THE DAILY CLIPS

February 10, 2010

News, commentary, and opinion
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East Carolina University News Bureau
E-mail to durhamj@ecu.edu  Web site at http://www.news.ecu.edu
252-328-6481 FAX: 252-328-6300
University stands ready for challenges

East Carolina University Chancellor Steve Ballard struck a confident tone in delivering his first State of the University address last week, outlining the school's strengths and its vision for the future. That included the continued strength of the Brody School of Medicine, the talent of the faculty and the determination that East Carolina continue to meet its commitment to serve the region.

That final point bears particular emphasis as it promises to echo across eastern North Carolina and the region. In this time of economic turmoil, the community is especially fortunate to have an engine for growth in East Carolina, and the school's continued success is vital to its future.

Ballard's first State of the University address drew about 450 people, including several prominent public officials, to Hendrix Theater last week in a move that deserves commendation. While a chancellor should keep the university community, the public and key decision makers informed about the school as often as possible, this new setting provided a brighter spotlight for the message, making his speech a notable event.

And it was one that did not disappoint. While most are familiar with some of the university's more recent achievements, the chancellor should never tire of celebrating them at every opportunity. What East Carolina has accomplished in a century of education can best be described as remarkable, particularly the development of the Brody School of Medicine, the founding of which changed the course of the school and the region.

Yet, the most important part of Ballard's address involved the university's continued commitment to service, an aspect of East Carolina's mission that no chancellor can mention frequently enough. The university remains the most important economic development tool for a region...
in need of them in a faltering fiscal climate. Without it, Greenville and Pitt County would struggle to survive, as would the whole of the East.

By emphasizing that mission in this unique atmosphere, Ballard demonstrated how central it is to the university's identity. That is a message with great value, especially at this time, and one that promises to pay dividends in the future. However, East Carolina faces a particular set of challenges — with a tightening state budget, declining revenues and a rising enrollment — that will require considerable heavy lifting in the months to come.

Ballard intended his speech to signal that a resolute university stands ready to tackle those challenges. For eastern North Carolina, Pitt County and Greenville, there could be no more important message.
CEOs quick recovery shows benefits of healthy lifestyle

The medical students and young physicians I teach ask me how to help patients make healthy lifestyle changes. They don’t know what to do when patients say, “Granddad ate anything he wanted, drank and smoked, and lived to be 90,” or “Cousin John ate healthy and had a heart attack anyway.” I teach them to recognize the stages of change and use motivational interviewing. Then I encourage them to ask patients who have made lifestyle changes to share their stories with others.

Dave McRae, the CEO of University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina, recently revealed his own health story. Last month, he underwent quadruple-bypass surgery at the East Carolina Heart Institute at Pitt County Memorial Hospital. Hopefully, Dave’s story will motivate others to eat right, be active, control stress and avoid tobacco products. Here is what Dave has to say.

“What a difference a day makes.” How true those words have been in my life recently. On the evening of Jan. 11, my wife Patti and I enjoyed our usual two-mile walk and heart-healthy evening meal. I felt good! Jan. 12 started with a visit to Dr. Jack Rose’s office for a routine stress test. By day’s end, I was awakening from an unscheduled cardiac catheterization performed by Dr. Walter Tan. I looked into the faces of Dr. Mark Williams, a heart surgeon, and the leader of the Heart Institute himself, Dr. Randolph Chitwood. In unison, they said, “We need to talk.” Two days later, I was in the intensive-care unit recovering from quadruple-bypass surgery.

People know I have tried to do the right things to avoid this very experience. Over the years I have tried to follow Dr. Kolasa’s nutrition advice. I watch my weight, eat a healthy diet and exercise daily. I manage my stress and reserve quiet time for rest and spiritual renewal. I have the love and support of my wife, our daughter Shannon and her husband Walt, and three wonderful grandchildren: Rob, Rebecca and Ridge. I have fulfilling work, leading an organization that contributes to the quality of life for all of Eastern Carolina.

What else could I have done to protect my heart? Was it worth the hard work and discipline? If I had just known what lay ahead, would I have said, “It’s all in the genes, so why take care of myself?” Why me, Lord? I have been preoccupied with these questions since the fog of anesthesia lifted. I’ve asked them of anyone who would listen. The answer that made the most sense to me came from Dr. Williams.

My surgeon’s task was to cut me open, fix me and put me back together, but Dr. Williams did so much more. He became my life coach and counselor. Here are his words: “It is my firm belief that some are genetically predisposed to coronary artery disease problems. The healthy lifestyle you have lived delayed the onset of the disease and allowed a very rapid recovery. Without question, the statistics favor those who care for themselves. For every 280-pound man who reaches his 70s and 80s with no health problems, hundreds of others struggle with obesity or diabetes and die earlier.”

See KOLASA, D2
You keep up your healthy lifestyle. Those who do not are much more likely to have health issues."

I'm convinced he has it right because I recovered quickly and fully with few problems and little discomfort. I was discharged five days after surgery and back at work Jan. 25. My appetite, sleep patterns, energy and zeal for life all returned shortly. I am grateful to be back to a normal life so quickly.

I owe thanks to all who carried me through this experience. I also owe thanks to those who guided me over the years to follow nutrition and dietary guidelines, exercise regularly and build a strong support system. My lifestyle got me through a difficult time that was inevitable, given my family history. That lifestyle helped me recover more quickly and fully than I otherwise might have.

And what a blessing it is to have the surgeons, staff and equipment of the world-class Heart Institute here in Pitt County. I am grateful I did not have to leave friends and loved ones for this or any similar medical care.

Professor Kathy Kolasa, a registered dietitian and Ph.D., works with the Family Medicine Center, Brody School of Medicine at ECU. Contact her at kolasaka@ecu.edu.
Romary won’t seek re-election

The incumbent school board member says she wants to devote more time to family and work.

BY GINGER LIVINGSTON
The Daily Reflector

An incumbent school board member announced Tuesday she won't seek re-election.

Marcy Romary, who holds Seat 3A on the 12-person body, said she wants to devote more time to family and work.

“At the end of my term, I need to direct my energies towards my family and my work,” she said. “My only child is a freshman in high school, and it’s important to me not to miss out on her last few years at home.”

Romary, a fundraiser for East Carolina University, said she also has taken on more job responsibilities that require more time.

Filing for the 2010 elections began Monday. Two incumbents and two challengers have filed as candidates for four different seats.

Romary said the controversy involving school redistricting in 2005 and the rancor it generated was a factor in her decision.

“Student reassignment is one of hundreds of issues the board deals with, although there are people who believe this is the only issue and see ELECTION, A9

ELECTION
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that I should continue to challenge a decision made four and half years ago.”

The school board is gearing up for a new round of student reassignment work that will begin this summer. The plan is scheduled to be approved this fall, just before the new board takes office.

Two more individuals seeking school board seats filed to run, putting one candidate in five of the six seats up for election.

Billy Peaden is seeking his second term as the board’s District 2A representative. Sean Kenny filed as a challenger in the District 5A, which is represented by Dick Tolmie.

Michael Dixon filed for re-election to District 1A, retiring associate superintendent Worth Forbes filed as a candidate for District 6A, and Marc Whichard filed as a candidate for District 4A on Monday.

CANDIDATES
The following candidates filed for elections being held in Pitt County:

Walter B. Jones Jr. (I), Republican, U.S. House District 3
Florence Arnold Armstrong, Democrat, N.C. Senate District 3
Frankie Bordeaux, Democrat, N.C. Senate District 3
Clark Jenkins (I), Democrat, N.C. Senate District 3

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CANDIDATES
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Louis M. Pate Jr., Republican, N.C. Senate District 5
Bill Cook, Republican, N.C. House District 6
Arthur Williams (I), Democrat, N.C. House District 6
Edith Warren, Democrat, N.C. House District 8
Stan Larson, Republican, N.C. House District 9
Marian McLawhorn (I), Democrat, N.C. House District 9
David Hammond (I), Democrat, Pitt County Commissioner District 1
Eugene James (I), Democrat, Pitt County Commissioner District 2
Thomas Johnson (I), Democrat, Pitt County Commissioner District 3
Jimmy Garris (I), Republican, Pitt County Commissioner District 5
Kenneth Ross (I), Democrat, Pitt County Commissioner District 6
Seat 6A is held by Mary Grace Bright, and 4A is held by Roy Peaden.


The school board election is May 4, the same time as the Democratic and Republican primaries.

The 2010 elections include races for Congress along with the state House and Senate.

U.S. Rep. Walter B. Jones Jr., a Farmville Republican, filed Tuesday for re-election to the 3rd Congressional District.

Pitt County is divided among three House districts and two state Senate districts, and candidates for those seats have filed in both Pitt County and the counties that share the districts.

On Tuesday, Chocowinity Republican Bill Cook filed to run against incumbent Democrat Arthur Williams for state House District 6. Williams filed for re-election on Monday. District 6 serves part of Pitt County and all of Beaufort County.

Louis M. Pate Jr., a Mount Olive Republican, filed to challenge Snow Hill Democrat Don Davis for Senate District 5, which serves all of Greene and parts of Pitt and Wayne counties.

Pitt County district court judges Joe Blick and Gwyn Hilburn filed for re-election to their respective seats on Monday.

Mark W. Owens Jr., who is seeking re-election to Pitt County Board of Commissioners' District 4, also filed Tuesday.

Contact Ginger Livingston at (252) 329-9570 or glivingston@reflector.com.
Food bank regional council adds members

Sunday, February 7, 2010

The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina at Greenville announced the appointment of seven new members to its regional council.

The Greenville food bank, at 497 W. Ninth St., is a branch of the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina in Raleigh. The role of the council is to primarily generate and develop funding and other resources within the council itself and the community at large for the mission of the food bank. The Greenville branch serves Carteret, Craven, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Onslow, Pamlico and Pitt counties. Edgecombe and Wilson counties are shared with the Raleigh branch.

New council members are:

**Steve Jones:** joined the council as chairman in September. He is executive vice president of First American Financial Management Co. A 1991 graduate of East Carolina University, Jones has primarily worked in the banking industry. He is a member of the ECU board of trustees and has served on the food bank’s executive committee, the Great Raleigh Chamber of Commerce executive committee and as past chairman of the YMCA of Greater Fayetteville.

**Don Fisher:** vice president and general manager of WCTI News Channel 12. A graduate of Elon College, has worked with FOX and ABC stations and became general manager of WCTI in 2008.

**Philip Rogers:** served as executive assistant to the chancellor at East Carolina University since September 2008. He has degrees from Wake Forest University and UNC-Chapel Hill.

**Nick Crabtree:** owner of Crabworks, a food manufacture and distribution company in Greenville specializing in global distribution of a variety of frozen food products. Prior to starting Crabworks, Crabtree worked in advertising and marketing. He is a 1999 graduate of ECU and a two-year letter winner for the Pirate football team.

**Joanna Rose:** part of the Commercial Real Estate division at RBC Bank. She has been in the financial services industry for 15 years. Rose has been involved in various community development opportunities, including the IRS VITA tax program.

**John Tipton:** a third-generation custom home builder from Greenville. His family’s company, Tipton Builders Inc., has been in business for close to 40 years in eastern North Carolina.

**Greg Weatherford:** vice president of sales for Sysco in Raleigh. He has 29 years in the food service industry. Weatherford serves on the East Carolina School of Human Ecology advisory board and on the N.C. Hospitality Education Foundation board.

Other new council members include Stacy Hill, who resides in Greenville.

The Greenville Food Bank also had several returning council members:

**Becky Stasavich:** retired after three different careers — high school English teacher for six years, associate dean of students on two college campuses for 13 years, and 23 years as a church administrator.

**Ann Harrison:** retired professor from ECU, where she taught gifted and special education. For 10 years, she has directed the food pantry at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church.

**Cliff Harvell:** pastor of Brooks Frizzelle Memorial United Methodist Church in Maury and Mount Herman United Methodist Church in Lizzie for the past seven years. He also is founder and coordinator of the Greene County Interfaith Food Pantry.

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As college costs rise, sticker shock eased by student aid

By Daniel de Vise
Washington Post Staff Writer
Wednesday, February 10, 2010; B01

If the $50,000-a-year price of a prestigious private college looks unreal to most families, well, it's not real. At least, not for most students.

The sticker price of private college has soared in the past five years, feeding a common perception that the most expensive schools are beyond the reach of most families. But net price -- the amount the average student actually pays -- has declined.

The higher education marketplace increasingly resembles a mall on the day after Thanksgiving. The published price of a college education has spiraled far above what the average student pays after subtracting grants, tuition discounts and tax benefits.

Published tuition, fees and living expenses at private nonprofit colleges average $35,640 in the 2009-10 academic year, according to the definitive annual report Trends in College Pricing by the nonprofit College Board. But net price averages $21,200. Adjusted for inflation, one has gone up. The other has gone down.

"The price, on the surface, is more than a middle-income family can pay," said Alison Rabil, assistant vice provost and director of financial aid at Duke University. "But we're not asking families to pay that amount."

College finance has grown increasingly complex. The phenomenon of rising sticker price is partly a marketing trick, partly a tool to redistribute the costs of college across income levels.

Tuition and fees have risen by nearly one-third at private nonprofit colleges since fall 2004, or 15 percent in inflation-adjusted dollars. But aid has risen faster.

The difference between sticker price and net price "may be the single most misunderstood fact" in higher education, said David Warren, president of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. "Net tuition is only 45 percent of the advertised tuition. That's a pretty significant difference."

The most selective, well-endowed colleges dispense ever-greater sums of grant aid according to need -- and rising tuition has broadened the definition of need. At the most expensive colleges, the term now applies to families making $200,000 a year.

With a household income of about $100,000 and his family's home in foreclosure, Nicholas Parks didn't know whether he fit George Washington University's definition of need. As Parks approached college
admissions season last winter, GWU was a $53,000-a-year dream school.

"I didn't really have my heart set on it," he said, "because I didn't think I'd be able to afford it."

The school rewarded his dream with $35,000 in grants, covering most of his tuition and fees, leaving the Parks family to handle room and board, books and car fare from Fairfield, Conn. Parks, 18, is midway through his freshman year.

"I was shocked when I got it," Parks said. "I really never thought I was going to come here."

About 55 percent of incoming George Washington freshmen received grants, and the average grant recipient got $23,640. The net price for a year's education for those students: $29,052.

Tuition is rising even at less-selective regional colleges. Many offer increasingly generous "merit aid" and tuition discounts rather than a low sticker price, on the theory that students tend to equate price with quality. At some institutions, a large majority of students pay less than full price.

Net price has declined by a few hundred dollars among private nonprofit colleges in the past five years, in inflation-adjusted dollars, according to the College Board analysis. Net price rose slightly in the 2009-10 academic year because of the economic downturn, as grant aid trailed tuition increases for the first time in several years, according to Sandy Baum, a College Board researcher.

Looking back over a decade instead of just five years, the net price of private college is only modestly higher now -- up 7 percent -- the report shows, even though tuition has swelled.

The net cost of public colleges has risen slightly in recent years because of dwindling state funds. At the University of Maryland, for instance, 57 percent of in-state freshmen received aid in 2008-09, according to data provided by the school. Grants averaged $7,535. They brought the cost of U-Md., including living expenses, down from a list price of $21,163 to a net price of $13,628 for grant recipients.

Most colleges don't advertise net cost, for the same reason hotels don't post their lowest rates on guest room doors. No two students are likely to be paying the same amount. Selective schools don't want to create false hope in aid applicants, and less selective schools don't want to diminish the prestige of a high sticker price.

"It's complicated, because students' unique situations make them eligible for different amounts of aid," said Haley Chitty, spokesman for the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.

To clear the air, the federal government will require every college to post a "net price calculator" on its Web site by August 2011. The calculator must estimate what a particular student will pay to attend the college, based on the family's finances and the school's aid budget.

The notion of estimating what each student will pay is daunting to many private colleges because pricing often depends on factors other than need. How will the calculator account for merit aid and tuition discounts?

"That is going to be the huge question as people begin to reckon with this," said Douglas Bennett, president of Earlham College in Indiana.

Several schools, including Yale, Princeton, Amherst and Williams, have net price calculators or aid
"estimators" on their Web sites. Estimating net price is comparatively simple at those schools, which have enormous endowments and dispense aid entirely based on a student's need and with fairly predictable results. At less wealthy, less selective schools, aid is often determined case by case.

Lauren Lightfoot, 21, got a modest grant to attend Georgetown University, one of several dozen colleges that pledge to meet the full need of admitted students. She chose Georgetown over the University of Georgia and Vanderbilt University, each of which she could have attended on full scholarship.

"It's just like buying Coke over the store brand soda," she said.

Lightfoot comes from a middle class family in suburban Atlanta. Her father works for the Postal Service; her mother is an electronic technician at AT&T.

"I don't think that they considered me needy," she said of Georgetown, where she is an English major. "The school costs about $55,000 a year. Two hundred thousand dollars, that's a lot of money for anyone."


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