Members of the staff and guests mingle during an open house in The Center for Science, Mathematics, and Technology Education in East Carolina University's Building 159 on Cotanche Street Monday, Jan. 24, 2011. The center unveiled a lending library and virtual collaboration network for teachers called TeachNET. (Justin Falls/The Daily Reflector)

ECU center holds grand re-opening
By Jackie Drake
The Daily Reflector
Tuesday, January 25, 2011

It's not often an organization holds a grand opening after 25 years of existence, but the Center for Science, Mathematics and Technology Education at East Carolina University has two reasons to do so.

Located at Cotanche and Fourth streets in downtown Greenville, the center held an open house Monday afternoon to announce the launch of two new special programs for area public school teachers.

A lending library allows teachers to borrow expensive science and math materials for their classrooms for free, and an online social networking platform called TeachNET provides a way to collaborate and communicate with other teachers and ECU faculty.

The center will continue to serve more than 20 counties in eastern North Carolina, providing seminars and classes for teachers to earn required continuing education units.

The center's vision is to leverage the resources of the University of North Carolina system, in partnership with schools and the N.C. Department of Public Instruction, to enrich the professional knowledge and skills of mathematics and science teachers across the state and to promote mathematics and scientific literacy among all students.

During the past year, the center has undergone a redesign to both its offerings and its facilities and is now ready to do more as a regional focal point to bring math and science teachers together and share ideas and resources.
The lending library provides teachers free access to reference books, lesson plans, calculators, geometric block kits, compasses, protractors and more. A second storage room for materials is off site, but availability can be viewed in an online inventory.

“It's a library, but it's more than just books,” Roger Conner, media and communications director for the center, said. “It's supplies and materials that teachers may not have or schools may not have money to purchase.”

TeachNET allows teachers from Pitt and surrounding counties to share activity ideas, lesson plans and best practices with other teachers.

“It's like Facebook with lesson plans,” Conner said.

Like Facebook and other popular online social networking platforms, teachers each have a personal profile and can create groups and events by interest area. ECU faculty are part of the network, and the university's math and science experts are available to answer questions.

“The center's been around about 25 years. We've morphed a little, but our mission is still pretty much the same,” interim director Margaret Wirth said. “We're improving the quality and quantity of math and science teachers.”

“We've always provided professional development for teachers, but now we're offering more programs and resources for them,” said Susan Ganter, chairwoman of the Department of Mathematics, Science and Instructional Technology Education. “We're very excited. We're refocusing our energy and want everyone to know what we do.”

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LITTLEFIELD — Tony Collins touched on a variety of subjects while speaking at Ayden-Grifton High School on Monday, but his message had a common theme.

That theme was opportunity.

The former East Carolina and NFL running back provided insight on recruiting to the 25 or so high-school athletes in attendance. Collins, who works for National Collegiate Scouting Association, said recruiting is a complicated and multi-faceted process, but athletes need to make the most of their opportunities — even if that requires them stepping out of their comfort zone.

He said the process begins with education.

“If you don't know what your grade point average is right now, go to your guidance counselor at school and ask them, ‘What is my grade point average?’” Collins said. “Because if a college coach comes to talk to you and you don't know your grade point average, the first thing we're going to think is this kid isn't serious about school because he doesn't even know what his grade point average is.

“I go to a lot of schools where the athlete knows how many touchdowns he's rushed for and how many yards he has, but he doesn't know his grade point average.”

Collins shared his experiences with recruiting both as a player and as a father, citing that he made many mistakes with the latter.
He mentioned statistics about recruiting, like the fact that less than one percent of high-school athletes play at the Division I level. But he said that 96 percent of the athletes that enroll in the NCSA program receive scholarships.

NCSA urges athletes to look at all scholarship avenues, specifically non-Division I programs.

“We don't want to send a Division III player to a Division I school,” he said. “They don't play. They'll sit the bench for four years.”

Collins prepped at Penn Yan Academy in New York and later became the first person from that school to be selected in the NFL draft when he was picked by the New England Patriots in the second round in 1981.

He set up his NFL career by having a standout junior season at ECU. But he admitted that he stopped going to class once he realized he was NFL material, which he said was one of the biggest mistakes of his life.

“I didn't know what I had,” said Collins, who recently completed his degree. “I was fortunate enough to be able to play football, but I want you take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way. Opportunities are going to come and they are going to go, and if you're not ready when they come they will just pass you right by.”

A-G Athletics Director Chris Ross, who had multiple phone conversations with Collins leading up to the event, said Collins' words were effective.

“As coaches and athletic directors, we can say things and they get old and redundant,” Ross said. “To have somebody new and somebody fresh, it means more sometimes when it's coming from someone who has achieved notoriety like Tony has.”

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Suspect says he made $250,000 at NCSU selling marijuana

BY THOMASI MCDONALD - Staff Writer

RALEIGH–A recent N.C. State University student who told law enforcement officials that he made $250,000 in the past year selling marijuana to fellow students has been charged with drug trafficking.

Robert Harrell Bass Jr. was stopped this month by an Oklahoma state trooper, who found 26 pounds of marijuana in the minivan Bass was driving, according to a search warrant made public Monday.

Bass, a junior, was enrolled at NCSU in the fall but did not register for the current semester, said Keith Nichols, a university spokesman.

$26,123 in cash found

After his arrest in the Jan. 8 traffic stop, Bass told the Oklahoma trooper that he had picked up the marijuana from someone in Humboldt, Calif., after wiring the person $70,000, court records show. Bass told the trooper that he and a friend flew to California to pick up the marijuana. The friend, whom Bass called "Ben Van," rented a white, 2010 Dodge Caravan, court records show. The friend flew back to Raleigh and left Bass to drive the van, Bass said.

The state trooper told Bass that he was being charged with drug trafficking and that his bail would be about $25,000. Bass replied that he had that amount of cash on hand at his house, 1251/2 Chamberlain Street in Raleigh. Then, the state trooper said, Bass called his roommate to verify the cash on hand and asked him to remove it from a safe at the home, court records show.

Bass also told the trooper that he had made about $250,000 peddling marijuana to other students over the past year, court record shows.

The Oklahoma trooper contacted Raleigh police and told them what Bass had said. Last week, Raleigh police searched Bass' residence and a silver, 2001 Toyota Camry parked at the home. Investigators found $26,123 in cash, nearly 60 grams of marijuana, drug paraphernalia, a desktop computer, bank bags and notebooks, court records show. Raleigh police are awaiting Bass's extradition from Oklahoma.

Nichols, the NCSU spokesman, said the university would not take any disciplinary action against Bass because he is not enrolled as a student.

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GWU launches online prep school
By Daniel de Vise
Washington Post Staff Writer
Saturday, January 22, 2011; 6:31 PM

George Washington University has opened a private college-preparatory high school that will operate entirely online, one of the nation's first "virtual" secondary schools to be affiliated with a major research university.

The opening of a laboratory-style school under the banner of a prestigious university generally counts as a major event among parents of the college-bound. The George Washington University Online High School, a partnership with the online learning company K12 Inc., is competing with brick-and-mortar prep schools and with a small but growing community of experimental online schools attached to major universities.

Online learning may be the next logical step in the evolution of university "lab" schools, an ongoing experiment in pedagogy. Online instruction holds the potential to transcend the factory model of traditional public education, allowing students to learn at their own pace. In the ideal online classroom, no lesson is ever too fast or too slow, and no one ever falls behind.

But it's not for everyone. It's unclear how adolescents will fare in an online school, an academic model that typically requires students to take charge of their own learning. Online programs are better established among career-oriented colleges serving adults.

"It takes a lot of dedication to get yourself up early in the morning, because you don't have a bell ringing in the hallway to tell you your classes are starting," said McKenna Tucker, 16, a sophomore at the new school who lives in Tennessee.

Classes started Tuesday with 16 students studying in nine states, none of them local. There are plans to enroll more students and add a 12th grade in fall. Annual tuition is $9,995. Many of the first students, including Tucker, are children of K12 employees. The private company, based in Herndon, will operate the school, and the university will oversee and study it.

"Whether it actually is superior, and whether it works for all kids, some kids or most kids, that's a research question we don't have an answer to yet," said Michael Feuer, dean of the university's Graduate School of Education and Human Development. "This project is going to be something that contributes to that body of knowledge."

The latest federal data show enrollment in computer-based distance learning grew from 317,070 in the 2003 academic year to 506,950 in 2005 among public schools. Online
high schools have opened in Michigan, Arizona, Wisconsin, Oregon and California, among other states. Some are charter schools, public but governed by independent boards.

Stanford University in 2006 opened the first online high school for gifted students, exploiting the potential of online instruction to allow advanced students to work ahead of their peers or study material not covered in traditional schools.

The new GWU school is ostensibly a competitor, although it is not being marketed as a school for the gifted.

K12 says it offers more than 100 custom-designed courses that range from regular grade-level classes to honors and college-level Advanced Placement instruction. Students may choose concentrations in liberal arts, science and technology or business and entrepreneurship.

"What we're looking for are hardworking, motivated, interesting kids," said Barbara Brueggemann, the head of school.

Students are taught in small online "virtual classrooms" that, depending on the lesson, might link them and their teacher by audio, video, text-message or e-mail. There is no online gym or band, but school officials say the curriculum is flexible enough that students can easily make time for athletics and arts.

Online schools around the nation have prospered or perished largely on the strength of their programs, just like traditional schools, said Tracy Gray, director of the National Center for Technology Innovation in Washington.

"We still don't really know enough about for whom this works, under what conditions, and when does it work," she said. But research suggests that online learning is a safe choice for an ambitious, college-bound student likely to enroll at the GWU school: "Those students tend to be highly motivated and self-directed," she said.
January 23, 2011

Business Schools With a Social Appeal
By D.D. GUTTENPLAN

LONDON — Business schools can be cutthroat places. After struggling to gain admission to the top schools, students compete for grades and the best work placements. Meanwhile, the schools themselves jostle for position in the various global rankings, competing in order to attract the most able students. But in the never-ending battle for dominance, one London business school has decided to appeal not to potential students’ wallets, but to their consciences.

Starting in September, the Hult International Business School will offer a master’s degree in social entrepreneurship. The Hult president, Stephen Hodges, said that the new program, which is “based on the principle that social problems can be tackled in similar ways to business problems,” grew out of the enormous response to the Hult Global Case Challenge, a competition that tackles social problems “through crowd-sourcing innovative ideas and solutions from the world’s best and brightest business school students.”

“One of our students, Ahmad Ashkar, organized the first competition last year,” Dr. Hodges said in an interview. “This was an entirely student-led activity. The school provided no support whatsoever. In the end there were teams from 100 different business schools who donated their time and expertise to helping One Laptop per Child — the charity that brings inexpensive computers to the third world. It made us realize that there is a tremendous appetite for this. Today’s business students are far more socially aware than their predecessors.”

Acknowledging that “a competition to address the problems of British Airways,” for example, wouldn’t generate the same level of student interest, the school decided to back the student challenge by donating $1 million to implement this year’s winning idea. At the same time, Hult found that “an increasing portion of our applicants weren’t interested in consulting or investment banking,” Dr. Hodges said. “They were aiming at careers in non-governmental organizations or hoped to start social enterprises.”

Though the one-year social entrepreneurship masters will only be offered in London this year, the school plans to roll out the program at all of its locations, beginning next year in San Francisco. Hult, which was founded by Arthur D. Little, a consulting firm based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1964, then taken over by the Swedish entrepreneur Bertil Hult, now has campuses in Dubai and Shanghai in addition to London, Boston and San Francisco.

Hult is hardly the first business school to try to leverage idealism. Tony Sheldon, who runs the Program on Social Enterprise at Yale’s School of Management, or S.O.M.,
points out that when it was founded in 1976, “S.O.M.” originally stood for School of Organization and Management. The school has long been a magnet for students seeking careers in the nonprofit sector.

“We didn’t even call our degrees M.B.A.’s,” he said. “A lot of companies now, and a lot of business schools, have adopted the vocabulary of social enterprise. The dangers are that it becomes just a marketing ploy, rather than an expression of purpose.”

Mr. Sheldon welcomed the Hult program. “Even if most of their graduates don’t start new social enterprises, there are also ways to effect change, even inside multinational corporations, by influencing things like the supply chain or purchasing decisions on issues like child labor or the company’s human resource policy or the effects on the environment of the production process.”

An expert in microfinance who has consulted for the World Bank, the New York City Financial Services Corporation and the Ford Foundation, Mr. Sheldon said that genuine social enterprise needed to “enhance the productive capacity” of its clients. “There’s a lot of hype about targeting ‘the bottom of the pyramid,’” he said. “But we need to ask where the profits flow as well as who the customers are.”

“Social entrepreneurship is a little like pornography,” Mr. Sheldon said. “It’s hard to define, but you know it when you see it.”

Besides Yale’s School of Management, which now does award its graduates an M.B.A., there are social entrepreneurship programs at a number of American universities. Duke’s Fuqua business school has the well-known Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship, while the Haas School of Business at the University of California-Berkeley and Columbia University’s business school have long collaborated on the Global Social Venture Competition with the London Business School, France’s ESSEC, and partners in India, Thailand and Korea.

“Regardless of the current economic vicissitudes,” said John Danner of the Haas School’s Lester Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, possibilities for social entrepreneurship still exist.

“The fact remains that there are more future opportunities,” he said in an e-mail, “figuring out useful and profitable (and perhaps personally fulfilling) solutions to the needs of the 4 billion people living on less than $10/day than there are tweaking the next gadget for consumers living at the tip of the world’s economic pyramid. That fact is not lost on our students.”

According to Nick Temple, director of policy at London’s School for Social Entrepreneurs, that approach brings its own difficulties. “What concerns us is that social entrepreneurship education in the U.S. seems to be embedded in universities,” he said. “There’s nothing wrong with that, but we feel that social justice is also about addressing
inequalities. If you’re limiting yourself to people who’ve passed exams or can afford the cost of private university fees you limit yourself to a relatively small pool.”

Founded by Michael Young, the serial social entrepreneur whose brainchildren also include Britain’s Open University and The Consumer Association, the School for Social Entrepreneurs offers training and support to all kinds of potential social innovators.

“Social entrepreneurs can come from everywhere — career changers, retired doctors, long-term unemployed — as well as academia or business,” Mr. Temple said in an interview. “Our role is to democratize social entrepreneurship.” Citing what he likes to call “the long tail of social entrepreneurship,” he argued that “if you add together the impact of a huge number of social entrepreneurs doing relatively small-scale activity, then that impact is potentially equivalent to — or even more than — a small number of social entrepreneurs doing large-scale projects.”

For Sandy Balfour, who fled apartheid-era South Africa for England, where he founded Divine Chocolate, Britain’s first fair-trade chocolate company, social enterprise “is simply politics that pays for itself.” Currently serving as chairman of an educational charity as well as chief executive of Liberation Foods, a “farmer-owned fair trade company selling branded nuts from India, Malawi, Mozambique and Bolivia,” he remains skeptical about what he calls “the professionalization of human impulses.”

“Do you put the ‘social’ first or do you put ‘entrepreneurship’ first?” Mr. Balfour asked. “In the end, ownership is what matters. I did a degree in accountancy, and what I learned is that the route to understanding everything is to have the money under control. After that you can do what you like.”

This article has been revised to reflect the following correction:
Correction: January 24, 2011
The name of the Fuqua Business School at Duke University was misspelled in an earlier version of this article.