THE DAILY CLIPS

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U.S. State Department, ECU partner for new climate change course

Saturday, February 6, 2010
ECU News Services

East Carolina University is working with the U.S. Department of State to promote a course on climate change that will be viewed across the globe. Intended to foster cross-cultural understanding of global climate change, the first-of-its-kind partnership kicked off Feb. 3 with a presentation by President Obama's top science adviser, John P. Holdren, on "Science and the Impact of Climate Change."

Holdren, director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, spoke by videoconference to students at ECU and at partner universities in India, China and Brazil — three countries that are major players in the climate change debate.

Austin Bunch, ECU associate provost, hailed the partnership as a "feather in the cap" for the university.

"With the global attention to climate change, this course offered by the department of geography and the complementary activities that are planned worldwide bring attention to ECU's leadership in the use of technology, in building global partnerships, as well as increasing our students' awareness of their parts in being global citizens," Bunch said. "It is a significant example of our quality in teaching and learning."
The State Department chose ECU because of its record of sustaining classroom partnerships among students from several countries, said Rosina Chia, ECU assistant vice chancellor for global academic initiatives. In 2004, Chia and Elmer Poe, associate vice chancellor for academic outreach, started a Global Understanding course that brings together students around the world via videoconferencing. An ECU student, for instance, might spend five weeks working on a project with a Pakistani student, five weeks with a Chinese student and five weeks with a Russian student. Today, that 8-section course connects 28 colleges and universities from 22 countries.

The pilot Global Climate Change class will match students with peers at other universities to work on projects addressing the issue in their communities. Those institutions are Shandong University in China, Faculdade de Jaguarióna in Brazil and the University of Jammu in India. Experts from the participating countries also will address students. Students already have studied consensus building and conflict resolution. “We anticipate that these four countries will have very different viewpoints on how to resolve the problem of climate change,” Chia said.

In the fall, the State Department will be reaching out to a worldwide community interested in discussing global climate change — potentially tens of thousands of people, Poe said. “The hope is that the course will simply stimulate an ongoing discussion about climate change within a broad community around the world.”

Greenville-area sponsors for the pilot course are Greenville Utilities Commission and North Carolina’s Eastern Region, the economic development agency for the area’s 13 counties.

Presentations throughout the semester will feature other high-ranking experts:

- April 7: “Multilateral and Local Actions,” Jonathan Pershing, deputy special envoy for climate change, State Department

**Author to speak about publishing ‘double life’**

Eloisa James is an author leading a “double life.” She is a Shakespearean professor who is also a New York Times bestselling author of popular romance.

James will talk about what it’s like to have a split writing life — writing for love, writing for money, and writing about Shakespeare — during her presentation at 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 18 in Joyner Library’s Teaching Resource
Center, second floor. Her lecture is entitled, “Shakespeare in Love: From the Renaissance to the Romance.”

As bestselling author, James writes historical romances for HarperCollins Publishers. Her novels have repeatedly received starred reviews from Publishers’ Weekly and Library Journal.

As scholar, James graduated from Harvard, Oxford and Yale universities and eventually became a Shakespearean professor, publishing an academic work with Oxford University Press.

She is an associate professor and head of the creative writing program at Fordham University in New York. Her “double life” is a source of fascination to the media and her readers. In her professorial guise, she’s written a New York Times op-ed defending romance, as well as articles published everywhere from women’s magazines such as More to writers’ journals such as the Romance Writers’ Report.

Her lecture, which will be followed by a book signing, is free and open to the public. The event is sponsored by English Club, the Student Activities Board, Harriot College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of English, and Joyner Library. For more information, call 328-4090.

**Mothers with MS manage their fatigue**

Mothers with multiple sclerosis may manage fatigue in ways that are strikingly different from well mothers or those with rheumatoid arthritis, say researchers at ECU. In spite of the debilitating fatigue that many people with MS regularly experience, the fatigue that mothers with MS experience was not associated with their parenting.

For women with autoimmune illness, especially MS, fatigue can be a debilitating symptom that impacts many aspects of life. Yet there is little research on maternal fatigue and its impact on the mothering experience for either well women or women with chronic illness.

In the December 2009 issue of Families, Systems & Health, ECU researchers Carmel White, assistant professor; Mark White, associate professor; and Melissa Fox, doctoral student in child development and family relations; compared the impact of fatigue on mothers with MS, mothers with RA and well mothers.

They analyzed three components: dealing with the typical daily challenges of parenting such as children ignoring parental requests, discipline styles and monitoring the whereabouts of children.

The study followed 262 mothers: 103 mothers with MS, 68 mothers with RA and 91 well mothers. In this study, the mothers rated their levels of fatigue, depression, quality and quantity of sleep, parenting daily hassles, discipline styles, and monitoring.
After sleep, depression and number of children were controlled for in the analysis, fatigue was found to have a significant effect on monitoring child whereabouts for all three groups of mothers. Fatigue also factored significantly into the frequency and intensity of parenting daily hassles for well mothers and mothers with RA.

To the surprise of the researchers, however, fatigue was not a big factor in parenting daily hassles for mothers with MS. For those mothers, the number of children in the family and poor sleep contributed much more to the escalation of parenting daily hassles.

"Since mothers with MS reported significantly more fatigue than well mothers and those with RA, we expected that fatigue would play a big role in the frequency and intensity of parenting daily hassles for mothers with MS, but we actually found that fatigue plays a small role for those we surveyed," Carmel White said.

The researchers surmised from this study and other studies that the lived experience of fatigue may be quite different among the three groups of mothers. It is likely, they believe, that mothers with MS have learned to function in their role while experiencing regular fatigue by adjusting their expectations about parenting.

"This study helps us understand how fatigue impacts mothering in well mothers and mothers with chronic illnesses," Carmel White, said. "In fact, for mothers with MS, it was sleep, not fatigue, that was more influential on their parenting behaviors."

**Upcoming events:**

Thursday: Moscow State Radio Symphony Orchestra, 7:30 p.m., Wright Auditorium. Ticketed event. Visit [www.ecuarts.com](http://www.ecuarts.com) or call (800) ECU-ARTS (2787).

See [www.ecu.edu/cs-ecu/calendar.cfm](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-ecu/calendar.cfm) for times, places and more information on these events and other ECU upcoming activities.
Robert L. Hause III


A public memorial service will take place at a later date.

Dr. Hause had a stellar career as a musician, composer, conductor and music educator. He was born and raised in Shelby, He graduated from Shelby High School, where he composed the school’s alma mater. He attended the University of Michigan where he earned his bachelor’s degree in music education cum laude in 1958 and his master’s in music education in 1960.

He taught music in the Jacksonville, Fla., public school system and served as assistant conductor of the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra. He taught music and theory from 1962-67 at Stetson University in Deland, Fla. before accepting a position as professor of music and conductor of the symphony at East Carolina University, a position he held until his retirement in 2005.

During his tenure at East Carolina University, he founded and served as director of the North Carolina Suzuki Institute. He collaborated with Charles Kuralt and Louis McLawhorn to conduct “North Carolina is My Home” for UNC Public Television. He arranged and conducted the two performances of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony at East Carolina, both of which were recorded for a LP. He also was active in the local arts community. He was chairman of and helped found the Greenville Boys Choral Association, as well as conducting the Greenville Community Symphony on many occasions, including collaboration with the North Carolina Academy of Dance Arts’ annual production of “The Nutcracker.” He also created an annual series of special concerts for local elementary school children and composed and arranged several instrumental and choral selections.

He was a guest conductor for several summers at the Brevard Music Camp and at the Eastern Music Festival. He traveled the country guest conducting for many musical arts organizations and once conducted a big band from the deck of the USS North Carolina for the Riverside Pops festival in Wilmington.

His passion for music education translated into a tireless devotion to Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. He served as province governor from 1976-85, then as national president from 1991-94. He is Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi and Pi Kappa Lambda.

Hause was an experienced and avid sailor, and he was well-known to his students, friends and family as “Captain Bob.” He earned his USCG captain’s license and was a leader and active member of the North Carolina Power Squadron, Pamlico-Tar River Chapter. “Sailing is really an art,” he said. “It’s like music because you can never learn it all.”

He is survived by his wife, Karen of Greenville; three sons, Eric Hause of Norfolk, Va., Jonathan Hause of Wilmington, and Evan and wife Maureen of Brooklyn, N.Y.; sister, Patricia “Trish” Hause Losee and husband Frank of Willow Spring; and granddaughter, Elena Hause.

The family will receive friends from 2-4 p.m. today at Wilkerson Funeral Home.

Contributions may be made to the Sinfonia Educational Foundation at www.sinfonia.org, in memory of Dr. Hause. Funds raised will be utilized to form a memorial scholarship in Dr. Hause’s name.

College athlete tells story to raise stroke awareness

The Daily Reflector

Katie Jerdee, a soccer player for Northeastern University who suffered a stroke at age 20 and a year later returned to her team and ran in the Boston Marathon a year after that, shared her story of recovery Friday to raise awareness of strokes. Jerdee spoke at East Carolina University's Wear Red for Women health educational event at the East Carolina Heart Institute.

The annual event raises awareness among women of the importance of heart and vascular health as well as teaching the warning signs of stroke and heart attack. Heart disease is the leading killer of women in America, according to the American Heart Association. The mortality rate for stroke in eastern North Carolina is 14 percent greater than in the rest of the state, and the mortality rate for heart disease is 12 percent greater, according to ECU researchers.
Annual event offers free dental care to Pitt County children

BY KIM GRIZZARD
The Daily Reflector

Ten-year-old Myranda Harris couldn't leave the dentist's office on Friday saying, "Look, Mom, no cavities!"
She actually had two.
Still, the Ridgewood Elementary School fifth-grader had a reason to smile. Her cavities were small, and they were found and filled quickly, as part of a program known as "Give Kids A Smile!"
The program included nearly 2,000 events nationwide on Friday as part of National Children's Dental Health Month. "Give Kids A Smile" is about more than children hopping into the dentist's chair and opening wide. It's about dental practices opening wide their doors for young patients who might otherwise be closed out of the dental care system.
The program, now in its eighth year, is a free clinic for children who do not receive dental care.
"So many children don't get dental care," said Jasper L. Lewis Jr., pediatric dentist and spokesperson for the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. "Part of it is education. Certainly part of it is economics."
Last year, more than 22,000 children received more than $2 million in free dental care as part of "Give Kids A Smile!" in North Carolina, which was named the leading program in the country by the American Dental Association.
On Friday, the East Central Dental Society scheduled more than 100 children for appointments at the at Eastern Orthodontics and Pediatric Dentistry, which hosted Greenville's "Give Kids A Smile!"
Six-year-old Mahogany Green had two of her baby teeth pulled. Her mother, Zina, said she welcomed "Give Kids A Smile!" as a chance to catch up on her daughter's dental health needs, which she says sometimes take a back seat to other expenses.
"I'm not saying that teeth are not important," Ms. Green said, "but some things have to come before it, being a single parent like I am."

See DENTAL, A7
Dental
Continued from A1

Dentist Billy Williams, who co-chairs Greenville's "Give Kids A Smile!" said dentists nationwide are seeing patients forego dental care because they are struggling financially.

"I think people don't put oral health as a high priority as overall health," Williams said, "and the economy's making that worse, no question.

"With kids, it's really sad because some of the problems if you could catch them earlier would be much easier to deal with."

"Give Kids A Smile!" co-chair Lee Lewis, a specialist in both orthodontics and pediatric dentistry, said parents who are out of work find themselves without dental insurance and without the ability to pay for services. While some qualify for government-sponsored programs such as Health Choice or Medicaid, those programs are facing their own financial problems.

Medicaid reimbursements paid to participating dentists have been reduced, Lewis said, prompting some dentists to refuse Medicaid patients because their practices were losing money in trying to treat them.

"With the economy the way it is, there are going to be more and more people entering these programs," he said. "That's one of the main reasons for looking at bringing a dental school to East Carolina — is to help provide care for these people."

It was at an earlier "Give Kids A Smile!" event that Jasper Lewis first approached state representatives with the idea of a dental school at ECU.

N.C. Rep. Edith Warren remembers the excitement in the room as Lewis began to outline what he and several community leaders had envisioned.

"We kind of jumped up and down because we recognized the great need that is there," Warren said.

Warren, who served as principal of Farmville's Sam D. Bundy School for nearly 20 years, has seen the need first hand. She remembers poor children suffering through toothaches at school.

"You also knew if there was a child in the first, second or third grade that had a dental problem, there was a family at home that also had those issues," she said.

Warren is looking forward to the opening of the school, which expects to enroll its first students in 2011. The school plans to focus on North Carolina's under-served communities, establishing clinics in areas where access to dental care is scarce.

"That is absolutely critically important — to have dentists in eastern North Carolina, particularly some of these rural counties," said U.S. Rep. Walter Jones Jr., of North Carolina's 3rd District, who was in Greenville on Friday to attend "Give Kids A Smile!" "Too many times the rural people are not receiving what they should."

Myranda's mother, Sherrill Harris, is from one of those areas. She grew up in Gates County, which has been without a dentist since the county's lone dental practice moved to Edenton.

Dr. Gregory Chadwick, associate dean for planning and extramural affairs at ECU's School of Dentistry, said the school's Community Service Learning Clinical Centers should help change that. The school has already announced plans for sites in Ahoskie and Elizabeth City in eastern North Carolina and Sylva in the western part of the state. The school still has seven sites to place and is looking at a number of counties that have few or no dental practices.

"I think we're going to have the ideal opportunity in the rural areas because we'll have a dental presence out there where there is none," said Chadwick, who was president of the ADA when "Give Kids A Smile!" was conceived. "We really want to go out and improve the health of the people in these areas."

Jasper Lewis said "Give Kids A Smile!" is about improving overall health quality as well, despite the name that seems to suggest a focus on pearly whites.

"Children that have dental disease, have pain," Lewis said. "They're not smiling children. If we can get them out of pain, if we can get rid of some of those infections, if we can make them literally be healthier, that's where the smile comes from.

"It's nothing to do with cosmetics. It has to do with health."

Contact Kim Grizzard at kgrizzard@reflector.com or at (252) 329-9578.
Thin doctor's specialty is dieting

DURHAM -- Will Yancy, a slight man with a trim waistline, might, on first glance, come across as someone who would have very little expertise on the ups and downs of the latest diets.

But the Durham doctor has recently emerged as a leading judge in the raging debate between low-carb diets versus low-fat regimens.

Yancy's verdict: Go low carb.

In late January, the Archives of Internal Medicine published his yearlong study of 146 overweight or obese people with a range of health problems. The participants, patients from Durham VA Medical Center clinics, were divided into two diet groups. One group limited its intake of carbohydrates. The other took a prescribed weight-loss medication and cut down on fats and calories.

"So what we found," Yancy said, "was that both diets were equally effective in terms of weight loss."

But low-carb diets, such as Atkins, were better at lowering blood pressure among the participants than weight-loss pills.

"The message I like to pass along is diets can work for weight loss," Yancy said, adding that the regimens work only if people stay on them. "What we're lacking, and the focus of my next research, is how to get people to stick to them."

Yancy, 40, has been interested in obesity research since he was fresh out of the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University. While working in University of Pittsburgh clinics, two things baffled him.

"One was that people came into my clinic and wanted sleeping pills, and as someone who had no trouble sleeping, I never understood this," Yancy said.

The other enigma, Yancy said, was that many of the clinic patients had medical problems and illnesses that were directly linked to weight problems. What Yancy could not understand at the time, he said, was why patients who struggled with diabetes or high blood pressure did not just lose weight.

A decade later, the sleep question remains a curiosity, but he's devoted his life's work to figuring out the best way for people to lose weight.

His peers and colleagues have taken note. In addition to getting articles published in medical journals, Yancy was honored three years ago with the President's Early Career Award for Scientists.

"One of the things that really made his early success is that there is a lot of 'fad-ism' in diets," said Dr. Eugene Z. Oddone, a Duke University professor of medicine and director of the Center for Health.
Services Research in Primary Care at the Durham VA Medical Center. "He really is one of the first ones that kind of submitted these diets to rigorous studies."

Formative years

Yancy was born in California but grew up in Durham.

Both parents worked in the medical field. His father was a pediatrician, in private practice first, then at Duke. His mother was a nurse in obstetrics and gynecology.

After finishing at Jordan High School in the late 1980s, Yancy did not stray far from home for college. He got an undergraduate degree at Duke University and, in a math class, met the woman who would become his wife.

Medical school and post-graduate training took Yancy to Greenville and then Pittsburgh.

But Yancy felt a pull back to Durham.

"It has a lot of unique features," Yancy said. "It doesn't feel like it's a big metropolis, but it has a major university that brings a diversity of people to it, but it still feels like living in the South, down home."

With a busy work schedule and three children, Yancy spends much of his free time with family. In the heart of ACC basketball country, he finds time, of course, to cheer on his favorite college hoops team - the Blue Devils.

He lends his time and expertise on energy balance to the N.C. Association for Biomedical Research high school teaching program, which offers science and medical workshops for teachers interested in providing students with a richer education.

On most Mondays, Yancy plays basketball with friends.

Though he tries to exercise several more times a week and enjoys water-skiing on Lake Gaston, Yancy attributes his trim waistline to healthy eating.

"I don't snack; I don't drink my calories," Yancy says.

Corrine Voils, a social psychologist and health service research who works with Yancy, says her colleague has a fondness for sweets.

"What's funny is we eat lunch together a lot and a lot of the low-carb researchers, they won't eat carbs," Voils says. "Will's not that way. He loves chocolate chip cookies. He loves dessert. He'll give up french fries and rice or other carbs so he can have his cookies."

Gentle teasing aside, Voils says, she admires how committed Yancy is to his patients.

"He's an innovative thinker," Voils says. "I think he really cares about patients and finding out about ways to help them lose weight."
Now, though, after years of obesity research, Yancy says he knows that combating hypertension and some forms of diabetes is not as simple as instructing someone to lose weight, as he thought early in his career.

"What we're lacking, and what I want to focus on next, is how to get people to stick to their diets," Yancy said. "Whether that's tailoring a diet to an individual or tailoring it to their metabolic syndrome, that's what we need to learn more about."

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Want a degree? Get it in three

Mount Olive College has figured out a way to save its students a cool $22,000: get them a degree in three years.

The small private college of 800 students in Wayne County is the first in North Carolina to latch onto a burgeoning national trend toward the three-year bachelor's degree.

It is an idea spurred by necessity: with more college students and their families struggling to pay tuition bills, universities have looked for ways to deliver their product more quickly and affordably. The three-year model has gained momentum in the past year, with a handful of small, private colleges unveiling programs of late.

But the three-year plan is not for everyone. At Mount Olive, President Philip Kerstetter thinks the new program would appeal to maybe 5 percent of his student body. That's 40 students who would need to know precisely what they want from the first day of college. They need to enter college with plenty of advanced placement credits from high school and the ability to shoulder a course load of up to 24 credit hours per semester. They'd also need at least a 3.5 grade point average in high school to be eligible.

"It requires a pretty motivated student," said Kerstetter, whose college has six satellite campuses across the state, including one in Research Triangle Park. "A lot of students come into college and want to do some exploration. God bless 'em. But this isn't for them."

The keys to making a three-year program work are advising and class scheduling, Kerstetter said. Advisers would help students find the most direct academic path, and the university would give them scheduling preference during one of college's most frustrating rites of passage - class registration. Kerstetter reasons that a motivated student who enters college with a semester or more of college credits in the bank can graduate in three years if he gets good advice and can schedule all the classes he needs in the right sequence.

The payoff: One less year of tuition, fees, and room and board, which this year totals $22,000.

Getting what they want

At Mount Olive, four-year students can take up to 19 credits per semester, though most take 15 or 18, which means five or six three-credit courses. In a three-year program, they could take as many as eight courses and would need 126 credits to graduate.

Though some students manage to graduate in three years on their own, the formal three-year programs popping up across the country are a step forward, said Molly Broad, president of the Washington D.C.-based American Council on Education.
Most students who want to graduate in three years need the sort of institutional support that Mount Olive has proposed.

And while the program may sound like it takes the fun out of college, Broad thinks some students simply want the degree as fast as possible.

"There are some students who really are not going to college for a social life or cultural experience," said Broad, a former UNC system president. "They can save money for themselves and make space for the next generation of student."

Catching on

The three-year degree idea picked up steam last summer when U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander, a former president of the University of Tennessee, endorsed it in a Newsweek article.

Larger public universities are warming to the idea. In Rhode Island, for example, state legislators last year mandated that two public universities offer a three-year option.

At UNC-Chapel Hill, first-year students routinely enroll with 20 or 30 college credits completed, said Stephen Farmer, the school's director of undergraduate admissions. While UNC likely wouldn't adopt the same sort of three-year bachelor's degree model that Mount Olive has, it might be open to a 3 + 1 model, where a student could get a bachelor's and master's degree in four years, Farmer said.

"We're really interested in making it as easy as possible for students to accelerate," he said.

Greg Doucette, an N.C. State graduate now in law school at N.C. Central University, said most students don't see the big financial picture and thus may not see the value in rushing through college in three years.

And many switch majors once they've been in college awhile, said Doucette, the sole student member of the UNC system's Board of Governors.

"I think everyone thinks they have it figured out at the beginning, and then they change their minds," he said. "I started at N.C. State in computer science. Now I'm in law school."

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Novice preacher, notable pulpit

DURHAM -- Lots of famous people have preached from the Duke Chapel's lofty pulpit.

There are the heavyweight theologians: Paul Tillich and Jurgen Moltmann; the poplar evangelist Billy Graham; the statesmen, Martin Luther King Jr. and Archbishop Desmond Tutu; the presidents, including Bill Clinton last year.

And then there's Christina Booth.

Unlike many of her predecessors at the soaring limestone cathedral, she does not hold a divinity degree. She has not served in public office. Nor have her good works earned her widespread recognition.

But Booth, a senior at Duke, who delivered Sunday's sermon to a full house of nearly 1,400 people, won an annual competition among undergraduates to preach at the chapel, an honor she pulled off with aplomb.

"I thought she was personable and thoughtful," said Evan Cate, a friend who leads her Bible study class at Blacknall Presbyterian Church in Durham, where Booth attends.

The 22-year-old from Atlanta said she barely slept and was extremely nervous as she slipped into a white clerical robe and tied the rope belt at her waist Sunday morning.

As a faithful Christian, she knew that many a biblical hero struggled at this very juncture. She was about to mention them in her sermon: Moses had a stutter; Isaiah, who sees God sitting on the throne, cries "Woe is me!" as he considers his inadequacy for the job of prophet.

Fortunately, she had practiced. Finalists in the preaching competition are required to preach before a committee, and, if chosen, submit to some coaching during a trial run earlier in the week.

As she mounted the steps of the pulpit, she remembered her instructions: Speak slowly, pause for effect, enunciate each word.

She also knew this was not a secular speech to be judged by its listeners but by its adherence to God's message.

"It's not really about whether I did a good job," she said later. "It's a worship service."

Booth had another advantage. Her sermon was one many people, and especially students, can relate to: finding a vocation.

"I was actually hoping God would point out one job application, help me submit it, and set me down
the path that I've been really planning all along," she said in the introduction to her sermon. "But this doesn't seem to be the way it works."

Instead, her sermon suggested, people have to listen carefully to God's call and respond, even when it's intimidating, frightening or challenging.

"Whether it's a call to move across the world and take on a new challenge or move across the office and minister to a neighbor, we might feel in over our heads," she said. But she added, "We are to get up and follow Christ saying, 'Here I am. Send me.'"

Her own calling

Booth, a religion major with a chemistry minor, had considered a calling to the ministry, but after working on a public health project in Haiti this past summer, she said she felt more passionate about global public health challenges - from sanitation or safe drinking water to HIV prevention.

After the hourlong service, Booth - along with the Rev. Sam Wells, the dean of the chapel - stood at the door to greet people as they walked out. Fellow students and church buddies gave Booth big hugs and thumbs up.

Beaming from the sidelines were Booth's mother, father and grandmother, who had driven from Atlanta for the occasion.

A sermon to remember

The annual sermon competition draws about a dozen applicants who submit sermons of 2,000 to 2,500 words and are judged by their ability to use theological reasoning as a way of communicating, said the Rev. M. Keith Daniel, director of Duke Chapel PathWays, a program designed to help students explore God's calling.

"It's an event they'll remember for the rest of their lives," said Wells. "And it's a clear statement to students that their faith is taken seriously."

As she was composing her sermon during fall break, Booth's own vocation was very much on her mind.

This past week, as she prepared for Sunday's service, it began to take shape.

After graduating in May, Booth will be heading back to Atlanta for a two-year appointment with Teach for America, a nonprofit that recruits seniors from elite colleges and sends them to teach in low-income schools across the nation. And though she won't be teaching religion - she'll teach middle and high school science - she will continue to listen to God's calling.

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NCSU shaves size, cost of plan for new house

RALEIGH -- N.C. State University has retooled its long-stalled plan to build a new lakefront chancellor's residence at Centennial Campus, slashing the size of the home by nearly a third and trimming the costs by about 40 percent. The university now hopes to break ground within weeks.

The NCSU board of trustees is expected to vote Feb. 19 on whether to build the 8,500-square-foot modernist house. It would be paid for with about $3 million in private funding, including services and materials donated by university supporters, said Jim Woodward, the interim chancellor.

In recent years, such homes have become quasi-public buildings used as fundraising tools for universities and to create the right impression for important campus visitors. Much of the space will be arranged for formal events, with just a third of the house dedicated to the living area for the chancellor's family.

"These homes are to benefit the university, not the chancellor, so when you're designing them, you have to be mindful that you're building a house that carries out this primary mission," Woodward said. "We're about three years away from starting a major capital campaign, and this house will be critical to its success."

Woodward is something of an expert in the design and use of such homes. He was involved in the planning and construction of two of them at UNC Charlotte - one early in his career and another completed after he retired. He and his wife hosted more than 600 events in the first of the two.

So when Woodward arrived in Raleigh in June for a temporary stint while NCSU hunted for a new leader, he immediately concluded that the current chancellor's home on Hillsborough Street, built in 1928, was unsuitable for large gatherings. It can feel cramped with even a couple dozen people, he said, and has parking for perhaps 20 vehicles at most.

University trustees had decided in 2004 that it made more sense to build a new home on the sprawling Centennial Campus than to spend $2 million renovating the old one.

That plan, though, ground to a halt after the design swelled to 12,300 square feet at a cost of more than $5 million. As the economy soured, members of the committee that was formed to plan and raise money began to worry that the project had become too big.

The committee had already secured commitments worth more than $3 million, and Woodward jump-started an effort to rethink the design, trim costs and get the project moving again. The latest design was influenced by the layout of the public areas in the similar-sized chancellor's home at UNC Charlotte. The new plan brings a traditional Southern inflection to the modern look required to fit in at the technology-focused research campus.
Woodward said the donations and pledges include several large gifts. He declined to name the donors, though two of the state's wealthiest people and biggest NCSU supporters are on the project steering committee: Ann Goodnight, the wife of SAS Institute co-founder Jim Goodnight; and Wendell Murphy, who made a fortune in pork production.

Best to build now

Ann Goodnight, a former NCSU trustee and now a member of the UNC system's board of governors, is so passionate about the project that after hearing Woodward talk about how well the UNC Charlotte house worked, she went to see it last summer. She said Wednesday that she was impressed with the arrangement of public rooms that encouraged mingling.

Woodward expects to leave the university when the new chancellor, William "Randy" Woodson, arrives, probably in April. One reason Woodward wanted to get the house started, he said, was to keep Woodson from getting off on the wrong foot with a needless public relations problem.

The house is an important tool that will pay for itself many times over, Woodward said, and no one could argue that an interim chancellor who would never get to live in the house was trying to give himself an unneeded luxury.

The new design would be able to handle more than 200 people for a stand-up function and perhaps 80 for dinner. It would have access to the parking lot at the nearby alumni center, Woodward said.

The house also is expected to serve as a showcase for green construction technology, said Kevin MacNaughton, the university's associate vice chancellor for facilities. It would take about a year and a half to finish, and while it's under construction, classes from the College of Design and College of Natural Resources will come out to observe things like the geothermal heating and cooling system, the roof-mounted windmill and a rainwater collection system for irrigation.

'House for the people'

Marvin Malecha, dean of the College of Design and past president of the American Institute of Architects, is a consulting architect on the project and said his role was that of chief designer.

"I understood this was a house for the people, and it needs to be humble, but also be dignified in a way that's befitting the campus," Malecha said. "We don't even like to call it the chancellor's residence because it's really the university's residence."

Because of the symbolic nature of the house, he said, and the university's role as a land-grant institution, NCSU wants to make it kind of a mini-stimulus package for North Carolina, using locally produced materials where possible. Those, he said, would help give the house a North Carolina feel.

The university will preserve the old house, which is near the Belltower, but it doesn't have a plan for how to use it yet, Woodward said.

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Natural cures run in her family

Before the clatter of capsules against childproof caps came the whispering fields of medicinal plants - fields Nadja Cech knows very well.

Cech, 31, grew up on an organic farm in Oregon where her family tended medicinal herbs. Now she's an associate professor of chemistry at UNC Greensboro, studying how and why plants such as echinacea work as medicine in the body. She gathers plants across North Carolina, and sometimes from her family farm out West, to analyze back in her lab at UNCG.

"History tells us that nature has made a lot of compounds that end up being very useful drugs. So we can't really ignore nature when we're doing drug discovery and trying to come up with new drugs," Cech said, noting that plants are major components of pharmaceuticals.

In fact, she said, 25 percent of drugs on the market are based on natural products, and as many as 50 to 60 anticancer drugs, such as Taxol, have plant-based roots.

To build drugs with plant components, researchers have to know which compounds inside the plant to use. However, it's hard for researchers to figure out which compounds in plants are actually at work and beneficial to health.

Some scientists try to identify and isolate a single ingredient or compound to add to a drug and ignore the remaining components in the plant, Cech said. But that's a mistake, she said. She suspects that a number of compounds work together to help the body. So when researchers ignore how compounds interact, they may be missing out on useful combinations, she said.

"Dr. Cech is systematically studying a phenomenon that is widely touted by herbalists but rarely studied with scientific rigor: synergy between plant components," said David Kroll, a professor of pharmaceutical sciences at N.C. Central University, who isn't involved in the study.

Kroll says that although the relationship between components in plants isn't studied enough, researchers frequently study how chemicals in medicines react. For example, he said, researchers mix multiple drugs in cancer chemotherapy because the drugs are more effective when combined. The same is probably true of natural products: Many things interact to create an advantageous effect.

Cech has found just that. For nine years, she has studied echinacea, an herb said to stimulate the immune system, and goldenseal, an herb used to combat bacterial infections. Goldenseal contains a compound called berberine, which scientists pegged as responsible for the herb's bacteria-fighting power.

However, when researchers isolated berberine and tried to use the compound alone in drugs to stifle infection, it failed miserably. Something else makes the herb effective. Cech looks for these extra
components, hoping to understand not only which compounds make berberine function to kill bacteria but also how they make the compound work.

Cech, operating her lab on a $200,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health, collaborates with farmers both in and outside the state to grow the herbs, which she and 10 or so student researchers sometimes harvest themselves. After gathering, Cech makes plant extracts and analyzes them with mass spectrometry, a technique that shows researchers the composition of the extracts and how much of a compound is present. Once she and her collaborators - including N.C. State University - find an extract of interest, Cech further separates it to find out how the extract works.

Jeanine Davis, an associate professor of horticultural science and extension specialist at N.C. State, grows crops for the project and collects herbs from all over North Carolina. She has worked with medicinal plants in the state for 22 years. When she cultivates echinacea and other herbs, she catalogs growing conditions, such as soil acidity and amount of light, that may affect the medicinal properties.

"Analyzing plant growing conditions makes the project unique," Davis said. "So much of the research being done on medicinal herbs hasn't been concerned (with) where that plant material is coming from."

Cech's lab hopes to decode the complexity behind different plants - from the intricacies of growing conditions to the riddle of extract makeup - specifically those herbs that have a history of use. This opposes science's recent movement toward synthetic compounds, which are often oversimplified but easier to make than natural compounds. But manufactured compounds don't always work as well as more complex plant-based alternatives, Cech said.

"Most of the world's population is still relying on alternative medicine as their primary source of health care, and a major portion of that is plants," Cech said. "There's certainly a lot of untapped wisdom there in terms of what people are using successfully that we don't understand, and alternative medicine can teach us a lot. We just need to learn the science behind it."
State looks into leak from UNC pond

CHAPEL HILL -- State regulators want to know why UNC-Chapel Hill waited nearly two months to report a leak of treated animal waste that reached a creek feeding Jordan Lake.

The state Division of Water Quality sent a "letter of intent" to the university this week, part of a process that might lead to fines. The letter seeks more information about a leak in a 1.6 million-gallon pond holding treated wastewater at the Bingham Facility, also known as The Farm, west of Carrboro in rural Orange County.

The facility houses about 60 dogs used in medical research on the main campus. It is slated to get additional dogs and hogs, as well as new buildings, as part of a $27 million expansion.

Public records obtained by the citizens group Preserve Rural Orange show that university officials suspected the storage pond was leaking as early as Oct. 19 but did not contact the state until Dec.10.

"It is not known when the discharge began; however the University of North Carolina waited 53 days once suspecting a leak of the lagoon liner to report the discharge to the Division," wrote Jay Zimmerman, environmental program supervisor with the state Division of Water Quality.

The delay does not necessarily mean that UNC-CH acted inappropriately, Zimmerman said Friday.

Some agencies notify the state as soon as they suspect problems, only to have state officials race out and find nothing, he said. Others gather more information before notifying the division.

Thursday's letter gives the university 10 days to provide additional information. Fines could reach $25,000 per day of violation, but Zimmerman said that would be in extreme cases.

Mary Beth Koza, UNC-CH director of environment, health and safety, was out of the office Friday and could not be reached for comment. Previously, Koza has said the university would do what ever the state required.

The university has two wastewater treatment systems at the Bingham Facility that spray treated wastewater on fields. One disinfects domestic waste from bathrooms and kitchens and has a state permit.

The other system handles animal waste and was "deemed permitted," meaning the state considered the dogs and other animals occasionally housed there an agricultural use that did not require a permit.

The wastewater that reached Collins Creek came from the animal waste system. The leaked material was not tested but likely contained very low levels of nitrogen and fecal coliform, Zimmerman said. The leak is subject to a fine because it reached state waters, the creek, and not because it represented a
major environmental threat, he said.

As part of its investigation, the state revoked the system's deemed permitted status on Monday.

UNC-CH now has two options: It can apply to modify the permit for the domestic system to also treat animal waste. This would require ensuring the system has adequate capacity and technology to treat the extra waste.

Or the university can repair the system and apply for a permit to operate the system it has been using for animal waste.

This would require fixing problems, such as the leak in the storage pond and other concerns the university has identified in its construction.

"They have some hoops to jump through," Zimmerman said.

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Donations to universities plunge

The sour economy has eaten into charitable contributions to colleges and universities across the Triangle, stalling construction projects at some and cutting the amount of money available for scholarships.

The downturn mirrors a national trend, with gift-giving down an average 11.9 percent, according to a report released this week by the Council for Aid To Education. That's the sharpest fall in at least three decades, the report said.

Big gifts in particular were off, said several local university and college officials, citing the drop in the value of potential donors' investments in fiscal 2009, which ended June 30.

For the state universities, the declines were another burden to heap atop their big budget cuts from the state.

Locally, Duke's 22 percent drop was one of the hardest hits, but that reflected a decline from an all-time record year for gifts in fiscal 2008, said Michael Schoenfeld, a university spokesman.

Giving has rebounded 5 percent in the past six months, giving rise to some cautious optimism at Duke, he said. Still, the recession, and institutional belt-tightening over the last year or so, has had an impact. Perhaps most visibly, a new campus development project has stalled for now because private giving was a primary component. But other projects, like a $20 million residence hall and $15 million in central campus improvements, are continuing as scheduled, Schoenfeld said.

And top priorities like financial aid won't be affected even if other budget items are, he said.

"It's not like if financial aid runs out, that's it," Schoenfeld said. "We'll meet our commitments. If that means adjusting other parts of the budget, we will."

At N.C. State University, giving was down about 15 percent, said Ken Sigmon, associate vice chancellor for development.

Projects such as a club-house at the university's new golf course on Centennial Campus will have to wait until large, multi-year gifts bounce back, Sigmon said, adding that NCSU is confident that the trend will eventually be reversed.

"We're not hearing a lot of 'No' answers," he said. "We're hearing a lot of 'not right now.'"

University leaders scraped together $820,000 last year from other sources to help cover the shortfall in giving for endowment-funded scholarships, with the net result that spending for renewable scholarships may not have dropped significantly, said Julie Mallette, associate vice provost and
director of scholarships and financial aid. Still, as a precaution, the university temporarily stopped awarding some renewable scholarships to the incoming class this past fall.

UNC-CH does better

UNC-Chapel Hill brought in $270 million in private donations last year, a 7 percent drop from the previous year as donors worried about dwindling investments.

"It's a strong wind in our face," said Matt Kupec, UNC-CH's vice chancellor for university advancement. "The stocks have recovered a bit but the psyches are still fragile."

Still, UNC-CH has fared well relative to its competitors. A year ago, the university ranked 19th overall in private donations nationally; this year, it's up two spots to 17 and is the sixth-best fundraising institution among public universities, its best such ranking ever.

As the big donors tighten their belts, fundraisers at UNC-CH have shifted focus a bit, looking to increase the number of donors giving smaller amounts.

"The big home-run right now is not as likely to happen," Kupec said, referring to gifts of $5 million or more.

Gifts to several of the region's smaller institutions were off, too. At N.C. Central University, giving fell about 6.3 percent to $6.6 million, said LaTanya Afolayan, vice chancellor for institutional advancement.

Years of nurturing

Afolayan said NCCU has been helped by several consecutive years of making steady, routine contacts with potential donors, along with enthusiasm about the college's recent move into Division I sports and its centennial this year.

In the current fiscal year, which began July 1, alumni giving has increased 21 percent over the same period last year, though corporate and foundation gifts are down, she said.

At St. Augustine's College in Raleigh, annual giving actually increased about 5 percent, but with big gifts down substantially, fundraising for big capital projects has slowed. This could mean postponing the second and largest phase of a new track stadium, said Marc Newman, the college's vice president of institutional advancement and development.

"The big gifts just aren't there right now," he said.

Like officials at several other institutions, he said that those who are making gifts seem more interested in funneling money toward scholarships, figuring it makes sense to help students as directly as possible, given that many families are struggling because of the economy.

At Peace College in Raleigh, giving to the annual fund was off about 9 percent, though it has started to improve, said Julie Ricciardi, executive director for development.
"The belts are tightening everywhere, but we're getting glimpses of hope, that if we're good stewards of our campuses, people will recognize that and support it," Ricciardi said.

The entire alumni base of the college is about the same size as a single graduating class from NCSU or UNC-CH, she said, so Peace was happy that it was able to raise $3.5 million in private money over the past two years to renovate and enlarge its library.

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Take a peek at college costs

I love online calculators.

Plug in some numbers, and just like that, I know how much to save for a vacation, retirement or to pay off my mortgage early. Plug in a different set of numbers from the fantasy world where I save more, and the future gets even brighter.

The only online calculators I've avoided are those that estimate the cost of college. Just the thought of seeing how far I am from where I need to be to pay for my son's college education scares the living daylights out of me.

Finally, this week I screwed up my courage and gave the College Board's calculator a whirl. Find it at collegeboard.com.

I started by plugging in $17,424, the current cost for tuition, fees, room and board, books, etc. listed on UNC-Chapel Hill's Web site (though there's no guarantee that's where he'll end up despite my years of brainwashing). Then I filled in the rest of the blanks: current savings, monthly savings, years until college and the like and clicked calculate. The results weren't pretty: annual cost had jumped to $24,517 (projecting only a 5 percent annual increase) or $105,985 for four years.

According to the College Board, most parents pay for 35 percent of college through savings and the rest through current income and borrowing. The calculations showed that by the time he's ready, I'd need to have almost $40,000 saved to make that 35 percent. I need to do better, or else I'll be borrowing more.

Borrowing, of course, brings its own headaches. Excedrin headache No. 1 - or so I've been told - is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid forms, aka FAFSA.

FAFSA forms must be completed to be considered for all federal and most state financial aid, including scholarships and grants, and this is the time high school seniors and their parents need to fill them out. It's also the time of year when you can get help navigating the form from people who understand it.

FAFSA Day is Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon. In the Triangle, help will be available at N.C. State University, St. Augustine's College and Wake Tech in Raleigh, N.C. Central University in Durham, Johnston Community College in Smithfield, and at State Employees' Credit Unions in Orange County.

For the list of sites go to CFNC.org/fafsaday or call 866-866-2362. Once you find a site, register.

Now for the homework. Parents will need to bring federal 1040 tax forms for 2009 for themselves and their child (if you haven't gotten around to doing your taxes yet, bring the W-2s); and a Personal
Identification Number. You'll need a PIN for at least one parent and for the student. You can get those in advance from the U.S. Department of Education Web site, www.pin.ed.gov.

You also need to fill out as much as you can of the FAFSA Web Worksheet at www.fafsa.gov.

FAFSA Day is sponsored by the College Foundation of North Carolina, the N.C. Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators and the State Employees' Credit Union.

While I'm talking freebies, you can also get help with your 2009 taxes courtesy of accounting students in NCSU's College of Management. They've been certified by the IRS. They'll be available every Saturday to those whose household income doesn't top $49,000.

Find out more at www.mgt.ncsu.edu.

If you meet the income requirements but can't get to NCSU, you can also get free help at the IRS office in Raleigh (4405 Bland Road) on Feb. 20 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

In either case, bring a valid driver's license or photo ID for yourself and spouse; Social Security cards for you and anyone else listed on your return, date of birth for everyone listed, all income statements and any documents that show taxes were withheld, last year's tax return if available, and proof that you have an account at a bank or credit union if you want any refund directly deposited.

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