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LA GRANGE — North Lenoir High School junior Cory Gosnell visited seven countries Tuesday without leaving his school for the journey.

Gosnell was among several hundred students who participated in North Lenoir's mini-international festival, which continues today in the school's library.

East Carolina University students from Iraq, Scotland, Costa Rica, China, Korea, Nigeria and England spoke to North Lenoir students to share information about their native lands. Francisco Corichi, a Lenoir County Schools language instructor, said the event was designed to bring the nations of the world to Wheat Swamp.

"The ECU School of International Affairs has helped us out with this," Corichi said. "We also involved the local community."

The two-day festival included music, crafts and cultural displays from several nations. Sarah McHard of Helensburg, Scotland and Claire Taweel of Costa Rica were among several speakers from ECU who participated in Tuesday's festival.

McHard discussed Scotland's weather, sports, government and pub life. She said it doesn't get very warm during the summer months in Scotland.

"Sometimes it gets warm, but it doesn't happen very often," she said. "It rains a lot."

Football is Scotland's national sport, which is called soccer in America. McHard passed around several football jerseys from her favorite team for the students to see.

Growing up in Scotland, McHard visited a local pub with her family. Pubs in Scotland are centers of the community.

"Families go to pubs with their children," she said.

Another favorite pastime for McHard while living in Scotland was attending musical festivals. She said Scotland's music was rich with cultural heritage.

McHard's fellow ECU student, Taweel, discussed her life in Costa Rica. Taweel also studied abroad in Costa Rica for six months.

"Fifty percent of Costa Rica is rain forest," Taweel said. "The people who live there take pride in the environment."

According to Taweel, there are about 200 volcanoes in Costa Rica, and earthquakes are a common occurrence.

"The last major earthquake in Costa Rica was in 2008," she said. "It scared me to death."

The festival will begin again today at 8:30 a.m. at North Lenoir in the school library. ECU speakers will
discuss their countries’ cultures, beginning at 9 a.m. Exhibits will be on display from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

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Duke students add competitive fishing to their pursuits

DURHAM -- On the banks of the Eno River, Santosh Shanmuga and Drew Haerer targeted spawning white bass on Sunday.

They're Duke students who are trying to transform the Duke Bass Fishing Club, in its second year, from a loosely formed group into a team that competes against other schools in largemouth bass tournaments.

And in the meantime, there are always fish to be caught.

Haerer, a graduate student from Woodward, Pa., cast small in-line spinners into the shady pools of the narrow stream as he targeted pods of fish headed upstream, migrating from Falls Lake in search of spawning grounds.

"I saw one swim by that was loaded up with eggs," said Haerer, the club's vice president. "I've seen fry in the water, but I still have seen fish spawning this morning."

Said Haerer, "They're definitely in here. Some are just pickier than others."

At that moment, a small white bass nipped at a tiny floating crankbait before darting off.

Duke's club has about 30 members, but about eight are most active, said Shanmuga, the club president.

Shanmuga, a freshman biomedical engineering major from Ann Arbor, Mich., has wide-ranging fishing knowledge and experience. He has fished the trout streams of northern Michigan with a fly rod and has pursued sailfish in a kayak in the waters just in front of Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

For collegiate bass-fishing tournaments, he and his fellow club members have one immediate need. Unlike N.C. State, North Carolina and East Carolina, which have established clubs with sponsors, the Duke club doesn't own a bass boat.

Yet.

"As soon as we get a boat, we'll be able to compete just as well," Shanmuga said. "We have some good fishermen, too."

The club is looking for donations of money, or better, a boat. Shanmuga would like to find a used bass boat for about $6,000.

Once the club has a vessel, it will apply for funds from the university's student-affairs office to cover travel expenses for competitions.

"We want to fish," club member Jeremy Hockman. "It doesn't matter how we do it. We don't need fancy equipment."
And boat or no, the club has brought together fishermen of different stripes.

Hockman, a freshman studying mechanical engineering from Miami, is more of a saltwater fisherman, but he likes fishing too much to fish only when he can get to the coast.

Members go fishing frequently, from the freshwater lakes within a short drive of Duke's campus to the Outer Banks and Wilmington for inshore and offshore excursions.

"The club has expanded the range of my tackle box," Hockman said.

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Show blends art, fashion, food

RALEIGH -- This year, Art to Wear had a new name: Food to Wear.

The popular N.C. State University fashion show, which annually blends the best of fashion and art coming out of State's College of Design and College of Textiles, had a newcomer taking home the judges' top prize Wednesday night.

Kirk Smith, a food science senior from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, presented an entire collection made from food packaging. Smith may be the only student without ties to the College of Design or the College of Textiles ever to be in the show.

He made a pair of pants from Bojangles' silver foil biscuit wrappers. There was a slinky corset dress made from Natural Light beer cans. Smith shredded and then wove Starbucks coffee cups and cup holders to create a cap, jacket and handbag. He made a wedding gown from Jimmy John's sandwich wrappers that had been folded into fans.

The finale was a jumpsuit made from small, medium and large Marco's pizza boxes.

His collection delivered more than just a few laughs.

Smith, who initially tried out to be in the show to win a bet with a fellow designer, polished each piece with a level of attention to detail that would have made "Project Runway's" Tim Gunn proud.

The legs on the pizza box suit moved in sync as the model walked. The beer-can dress had cut-off beer can bottoms dangling from the hem, and some of the cans looked as if they'd just come out of the fridge and been popped open. The Bojangles' pants had back pockets made from Bojangles' trademark yellow-and-red boxes. Those same boxes were used for a sombrero hat, suspenders and cuffs.

Wearable art, too

As expected, fashion and textile management major Chase Kennedy delivered one of the evening's most wearable collections. It also might have been one of the largest in Art to Wear history. Kennedy made a staggering 18 outfits for the show that included more than 60 individual pieces.

"I've been pushing myself to create a collection as if I were truly showing it as a designer at Fashion Week," Kennedy said before the show.

His highly tailored, gothic-inspired looks in black, white and shades of gray dazzled with Kennedy's typical attention to detail. Standouts included a pair of pleated gaucho pants and a series of blazers and jackets for both men and women.

Other student designers shined with conceptualized collections that also entertained on the runway.

Keely Cansler delighted with her "marionettes" that were cut free from their strings. Lauren Boynton
hand-dyed, painted and screen-printed fabrics to create her dark and dramatic "storm" collection. And Jeremy Medlin had an Art to Wear first when he brought two motorcycles onto the runway to show his leather welded motorcycle gear.

For some, the pre-show, which gave students with single outstanding garments a chance to show their work, would have been satisfying enough. Standouts included a black-and-white polka dot cocktail dress, a V-neck black cocktail dress with white satin bow and a gorgeous collection of knitted shrugs and evening wraps.

Pre-show stealer

Gabrielle Duggan's collection, however, stole the pre-show.

"[Her] collection was the epitome of Art to Wear," said Sarah Lytvinenko, a former Art to Wear designer who is a designer and co-founder of Raleigh Denim. "Not only did she explore the relationship between garments and the body, she made the audience really feel her concept. Her video was a brilliant addition."

Another lively addition to the pre-show came from freshmen College of Design students, who wore the white paper masks, hats and headdresses they created in class. They ran the gamut from structured to silly to dainty to comical.

"It gives me a great deal of encouragement for world design, what I saw here tonight," said William Ivey Long, who was one of the show's judges. The Tony Award-winning Broadway costume designer funded two awards for the student designers, including the judges' award.
April 14, 2010

Ex-Student Sues Brown Over Rape Accusation

By KATIE THOMAS

A former student has sued Brown University in federal court, saying university officials interfered with his efforts to clear his name after another student, the daughter of a prominent Brown alumnus and donor, accused him of rape.

In documents unsealed Monday, the former student, William McCormick III, said the university had failed to follow its own disciplinary policies and sent him home to Wisconsin after the woman’s father made calls to top university officials. The rape accusation was never reported to the police by Brown or the woman, according to the lawsuit. Within a month, Mr. McCormick had agreed to a private settlement with the woman’s lawyer: if he withdrew from Brown, she would not file criminal charges.

In a statement, a spokeswoman for Brown said the university and its employees had acted appropriately. “As in all instances, the university respects and maintains the confidentiality of student and employee records,” said Marisa Quinn, the university’s vice president for public affairs. Mr. McCormick’s lawyer declined to comment on the lawsuit, and a lawyer for the accuser and her father did not return calls.

Some advocates for students say that university policies are particularly one-sided when it comes to sexual misconduct cases and that the McCormick case highlights a legal gray area in which students at private universities can be accused of potentially serious crimes, but are not always given access to the same due-process rights afforded by the police or in a court of law.

“They have tended to favor the accusers rather than the accused,” said Adam Kissel of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, which focuses on students’ rights issues and has criticized the sexual misconduct policies at Duke, Columbia and other universities. “It’s almost as if guilty when charged is the policy, instead of innocent until proven guilty.”
At a hearing on Monday, Judge William E. Smith of Federal District Court in Providence, R.I., questioned why Brown never reported the alleged attack to the police. "The thought that with all the people involved in this matter at different levels, a determination is made to not tell law enforcement, even the Brown Police Department — I'm having trouble getting that," Judge Smith said, according to The Associated Press. He also characterized the lawsuit as "a mess" and told Mr. McCormick's lawyer, J. Scott Kilpatrick, that some of the assertions appeared to be unsubstantiated.

According to his lawsuit, Mr. McCormick arrived at Brown in the fall of 2006 as a star wrestler and straight-A student with a financial aid scholarship to attend the university. He was assigned to live in the same dorm as the female student. In the first few days of school, the lawsuit describes the two as becoming "friendly, but not romantic." But Mr. McCormick quickly drew attention in the dorm, the lawsuit says: his 250-pound frame cut a "physically imposing figure," and the woman's friends began describing him as "creepy" and called him her "stalker."

The woman first told her resident coordinator that Mr. McCormick was following her. According to an e-mail message from a Brown associate dean that is part of the court record, the student was initially reluctant to name Mr. McCormick and complained that she "did not want to have anything bad happen." The message also indicated that the woman's parents had called a high-level Brown official to discuss the matter.

The lawsuit claims that Brown employees pursued the complaint vigorously, pressing the student to divulge Mr. McCormick's name and pressing her to add to her complaint. According to the lawsuit, at one point the student felt that the officials were "yelling at her" and that the ordeal was taking time away from sailing practice and studying for a chemistry test. Eventually, with the help of her resident coordinator, she wrote a statement asserting that Mr. McCormick had raped her.

After the student amended her complaint to include rape, Brown officials met with Mr. McCormick and presented him with a one-way ticket home to Wisconsin. According to the lawsuit, they denied his requests for a copy of the complaint against him and he was not given an opportunity to provide his version of events. He was told only that he faced a complaint of "sexual misconduct," the lawsuit asserts.

The McCormick case is not the first time Brown has been sued over a sexual misconduct case. In 1998, the university settled a lawsuit with Adam Lack, a student who was suspended for a semester after another student accused him of having sex with her without her permission. His accuser later acknowledged she was drunk and did not remember the incident. The story led to a national debate over what constitutes rape, and how colleges should handle such
cases.

"The escalation of the story was the same in both cases," said David Josephson, an associate professor of music at Brown who acted as an informal advocate for Mr. Lack. Mr. Josephson said he sat in on a meeting between Mr. McCormick and Brown officials at the request of Mr. McCormick's faculty representative. "The case smells to me of injustice — left, right and center," he said.

Courts have traditionally been reluctant to challenge the internal policies of private universities. In 2000, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled in favor of Brandeis University in a similar sexual misconduct case, arguing that the university did not have to offer due process to a student who asserted that his date-rape case had been mishandled.

In court documents, Brown said it took appropriate action to safeguard one of its students from a possible attacker. Mr. McCormick's lawsuit asserts, however, that the university interfered with his access to potential witnesses and refused to provide documents that might exonerate him.

The lawsuit also asserts that a Brown dean arranged for Mr. McCormick to face an administrative hearing rather than have his case heard by a panel of peers, faculty and deans. The university's "actions and inactions," the lawsuit asserts, "had the intended effect of largely crippling William's ability to defend himself."

Mr. McCormick, who is now a junior at Bucknell University, asserts that the agreement he reached soon after the rape accusation is invalid because he was coerced to sign it under threat of criminal charges. Lawyers for his accuser have asked the judge to dismiss the case because under the settlement, Mr. McCormick gave up his right to sue.

The case was initially filed in September under seal in Rhode Island state court at the request of Mr. McCormick, who argued he did not want to be seen violating the confidentiality terms of his agreement with the student. It was moved to federal court in October.
Middlebury to Develop Online Language Venture

By TAMAR LEWIN

Middlebury College, a small Vermont college known for its rigorous foreign-language programs, is forming a venture with a commercial entity to develop online language programs for pre-college students. The college plans to invest $4 million for a 40 percent stake in what will become Middlebury Interactive Languages.

The partnership, with the technology-based education company K12 Inc., will allow Middlebury to achieve two goals, said Ronald D. Liebowitz, the president of the college: It will help more American students learn foreign languages, an area in which they lag far behind Europeans; and it will give Middlebury another source of revenue.

“We wanted to do something about the fact that not enough American students are learning other languages, and it’s harder for students if they don’t learn language until college,” Mr. Liebowitz said. “It is also my belief, and I think our board’s belief, that finding potential new sources of revenue is not a bad thing. By doing what we’re doing with this venture, we hope to take some stress off our three traditional sources of revenue — fees, endowment and donations.”

Middlebury, a 2,400-student liberal-arts college with an endowment of more than $800 million, has offered summer immersion language classes for almost a century, and now teaches 10 languages in those programs at its campus and, as of last year, some at Mills College in Oakland, Calif.

Partnerships between universities and commercial entities have become increasingly common in recent years, but the Middlebury venture is unusual in that it ties the college’s academic reputation in foreign languages to a third-party vendor. Moving into such an uncharted area carries risks, education experts said.
“These partnerships are starting as ways for colleges, which may feel themselves cash-strapped, to make some bucks,” said Philip G. Altbach, the Monan professor of higher education at Boston College. “I have problems with the whole thing, particularly for a place like Middlebury, which has a reputation as one of the best liberal-arts colleges in the country, and for doing a very good job with languages. They should protect that brand. They are not known for online programs, and to jump in to the deep end of the swimming pool, with a for-profit, is in my view dangerous.”

Mr. Liebowitz said that although the move carried risks, so, too, does inaction. “The way I see it, to retain our leadership in the teaching of foreign language, we have to evolve with the times,” he said. “And where things are going, in terms of access and education, is online.”

In 2008, Middlebury joined with the Monterey Institute of International Studies, a California graduate school, to start the Middlebury-Monterey Language Academy, an intensive language-immersion summer program for students in grades 8 through 12. That program, which will expand to new sites in the new venture, offers four-week residential sessions at Green Mountain College in Vermont, Oberlin College in Ohio, Pomona College in California, and Bard College at Simon’s Rock in Massachusetts.

Middlebury has also expanded its academic-year study-abroad sites, the C. V. Starr-Middlebury Schools Abroad, to 35 cities across 14 countries. Almost half the students at those sites now come from other colleges.

A hallmark of Middlebury’s language schools has been a formal pledge to speak only the language of study during the session.

Of course, online programs cannot replicate the immersion experience.

The online expertise for the venture will come from K12, a publicly traded company based in Herndon, Va. In partnership with charter schools and school districts, K12 operates online public-school programs in 25 states and Washington. K12 also operates the K12 International Academy, an accredited, diploma-granting online private school serving students in more than 40 countries.

“We plan to make the courses available to individual kids, home-school kids, charter virtual schools, and teachers who might want them as supplements” Mr. Liebowitz said. “I think the price point will be somewhere in the vicinity of $100.”