’t report it.”

The use of folk medicine is rooted in generations-old cultural traditions. Ayurvedic medicine, for example, originated more than 2,000 years ago in India, where 80 percent of the population uses it.

“People think, well, my grandmother did it, so it’s not a problem. It’s extremely hard to change cultures and beliefs,” said Brenda Reyes with the Houston Health Department.

In Houston, where one in four residents is foreign-born, Health Department officials routinely pay undercover visits to herbalist stores and try to buy remedies known to contain lead. Often, however, storekeepers are reluctant to admit they carry the medicine, bringing them out only when they know the customer, Reyes said.

In Houston and other places, health authorities can do little more than ask stores to take such products off their shelves.

In a 2004 study that found high concentrations of lead in ayurvedic medicine, Boston University researcher Robert Saper bought 70 different ayurvedic remedies at 30 stores within a 20-mile radius of Boston City Hall. One in five contained potentially harmful levels of lead, mercury
and arsenic.

After Saper’s study was released, health inspectors in Houston, Chicago, San Francisco and New York City conducted sweeps, and also discovered dangerous ayurvedic remedies on store shelves.

Lead poisoning can cause lethargy, confusion, learning problems and convulsions, and in severe cases can lead to irreversible brain damage and death. In severe cases, children are often given oral medication to reduce the lead in their bodies, or undergo chelation therapy, which captures lead in the blood and allows it to be removed through urination.

Patients sickened by home remedies often have more serious cases of lead poisoning than those poisoned from other sources because the medicines frequently contain extremely high concentrations of lead and are deliberately swallowed, said Mary Jean Brown, chief of the CDC’s lead poisoning prevention branch.

In 2004, the CDC reported 12 cases of lead poisoning associated with ayurvedic remedies in Texas, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York and California. In one case, a 37-year-old woman, hospitalized with abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting, reported taking five different traditional medications for rheumatoid arthritis.

Many state and local health departments have issued warnings about lead in folk medicines, and sometimes use questionnaires to screen youngsters in poor neighborhoods and immigrant communities for lead poisoning from folk remedies. The Food and Drug Administration has also issued alerts about certain medicines, including litargiro.

Maria is doing her best to spread the word about the dangers.

“I told everyone in my family, all my friends, not to use this anymore, not to give your children anything if you don’t know what’s in it,” said Maria, who purchased greta during a visit to her hometown in Mexico.

Maria gave each of the girls less than a teaspoon of greta — enough to send their blood lead levels well over the safe limit. A year later, their levels are still high, but inching closer to the acceptable range. The amount in their systems was not high enough to require any treatment.
Study: Too many adults skipping vaccinations

By Larren Neergaard
The Associated Press
Washington

Vaccines aren’t just for kids, but far too few grown-ups are rolling up their sleeves, disappointed federal health officials reported Wednesday.

The numbers of newly vaccinated are surprisingly low, considering how much public attention a trio of new shots — which protect against shingles, whooping cough and cervical cancer — received in recent years.

Yet many seem to have missed, or forgotten, the news.

A survey by the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases found that aside from the flu, most adults have trouble even naming diseases that they could prevent with a simple inoculation.

“There are not yet very many adults taking full advantage of the great advancements in prevention that have been made in the past few years,” said Dr. Anne Schuchat of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “By skipping vaccination, people are leaving themselves needlessly vulnerable to significant illness, long-term suffering and even death.”

The new CDC report found:

■ Only about 2 percent of Americans 60 and older received a vaccine against shingles in its first year of sales. Yet there are more than 1 million new cases of shingles, an excruciating rite of aging, each year. Up to 200,000 shingles sufferers get a particularly bad type of nerve pain that can persist for months or even years. Anyone who ever had chickenpox is at risk, especially once they hit their 60s.

■ About 2 percent of adults ages 18 to 64 got a booster shot against whooping cough in the two years since it hit the market. The cough so strong it can break a rib is making a big comeback, because the vaccine given to babies and toddlers starts wearing off by adolescence.

Older patients usually recover, but whooping cough can cause weeks of misery. Worse, those people can easily spread the illness to not-yet-vaccinated infants, who are at risk of dying from the bacterial infection, also called pertussis.

The booster was added to another shot long recommended for adults, a combination booster against tetanus and diphtheria. The new triple combo is called “Tdap.”

■ About 10 percent of women ages 18 to 26 have received at least one dose of a three-shot series that protects against the human papillo-

mavirus, or HPV, that causes cervical cancer.

Price has to be part of the reason: The shingles shot costs around $150, and the three-shot HPV vaccine about $300, and insurance coverage varies.

There’s no national program to guarantee access for adults who can’t afford vaccines as there is for child vaccines.

But cost can’t be the main reason: Adults aren’t taking full advantage of some cheap old standby vaccines, either. CDC statistics show that only about 69 percent of senior citizens receive the flu shot; 66 percent have had a one-time pneumonia vaccine; and 44 percent had received a tetanus shot in the past 10 years.
UNC raises $2.38 billion

Carolina First has meant 773 scholarships and 208 endowed professorships.

By Jane Stancill
Staff Writer

Chapel Hill — UNC-Chapel Hill has wrapped up its eight-year fundraising campaign, reeling in $2.38 billion in donations, the university said Wednesday.

The Carolina First campaign is the fifth-largest completed fundraising drive by a U.S. university, slightly surpassing Duke University's $2.36 billion campaign, which ended in 2003.

"It has been a huge stimulus to create and sustain momentum on this campus," said UNC-CH Chancellor James Moeser, who will retire this year and estimates he spent 40 to 60 percent of his time as chancellor on the campaign.

The final gift, which will be announced at a trustee meeting today, was a pledge of $9 million from Fred Eshelman, CEO of Wilmington-based PPD Inc., a global research company. The pledge will go to the School of Pharmacy.

Donations are increasingly important to public universities, which compete head to head for students and faculty with private universities that have deeper pockets and hestier investments.

"Private giving is the margin of excellence," Moeser said. "It's the difference between being good and great."

UNC-CH's fifth-largest campaign record probably won't last long. Sixty-eight campuses in the United States have completed or are currently raising more than $1 billion, according to The Chronicle of Higher Education. That goal used to be out of reach for all but the wealthiest Ivy League schools. Now, three universities — Columbia, Cornell and Stanford — are in the hunt for $4 billion in donations.

"The question is, when are we going to see the first $5 billion campaign?" asked Rae Goldsmith, vice president for communications at the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

"They're astronomical numbers, but when you think about what these campaigns are doing in terms of facilities, research and scholarships, they are transformative."

See UNC Money, Page 10A
UNC MONEY
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

The money will go to faculty and student support, building improvements, research and new priorities such as genomics, environmental programs and infectious diseases.

Millions for students

Students are already reaping the benefits. About $345 million was earmarked for 773 student fellowships and scholarships, including the Carolina Covenant program, which provides a debt-free education to students from poor families.

About $419 million will go to faculty, largely for the creation of 208 new endowed professorships. These are invested funds that produce annual earnings that help pay professors' salaries. The awards, which are matched with state money, will help the university keep and attract star faculty.

Earlier this week, the university honored its recent Nobel Prize winner, Oliver Smithies, with a $3 million eminent professorship that will be named for donors Van and Kay Weatherpoon. "We wanted to find a way to both honor him and further enable his research," said Dr. Bill Roper, CEO of the UNC Health Care System and dean of the UNC School of Medicine.

Spreading it around

The professorships won't only go to international superstars. The university also has the latitude to use endowed chairs to hire junior professors, said Holden Thorp, dean of UNC-CH's College of Arts and Sciences. For example, an anonymous gift for the honors program will go to the creation of five new faculty positions.

"That allows us to expand the faculty without any public money," Thorp said.

The private money goes for initiatives that could not realistically be paid for with state money, things like scholarships to pay for study abroad programs. "That's a really big thing that benefits students," Thorp said.

Nick Anderson, a UNC-CH junior from Weston, Conn., has had an interesting college career thanks to the university's private support. He is a Robertson Scholar, the unique joint scholarship program between UNC-CH and Duke financed by a $24 million gift from Wall Street investment manager Julian Robertson and his wife Josie.

Last summer, Anderson received a public service fellowship funded by 1975 alumnus Donald P. Kanak. He used the grant to install solar panels at a small school in rural Argentina. He also helped the people establish small entrepreneurial projects - a chicken coop and a vegetable garden - to provide income for the school.

"I learned a lot," Anderson said. "It was probably one of the most incredible experiences I've had in my life."

Art for the masses

Private money also helped put a new focus on the arts at UNC-CH. A $10 million endowment supports the Carolina Performing Arts, which brings performances from around the world to the newly renovated Memorial Hall. Students can attend performances for a $10 fee, and last month more than 1,000 saw the ballet there, said Emil Kang, executive director of the arts at the university.

"The only way we can afford to do that is by raising funds for our program," Kang said.

At the medical school and hospital, Roper said, the initial goal was $350 million. In the end, more than $600 million was raised for medical programs.

"In many respects it is the most precious resource we have," Roper said of the private dollars. "It allows us to stretch to do the things that we otherwise just couldn't do."

$2.38 billion
Total raised

$1.8 billion
Original goal of the campaign

8
Years the campaign spanned

193,000
Number of donors

773
Number of student scholarships and fellowships created

208
Number of endowed professorships created

$184 million
Amount raised for buildings

$243 million
Amount raised for athletics

36
Percentage of total given by alumni
Anti-rejection breakthrough aids organ recipients

BY ALICIA CHANG
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — In what is being called a major advance in organ transplants, doctors say they have developed a technique that could free many patients from having to take anti-rejection drugs for the rest of their lives.

The treatment involved weakening the patient's immune system, then giving the recipient bone marrow from the person who donated the organ. In one experiment, four of five kidney recipients were off immune-suppressing medicines up to five years later.

“There’s reason to hope these patients will be off drugs for the rest of their lives,” said Dr. David Sachs of Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, who led the research published in today’s New England Journal of Medicine.

Eliminating the need for anti-rejection drugs is “a huge advance,” said Dr. Suzanne Ildstad, a University of Louisville immunology specialist who had no role in the work.

“It still needs some fine-tuning so that everyone who gets treated gets the same consistent outcome. ... It’s not the holy grail of tolerance yet,” she cautioned.

The results do not mean that it is safe for current transplant patients to go off their medicines, doctors warn.

In the 1990s, Sachs showed the treatment could work in a kidney recipient who was a good genetic match. The woman, who had an organ and marrow transplant in 1998, has not needed anti-rejection drugs for a decade.

The new study involved five people who got kidneys from parents or siblings who had slightly different tissue types from the patients. Since many kidney transplants are similarly mismatched, there is hope more people might one day be spared immune-suppressing drugs.

Doctors have experimented with giving marrow before, during or after organ transplants, while also tinkering with patients’ immune systems to prime them to accept the new organs.

Sachs’ treatment involved weakening each kidney patient’s immune system with intravenous drugs several days before the transplant. After the transplant, the patient got an infusion of marrow from the donor to create a new immune system.

The stem cells from the marrow reprogram the body by allowing new immune cells to grow that don’t try to attack the donated organ.

The patients took anti-rejection drugs but were weaned several months later.

Four of the five patients developed a hybrid immune system — where recipient and donor cells live together in the body — for a short time. They were able to stop taking anti-rejection drugs and had healthy kidney function two to five years later.

In the one case that failed, the patient had a second kidney transplant and has been on medications since.

DRUGS’ DRAWBACKS

Immune-suppressing drugs are used to prevent organ rejection, but they also have drawbacks:

THEY’RE PERMANENT: Most transplant patients must take the drugs the rest of their lives.

RISKS: They raise the risk of cancer, kidney failure, diabetes, infections and other problems.

SIDE EFFECTS: They can cause side effects including excessive hair growth, bloating and tremors.

SOURCES: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, THE NEW YORK TIMES
Rich colleges’ piles of cash cause tension

BY JUSTIN POPEN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

New figures on university endowments confirm it’s not just the haves and have-nots in academia these days. Beyond the great majority of colleges, there’s a growing group of the newly rich schools and — at the top of the heap — a tiny cadre of ultra-wealthy institutions.

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But five at the top all have nearly $6 billion more than any school outside that group: Harvard ($35.6 billion), Yale ($22.5 billion), Stanford ($17.2 billion), Princeton ($15.8 billion) and the University of Texas system ($15.6 billion).

The survey marks the end of the most recent fiscal year, which at most schools ended June 30, so the numbers don’t reflect the recent downturn in the stock market.

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There is a “tremendous” difference in wealth from the schools at the top to those below them, said Ronald Ehrenberg, an expert on higher education economics at Cornell. “It falls off very, very quickly.”

The figures come at a time when the advantages of that small group of super-rich schools have been a contentious topic.

There has been growing criticism from the public and some in Congress that the wealthiest schools should be dipping deep into their savings to hold down prices. But when Harvard and Yale recently announced they would do so by boosting aid for families earning well into six figures, they were sharply criticized.

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There’s also rising resentment in higher education over faculty raiding. Wealthy colleges offer salaries that poorer schools can’t possibly match.

It’s not just the very richest schools — prosperous public universities raid poorer peers, too. Some argue there’s a public benefit when talented scholars gather in one place and collaborate. But there’s also a cost when the schools that educate the most people lose their stars. Harvard now pays full professors on average about $177,000, compared to about $106,000 at the average public research university.

“The publics lag woefully behind the prestigious privates not only in terms of faculty salaries, but in terms of their ability to attract the best graduate students and pay them competitive stipends,” said Mark Yudof, chancellor of the University of Texas.

Yudof says he doesn’t mind competition, and his system is better off than most — its $15.6 billion endowment is the largest by far of any public university.

But for a big university, the money doesn’t go as far. Texas’ funds support 300,000 students, more than 10 times the number at schools such as Harvard and Yale.

THE TOP FIVE

Top endowments as of the end of the most recent fiscal year, which at most schools ended June 30:

HARVARD: $35.6 billion

YALE: $22.5 billion

STANFORD: $17.2 billion

PRINCETON: $15.8 billion

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM: $15.6 billion

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
N.C. slow to change its health habits

North Carolinians are apparently slow learners when it comes to their health. The state's residents remain far too inactive and fat, and too many of us still use tobacco, according to N.C. Prevention Partners, which on Wednesday released a report card grading health and prevention measures.

The state's overall grades were unchanged from the last report card, issued in 2005. Here's how the state's residents measured up in the subjects of nutrition, exercise and tobacco use:
Former coach sues Duke

Slander claimed in lacrosse fallout

BY ANNE BLYTHE
STAFF WRITER

DURHAM - Mike Pressler, the former Duke lacrosse coach, filed a lawsuit suit Wednesday in Durham County court against his former employer and John Burness, the university's chief spokesman.

Attorneys for the fired coach announced their plans last week to pursue the slander case. The suit also makes libel claims.

"As we have said before, Mr. Pressler reached a fair and final financial settlement with Duke University in 2007. There is no merit to this lawsuit, and it is yet another attempt to reopen a settled matter," Pamela Bernard, vice president and general counsel for Duke, said in a statement released late Wednesday.

Pressler lost his job at Duke several weeks after his 2006 team's infamous spring break party, which gave rise to gang-rape charges against three players. The players were exonerated and declared innocent a year later.

Last week in Durham County court, Jay Trehy and Don Strickland, the lawyers representing Pressler, withdrew their request for a judge to rescind a settlement agreement between Pressler and Duke so they could pursue the slander and libel case.

Pressler has alleged that Burness, Duke's senior vice president of public affairs and government relations, made slanderous, libelous and defamatory remarks about him to the news media.

In court last week, lawyers representing Duke vowed to fight the suit.

John M. Simpson, a lawyer representing Duke, argued that any case by Pressler against his former employer should go through arbitration first.

Simpson argued that when Pressler started at Duke in 1990, he signed an agreement to go through an arbitration process with any employment complaints.

Trehy argued last week that Pressler could not be held to that agreement in a slander case because the remarks came after his employment at Duke had ended.

Pressler reached a confidential financial settlement with Duke last spring after the players were cleared of all charges.

Since losing his job in April 2006, Pressler has written and promoted a book about the lacrosse case. He now coaches at Bryant University in Rhode Island.
Bravo for Yale and Harvard, but what about the rest?

By Robert J. Birgeneau

How much should a family pay for a college education? Harvard University focused the discussion on college costs with its bold announcement that it is extending financial aid to families earning from $120,000 to $180,000 a year. Costs for tuition, fees and room and board will be capped at about 10% of family income. Following Harvard's lead, Yale and other elite private universities are responding with various measures to extend financial aid to more students.

The vast majority of Americans, however, are educated in universities that cannot provide the financial aid packages of private universities with large endowments. Ironically, it could become more expensive for a student from a family of low or moderate means to attend a public university than for a student from a well-to-do family to attend a private college.

The solution to this dilemma lies in new public-private partnerships to create endowments that will ensure access for all students, regardless of family income, to attend public universities.

The situation at the University of California, Berkeley, where I am chancellor, is illustrative. The total cost of attending Berkeley is about $25,000 a year. That cost is much lower than the $45,000 typical of Harvard and similar institutions.

Public college dilemma

Because many more Berkeley students need aid, and because sources are more limited, the price for our students can be significant. Harvard's new cutoff point for aid is a family income of $180,000 a year; Berkeley's is about $90,000. Consequently, a family with an income of $180,000 will pay $18,000 to attend Harvard, while one with an income of $90,000 pays about $25,000 to attend Berkeley.

Ivy League institutions educate less than 1% of the U.S. college population, compared with 75% for public colleges and universities. Public universities have been the nation's single most powerful engine for prosperity for millions of students from middle- and low-income families. Yet, the costs of public education are growing rapidly.

At Berkeley, a third of our students come from families with incomes less than $40,000 a year. These students qualify for federal Pell Grants to assist their education. The comparable percentage of Pell Grant students in wealthy elite private schools such as Harvard, Princeton and Yale is about 10%, and the absolute numbers are very small.

Poor students will suffer

For students from the poorest families, we provide a $17,000 grant, lowering the cost to $8,000 a year. But based on sources of aid, we project that in 10 years these students will have to contribute $16,000 or more.

What are our options? Many politicians want to freeze or roll back tuition and fees. But this is the worst option for poor families. Tuition and fee increases generate additional funding for aid that insulates poor families and can help them cover other cost increases. In California, as in many states, if tuition and fees are frozen, then so is the amount of money available for financial aid.

Public universities need a new model for financial aid. A public-private partnership would be most effective. As an extreme example, if each of Berkeley's 420,000 living alumni were to give a one-time donation of $1,000, and if that donation were matched by the state, an endowment could be created at Berkeley that would ensure access for the indefinite future for students from the poorest families as well as those from the middle class.

Public education and universal access for our brightest students, irrespective of their ability to pay, has been one of the most important social concepts that has made America great. Financial aid for low- and middle-income students is one of the best investments we can make in our country's future.

Robert J. Birgeneau is chancellor of the University of California, Berkeley.
Employers want new way to judge graduates

Survey: Application of skills more telling than college grades

By Mary Beth Marklein
USA TODAY

Colleges have been scrambling over the past year to respond to recommenda-
tions from a national commission that they be clearer to the public about what
students have learned by the time they graduate.

Sometime in the next several weeks, for example, a national online initiative
will be launched that allows families to compare colleges on measures such as
whether they improve a student's critical-thinking skills.

Tools for such measurements were recommended by the national commission,
which was created by Education Secretary Margaret Spellings. The group
released its recommendations in late 2006.

Now, a sampling of the nation's employers have weighed in. And they are not
terribly impressed.

The survey of 301 business leaders nationwide suggests that colleges find ways
to assess a student's ability to apply college learning to real-world settings.

Forget transcripts, multiple-choice tests or institutional scores. The surveyed
business leaders want faculty assessment of internships, senior projects or commu-

"Too many policymakers and educational leaders are focused on the tests rather than on what is really important: whether students are learning what they need to know."

-- Roberts Jones, president, Education & Workforce Policy