East Carolina student crowned Miss USA

Staff, wire reports

Sunday, April 19, 2009

LAS VEGAS — East Carolina University earned a title of a different variety Sunday night when Miss North Carolina USA Kristen Dalton was crowned Miss USA 2009.

The 21-year-old ECU senior and aspiring motivational speaker from Wilmington beat out 50 other beauty queens in a live pageant televised from Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino in Las Vegas.

Dalton edged out first runner-up Miss California USA Carrie Prejean, of San Diego, and second runner-up Miss Arizona USA Alicia-Monique Blanco, of Phoenix. Last year’s Miss USA was Crystle Stewart of Texas. Contestants from all 50 states and the District of Columbia competed in the pageant.

Dalton is a graduate of Wilmington Hoggard High School and is an honors psychology and Spanish major at East Carolina.

Kristen’s mother, Jennie, served as Miss N.C. USA in 1982 and her sister, Julia, served as Miss N.C. Teen USA in 2008 and second runner-up in the Miss Teen USA pageant.

The title comes with a year’s use of a New York apartment, a public relations team, a two-year scholarship at the New York Film Academy and an undisclosed salary.

Dalton will go to the Bahamas in August to compete in the Miss Universe pageant, where American beauties haven’t been lucky in recent years. Both Miss USA 2008 Crystle Stewart and her predecessor, Rachel Smith, wiped out on stage during the evening gown competition, becoming accidental YouTube stars.

On the Net:

Miss Universe Organization www.missuniverse.com

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ECU trustees continue to discuss funding crisis

By Josh Humphries
The Daily Reflector

Friday, April 17, 2009

The East Carolina University board of trustees continued discussions of the state budget and funding crisis Friday when it met at the East Carolina Heart Institute.

"The fiscal crisis of the state continues to dominate our thinking," Chancellor Steve Ballard said.

ECU lost $25 million in state funding this year and officials are planning for losses up to $35 million, Ballard said.

"We expect the next two and a half years to be very tight — these are not extravagances — we are going to have to cut things that really make a difference," Ballard said.

No members of the faculty have been cut due to budget constraints, Ballard said.

"But we have to plan for a gap or cut next year twice as high as last year," he said.

"Folks, that will be tough on every corner, or aspect, of the university."

He said plans are to focus on the faculty core of the university and to try to manage the budget in such a way that faculty and staff won't lose their jobs.

"We are doing everything we possibly can to avoid that but it depends on the size of the cutbacks," Ballard said.

The university's budget task force has already recommended ways to increase efficiencies, cut administration costs and to get rid of programs with only a few students.

The board also discussed the expansion of Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium which will ultimately hold about 50,000 Pirate football fans.

Athletics Director Terry Holland told the board that plans are in place to build the expansion on the east end of the stadium by 2010. However, the final decision will be made later this year as officials evaluate ticket sales and Pirate Club donations, the sources for funding the expansion.

The new section will create a bowl style stadium and hold about 7,000 fans. The section is slated to be a student section.

"We believe it will pay for itself and the construction will stimulate the local economy," Holland said. "It's an investment that will pay dividends."

The board also approved a parking fee increase for spaces on campus.

The fee increase will boost the cost of parking in all lots on campus and the board plans to take another look at parking costs next year.

Fees will increase on all types of parking permits allowed on campus from motorcycles to retired faculty.

Contact Josh Humphries at jhumphries@coxnc.com or (252) 329-9565.
ECU Notes: Block grant will help enhance communities

ECU News Service

Sunday, April 19, 2009

East Carolina University and the North Carolina Department of Commerce have collaborated on an innovative Community Development Block Grant program designed to strengthen less-prosperous communities in eastern North Carolina.

The “Talent Enhancement Demonstration Grants” program is designed to provide technical assistance and financial resources to increase competitiveness and build stronger, more vibrant and more capable communities.

The grants are available to units of local government in Gates, Northampton, Hertford, Perquimans, Pasquotank, Camden, Currituck, Chowan, Bertie, Edgecombe, Martin, Washington, Tyrrell, Dare, Wilson, Halifax, Pitt, Beaufort, Hyde, Wayne, Lenoir, Craven, Pamlico, Jones, Onslow, Carteret and Greene counties.

ECU’s Office of Engagement, Innovation and Economic Development (OEIED) and the North Carolina Department of Commerce’s Office of Rural Development are managing the program.

Communities can receive assistance for the following activities: grant writing, grant administration training and technical support; feasibility study assistance and preparation; economic impact analyses; entrepreneurial and small business technical assistance; community survey research; and community design assistance.

For grant guidelines, contact Charlie Thompson at (919) 733-1334 or cthompson@nccommerce.com.

Students display art

Seven artists graduating from the Master of Fine Arts program in the School of Art and Design at ECU will display their work at the Wellington B. Gray Gallery on campus.

Joshua Parker Coombs received his BFA from Maryland Institute, College of Art in Baltimore, in General Sculptural Studies in 2002. While obtaining an MFA at ECU’s Sculpture Department, he has focused on mixed media sculpture using a variety of materials including steel, cement and fabric.

Daniel DiCaprio has shown his art in the United States, Korea, Italy and Spain. His innovative combinations of woodworking and metalsmithing have earned him representation through Charon Kransen Arts. His work can be seen most recently in the spring 2009 issue of Metalsmith magazine and at SOFA New York.

Emily Soldin Howard, a mixed-media fiber artist, lives in Raleigh with her husband and son. A graduate of Meredith College in 2001, Howard has exhibited her work in galleries regionally and nationally, most recently at Artspace in Raleigh.

Linsi McAfee graduated from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte in 2006. Her art explores mixed media techniques influenced by photography, screen printing and textiles.

Kimberly Rumfelt, a Texas native, graduated from Texas Tech University in Lubbock in 2005. Her visual dialog is created through the use of multiple materials and concepts that discuss culture and domesticity.

Shand Stamper received her BFA from the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, Miss. Her current metalwork explores the cyclical nature of time and human connection, through adornment.
Cherry Neu Stevens, a native of Nebraska, found inspiration growing up on a farm where working with your hands was a daily necessity. She graduated from the University of Nebraska in May 2006 with an emphasis in sculpture and a minor in painting, and studied sculpture at ECU.

The Wellington B. Gray Gallery is located off of 5th and Jarvis streets in the Jenkins Fine Arts Center. Hours are Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Endoscopy center opens

A new medical practice site has opened offering more convenient access to certain types of medical procedures.

At the East Carolina Endoscopy Center, physicians will perform endoscopic procedures to diagnose and treat gastrointestinal conditions such as colon cancer. The center is on the third floor of Moye Medical Center at 521 Moye Blvd.

The center is a joint venture between East Carolina University’s medical practice, ECU Physicians and Pitt County Memorial Hospital. PCMH will provide staffing and management oversight, while ECU will provide doctors for the center.

Endoscopies are procedures that allow physicians to look inside the body using a tiny camera housed in a small flexible tube.

The 11,000-square-foot center has three procedure rooms, with room for a fourth, and a dozen preparatory/recovery rooms. The two gastroenterologists and five surgeons perform 12 to 15 procedures daily.

The East Carolina Endoscopy Center is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Patients must be referred by their primary care physician.

Help to stop smoking

Smokers wanting to quit can get some help from ECU Physicians’ four-week smoking cessation program.

The class will cover smoking facts, ways to deal with cravings, healthy substitutions for cigarettes and methods to help people quit smoking.

Classes are Wednesdays from 1:30-2:30 p.m., April 22 through May 13 in the classroom of the ECU Family Medicine Center at 600 Moye Blvd. For information or to sign up for the classes, call 744-4611.

Upcoming events:

Wednesday – Tree plantings on campus to mark Earth Day. 10 a.m. in the wooded area near the Langford-Joyner clock tower; and 2 p.m. near the International House.

Friday and Saturday – The East Carolina Film Festival, short, documentary and feature films in seven screenings. Hendrix Theatre in Mendenhall Student Center. Free for ECU students; $10 for festival pass to the public. www.eastcarolinafilmfestival.com.

See www.ecu.edu/cs-ecu/calendar.cfm for more information on these events and other ECU upcoming activities.

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April 18, 2009 Darts & Laurels

Saturday, April 18, 2009

Laurels — To the Police-A-Kid-Emy program that aims to produce lasting bonds between children and law enforcement officers. Sponsored by the Police Athletic League, the week-long session provides activities and events for more than 50 area children over their spring break. It also forges a better relationship between kids and officers that helps serve the community.

Laurels — To the 2009 PirateFest, a sprawling community celebration with events for the whole family. From the 15th annual International Festival taking place on the Town Common, to the Uptown Arts Festival on Evans Street, to the 26th annual Purple and Gold Pigskin Pirate PigOut, there's something for everyone today in Greenville. Get out and enjoy it.

Laurels — To the 39th annual Shad Festival, the annual event held in the southern Pitt County town of Grifton. This year's theme — Griffon Going Green — intends to highlight the need to keep the community clean and healthy, especially to protect the small bony fish that give the festival its name. Events will be held today and Sunday, giving area residents another weekend option.

Darts — To the financial squeeze that has forced some local entities to reduce hours in an effort to conserve funding. The Pitt County Humane Society no longer operates on Tuesdays, moving to a Wednesday-to-Sunday schedule, and the Greenville Aquatics and Fitness Center has reduced hours of operation for its pool. Other public services have been reduced as well, reflecting the grim economy.

Laurels — To the Greenville-Pitt County Senior Games, the annual event that promotes an active lifestyle among the area's senior citizens. Running from April 14 through May 12, Pitt County's seniors are joined by those from four other nearby counties for the games, which include more than 40 sporting events. It is a valuable event for participants, and provides a chance for seniors to earn a spot in the statewide games.

Darts — To the removal of the water tower at the old Imperial Tobacco plant in Greenville, the latest step in clearing that land. The plant was destroyed by fire last year, which led to a decision to fell the local landmark, including the water tower and smokestack that helped define the city's skyline.

Laurels — To the addition of a new section on the Greenville-Pitt County Chamber of Commerce Web site that hopes to keep local businesses involved in government operations. Members can use the site to contact local officials and monitor legislation at the local, state and national levels. It should prove to be a valuable resource for the area's business community.

Compiled by Brian Colligan, editorial page editor of The Daily Reflector. Contact him at 329-9507 or via e-mail at bcolligan@coxnc.com

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ECU club welcomes former governor

The Daily Reflector  
Monday, April 20, 2009

Former North Carolina Gov. Jim Hunt was guest speaker for the Cypress Glen Retirement Community’s ECU Club’s recent meeting.

“Jim Hunt is known across the country for supporting education and North Carolina is known as the Education State because of him,” East Carolina University Chancellor Steve Ballard said, in his introductory comments.

In his unprecedented four terms in office as governor, Gov. Hunt was a strong supporter of education, created the Smart Start program and was an early advocate of classroom teaching standards.

The crowd of more than 100 Cypress Glen residents and their guests heard Gov. Hunt “do some reminiscing.”

“ECU has shaped all of our lives who live in eastern North Carolina,” he said. He has close ties to ECU and said his mother attended ECU and earned a masters degree in Library Science and his daughter is currently getting a Nurse Practitioner degree online at ECU. “But nothing has made me prouder than fighting to get the medical school here.”

Gov. Hunt said he wanted to propose a “new Eastern N.C. for a bright, creative and prosperous people.” To make that happen, he said, “first, we need to provide civil and human rights to all our people. Give everyone a chance to be the best they can be.”

Second, our public schools must work for all students. “About a third of our students who start ninth grade drop out of school and never graduate,” he said. “To make our schools more successful we need strong and necessary standards in our schools and we need accountability in the classroom.”

Third, ECU must continue its tradition of excellence. “ECU has contributed much to eastern North Carolina and will continue to do so,” he said. “And ECU needs an Engineering School.”

Chancellor Ballard, along with Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs Marilyn Sheerer made brief remarks, followed by a question and answer time from the group. Sheerer recapped some of ECU’s accomplishments and growth. She said, “The current census for this academic year is 27,677 students and 88 percent of these were in-state students.”

ECU has led the way in Distance Education, she said, with these students accounting for about 6,000 out of the 27,677 total students. She also projected that by 2013, the student population will number around 33,000, with 9,000 of these students in the Distance Education program.

Entertainment was provided by Carroll Dashield, Jr., who returned for his second visit to the club. Dashield is the director of Jazz Studies & Jazz Ensemble at ECU and has toured with many musical legends such as Ray Charles & Jennifer Holliday. He is a bassist, musical director and composer/arranger. He performed some favorite jazz classic selections.

The Cypress Glen ECU Club is sponsored by the East Carolina Alumni Association and is open to all residents and their guests who have an interest in East Carolina University.

Cypress Glen is a Continuing Care Retirement Community located in Greenville at 100 Hickory Street, about one mile from the ECU campus.

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State puts freeze on purchasing supplies

By Ginger Livingston
The Daily Reflector

Friday, April 17, 2009

Public schools and state agencies can't buy any more supplies for the fiscal year's remaining 2 1/2 months, it was announced this week.

The April 13 memorandum sent to public school superintendents from the State Board of Education said any goods or services ordered but not received by Thursday had to be canceled unless it was a one-of-a-kind order or "critical and necessary" to continue direct classroom instruction for the fiscal year ending June 30.

"At this point, it's about continuing services and not entering into additional contracts," said Paul LeSieur, the Department of Public Instruction's director of school business services. "Because of the cash flow issue that we are having, the real key is money not be spent or obligated so cash will be available at the end of the month for payroll."

The state board's memorandum came four days after the State Office of Budget and Management froze all state spending except for payroll, utilities, financial aid, required state aid and debt service. The state said not only are purchases not allowed, there will be no more travel except for public safety, public health or economic development opportunities. Promotions are on hold, and vacant positions won't be filled.

The new mandate shouldn't diminish this year's graduation ceremonies at East Carolina University, spokesman John Durham said. His own office, which produces Pieces of Eight, the faculty-staff newspaper, canceled the printing of the upcoming monthly issue. It will be an online publication, he said.

This week was Pitt County Schools' spring break.

"Right now our district administration is in the process of working with (the Department of Public Instruction) to clarify these restrictions and establish parameters to help move (the school system) forward," Heather Mayo, the school system spokeswoman, said. "We will be communicating these parameters with schools and administrators next week."

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Medical & Health Sciences Foundation adds board members

The East Carolina University Medical & Health Sciences Foundation announced the addition of Mayo Boddie Jr. of Rocky Mount, Stacy C. Brody of Greenville, Richard R. Eakin of Greenville, Thomas L. Southern of New Bern and Dr. Khanh Vu of Oxford to its board.

Boddie is the vice president of Boddie-Noell Enterprises. He graduated from East Carolina University with a business degree in 1976 and serves on the board for ECU Hospitality Management and the Nashville Arts Center.

Brody has been a community volunteer in Greenville for a number of years. She serves on the Friends of the Ronald McDonald House board and is a committee member for Congregation Bayt Shalom.

Brody also is a former board member of the Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation.

Eakin, the former chancellor of ECU, is involved with the ECU Health Sciences Division and is chairman of the Friends of Laupus Library board. He also serves as a board member for the East Carolina Center for Nursing Leadership.

Southern, a representative of Mass Mutual Financial Group in New Bern, received a business degree in 1974 from ECU. He serves on the ECU Board of Visitors and is a board member for the Craven Regional Medical Center Foundation.

Vu, president of Vance Family Medicine Clinic in Henderson, has been a family medicine physician for 21 years, graduating from University of Kansas School of Medicine in 1985. He also serves on the Maria Parham Hospital board, Four County Physician Association board and Four County Physician Hospital Association board.

The East Carolina University Medical & Health Sciences Foundation serves the College of Allied Health Sciences, Brody School of Medicine, College of Nursing, Laupus Library, Leo Jenkins Cancer Center, East Carolina Heart Institute, School of Dentistry and the Metabolic Institute with financial support, scholarships, education and research.
SAT-free admissions: more than a fad?

BY JUSTIN POPE, The Associated Press

WINSTON-SALEM - If you're one of those students afraid that standardized test scores don't paint the full picture of your potential, your options are growing. More and more colleges don't require the SAT or ACT exams.

Wake Forest and Smith just admitted their first class of applicants who could decline to submit SAT or ACT scores, and Sewanee and Fairfield will do the same next year.

But is the "test optional" movement gaining steam or running out of it? That was a big question hanging over a college admissions conference hosted by Wake Forest last week. The answer could come in the next few weeks as colleges set their policies for next year's admissions cycle.

So far, several hundred colleges have gone test-optional for at least some students, including a growing number of more selective liberal arts schools.

"I don't know if you can tell a tipping point until after it's happened, but it's very close," said Bob Schaeffer, the gadfly testing critic who heads the group FairTest. He said he has heard from at least a dozen very selective institutions that are reviewing their admissions policies.

But most colleges still use standardized tests in admissions. The College Board, which owns the SAT, says only 45 schools are truly test-optional for all.

The SAT was devised in 1926 as a merit-based leveler to replace the elite pipeline from prep schools to top colleges. The idea was to let students show their natural ability even if they didn't come from the best schools.

But many now view the SAT as the opposite -- as an obstacle to opportunity. They point to scoring gaps among socio-economic groups and to concerns that the test is too coachable.

Some critics think test-optional is a ploy for colleges to attract more minority students without having to report their scores, which are lower on average, to the U.S. News & World Report rankings.

But Provost Jill Tiefenthaler said Wake Forest went SAT-optional to send a signal that it really wants a broader range of students. And it worked: Applications this year rose 16 percent overall and 70 percent for blacks.

The new policy irked some Wake Forest alumni, who said the school was putting diversity ahead of standards. But Tiefenthaler said, "The kind of students we want here are sometimes going to be great test-takers and sometimes not."

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Colleges vs. K-12 is old battle

BY ROB CHRISTENSEN, Staff Writer

This is, as the late state Sen. Ralph Scott of Alamance County once put it, "throat cutting time" in the legislature.

In Jones Street backrooms - smokeless these days - key lawmakers are making difficult decisions on the budget. This year, with state government facing more than a $3 billion shortfall, the deliberations are about spreading the pain.

One of the key issues this year - should the university system or the public school system take priority - has historic echoes in North Carolina.

Gov. Beverly Perdue has proposed a budget that emphasizes secondary and elementary education. The state Senate has offered its own budget plan, which is much kinder to the University of North Carolina system.

This in part reflects the politics and personalities involved. Perdue is a former schoolteacher and a major ally of the N.C. Association of Educators, the influential teachers lobby. Senate leader Marc Basnight is the legislative patron saint of the UNC system and is very close to UNC President Erskine Bowles.

The Perdue budget emphasizes protecting the secondary and elementary schools, while cutting $167 million from the UNC system. The Senate budget would cut only $35 million from the UNC system but would cut more deeply in public schools funding by increasing the size of secondary and elementary classrooms by an average of two students. The school cuts would save an estimated $322 million.

The university-versus-public schools argument has been boiling in North Carolina since the 1920s. That is when North Carolina, then a poor state, began pouring money into the Chapel Hill campus in an effort to elevate the university to national prominence.

At the time, state politics was controlled by the business interests -- what political scientist V.O. Key called a "progressive plutocracy." The business leaders of the state didn't want to send their sons and daughters up north to be properly educated. So they helped turn the UNC system into one of the nation's great university systems.

We can see the benefits of that decision today. Research Triangle Park, the economic engine of the region, would not be here if not for the universities. It has meant that in every community in North Carolina there are leaders - bankers, teachers, factory owners, lawyers, builders - who are well-educated.

The decision was also an economic one. It is far cheaper to build a first-rate university system than it is to create a first-class statewide public school system.

What began in the 1920s has continued in recent decades. In his new book, "North Carolina in
the Connected Age," N.C. State University economist Michael Walden notes that growth in university spending has outstripped spending on the state's public schools.

From 1972 to 2005, the proportion of income spent on grades K-12 in North Carolina remained about the same - below the national average, Walden said.

By contrast, in 1972 North Carolina was above the national average in spending on its university system. Since then, funding for the UNC system has grown faster than the national average, Walden wrote.

It has long been said that North Carolina has a Cadillac university system and a Ford public school system. The university/public schools debate is still going strong.

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Hospital gown getting redesign

NCSU team aims to please patients

BY JANE RUFFIN, Staff Writer
Comment on this story

It's medicine's equivalent of the fig leaf, except it doesn't always stay in place.

It's the hospital gown, the flimsy, blousy garment with a loosely tied open back that seems perpetually at risk of exposing what it's supposed to conceal.

Jeannie Norris knows. The employee of the N.C. State University Alumni Association recently spent time at Raleigh's Rex Hospital for a burst appendix.

"When you are in the hospital and had surgery, you really feel bad," said Norris, 44. "You don't pay a lot of attention to what's hooked and what's not. You find out after the fact that you've been walking around flashing people."

N.C. State is taking up the challenge of improving a gown design that has gone unchanged even as everything else in medicine has advanced rapidly.

Traci Lamar, a textile design professor at N.C. State, is leading a team that is working to create a more comfortable, less revealing hospital garment.

"They are really not only undignified and immodest, but it is influencing some behavior and some attitudes," Lamar said. "One patient literally used the word 'mortified': 'I was
mortified at the thought of getting out of the bed.""

Lamar's effort is not the first attempt to update a gown whose design is stuck in the early 20th century, when most patients were bedridden and it didn't matter that what they were wearing had a split up the back. But Lamar has the financial backing and serious research to develop a restyled garment that could finally be practical for hospitals across the country. The researchers hope to have the product ready for market in about two years.

The quest started in November 2006, when Lamar and researchers working with her received a $236,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Since then, they have surveyed patients and health-care workers, held focus groups and talked to hospital staffs in charge of buying gowns. The point was to identify the qualities -- such as style, cost, durability, comfort, function -- most needed in hospital wear.

The researchers came across complaints they did not expect. For example, nurses don't like the ties holding gowns together, because they are prone to form knots.

Feeling exposed

And they found that many patients wear two or even three gowns at the same time, adding to hospitals' expenses of acquiring and laundering the gowns.

"The only way I could feel covered and ready to face the public was to wear two of the gowns," said Locke Bowman, 82, of Southern Pines, a retired Episcopal priest and seminary professor who broke his ankle in 2007. "One was tied awkwardly in the back, and the other was tied in front. I was so busy trying to recover quickly that I just put up with the gowns as a necessary nuisance."

Patients also don't care for the lightweight fabric. "The gowns are so thin they are really just a rumor between you and the staff," said Jean Bolduc, 50, director of corporate communications for the Durham Housing Authority. Bolduc had neck surgery in July at Durham Regional.

The NCSU researchers have reached an important point, preparing to show examples of the concepts they are considering at a campus reception next week.

A reporter for The News & Observer could not see the samples because the university canceled a meeting planned with the researchers. A spokeswoman for the NCSU College of Textiles said the university and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation had promised to give the story exclusively to The Wall Street Journal.

Some hospitals already give patients more modest, up-to-date clothes, although they cost more than typical gowns. At Hackensack University Medical Center in New Jersey, patients wear colorful drawstring pants, boxers, tops, side- and front-snap gowns and robes by fashion designer Nicole Miller. The 100 percent cotton garments are thicker and more tightly woven than many gowns, and they cost about twice as much, said Suzen Heeley, Hackensack's director of design and construction.

Options please patients

"I think patients are very pleased, knowing they have options on different styles," Heeley said -- "men don't always want to wear a dress, a gown."

"They think it conveys a sense of caring, that we care about the patients' privacy and their dignity. That means a lot. When you feel better about your environment and what you are wearing, we feel that it really helps the patient's recovery time."

The NCSU group will soon request a second phase of funding from the foundation to produce a prototype. As part of this phase, they plan to conduct laboratory evaluations and wear
tests, develop manufacturing specifications and, in the end, have a garment ready to go. At the same time, they will research fabric that resists bacteria and viruses, to be incorporated into the garment during a third phase of their work.

The promise of a garment that fights the spread of infection interests hospital officials, said Meera Kelley, a physician who serves as vice president for quality and patient safety at WakeMed. Traditional gowns absorb fluid, such as blood and urine, and thus harbor bacteria, she said. So a health-care worker who touches a patient's wet gown can spread contamination.

Kelley hopes WakeMed will be able to test NCSU's new garment, but whether it and other hospitals purchase the final product will depend on cost. WakeMed currently pays $5.59 for a standard gown, which sustains 40 to 50 washings before it is thrown out. Every day, the hospital launders 1,400 to 1,500 gowns.

"Many hospitals are just barely profitable, if not actually in the red," Kelley said. If the new garments are very expensive, WakeMed may not consider them worth the investment.

But satisfying a patient's sense of modesty is worth something, too, she said. "I think people tolerate a lot that they wouldn't tolerate in the real world because they are sick and vulnerable," she said. "I think we need to do better."

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- 'Frankly ... you feel bad enough'

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Mystery donors give over $45M to 9 universities

DES MOINES, Iowa — A mystery is unfolding in the world of college fundraising: During the past few weeks, at least nine universities have received gifts totaling more than $45 million, and the schools had to promise not to try to find out the giver's identity.

One school went so far as to check with the IRS and the Department of Homeland Security just to make sure a $1.5 million gift didn't come from illegal sources.

"In my last 28 years in fundraising ... this is the first time I've dealt with a gift that the institution didn't know who the donor is," said Phillip D. Adams, vice president for university advancement at Norfolk State University, which received $3.5 million.

The gifts ranged from $8 million at Purdue to $1.5 million donated to the University of North Carolina at Asheville. The University of Iowa received $7 million; the University of Southern Mississippi, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and the University of Maryland University College got $6 million each; the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs was given $5.5 million; and Penn State-Harrisburg received $3 million.

It's not clear whether the gifts came from an individual, an organization or a group of people with similar interests. In every case, the donor or donors dealt with the universities through lawyers or other middlemen. Some of the money came in cashier's checks, while other schools received checks from a law firm or another representative.

All the schools had to agree to investigate the identity of the giver. Some were required to make such a promise in writing.

"Our chancellor was called to a Denver law office and had to sign a confidentiality agreement that she would not try to find out," said Tom Hutton, spokesman at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

"Once the chancellor signed it, she was emphatic that we don't try to find out."

Each was delivered since March 1 and came with the same stipulation: Most of the money must be used for student scholarships, and the remainder can be spent on various costs such as research, equipment, strategic goals and operating support.

"We have no idea who this generous individual is, but we're extremely grateful," said Lynette Marshall, president and chief executive of the University of Iowa foundation. "This is the first time in my 25-year career that something of this magnitude has happened."

Usually when schools receive anonymous donations, the school knows the identity of the benefactor but agrees to keep it secret. Not knowing who is giving the money can raise thorny problems.

William Massey, vice chancellor for alumni and development at UNC-Asheville, said the school contacted the Department of Homeland Security and the IRS to make sure the money was legal before accepting it.

"There may be an ethical problem if you knowingly accept funds from ill-gotten gains," said Colorado Springs' Hutton. University officials "do due diligence and ask the appropriate questions and receive satisfactory answers."

The $6 million donated to the University of Southern Mississippi was the largest single gift ever bestowed to the school.

"It was a remarkable gift particularly during these economic times," said David Wolf, vice president of
Mystery donors give over $45M to 9 universities

advancement.

“I think somebody is out there, or potentially a group of people, that has a great respect for the value of a college education and the power that it brings,” Wolf said. “Gosh, if it’s the same person or the same collective group of people, it’s an amazing story.”

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