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Moore ready to go to work
By Nathan Summers
The Daily Reflector
Tuesday, April 27, 2010

As far as Wes Moore is concerned, coaching only works when those receiving the coaching are capable of carrying out the game plan.
Now that he’s been sworn in as the new women’s basketball coach at East Carolina, Moore said he’s ready to create a cast of characters similar to the ones he said were the backbone of his past success.
Moore, who was introduced as ECU’s 10th women’s basketball coach on Tuesday, made an admittedly difficult choice to leave the team at Chattanooga he’d coached for the last 12 years in order to take on a new challenge at ECU.
Although he’d enjoyed unprecedented success — his Lady Mocs won the last 11 Southern Conference titles under his watch — Moore decided to pounce on the ECU vacancy created when Sharon Baldwin-Tener announced she was leaving Greenville after eight seasons.
“‘To make a career out of something you love and have a passion for has been a privilege,’” Moore said Tuesday. “‘From the moment I realized I wasn’t going to be the first NBA lottery pick out of Johnson Bible College, I knew I wanted to coach.”
Although he admitted he’s had little time to study his new team’s roster, Moore said he already knows ECU’s potential based on its 23-win season in 2009-10.
“There is talent there which is a little bit different than any other program I’ve inherited,” said Moore, who added that having a handful of seniors on his first ECU team will mean an immediate need for recruiting. “‘Recruiting right now is pretty critical for the future.
“It’s all about players. My first year at Chattanooga we won 10 games. My second year at Chattanooga we won 26 games. It wasn’t that I just all of a sudden just got smart. We got players.”
In order to find those players for the future, Moore said he’s planning on recruiting now, starting with making contact with current high school juniors this week.
Despite having a golden touch with the teams he’s coached, Moore insists his blueprint for success is based solely on talent.
“We’ve been very fortunate to attract some very talented players,” he said. “The last four years we’ve had the player of the year in the conference. Once you start winning, it’s going to attract more great players.”

Moore’s immediate objective will be to try to build on the framework left behind by Baldwin-Tener, who two weeks ago accepted the head coaching position at Georgia State. While he said he knows the transition period will be tough, Moore thinks it will also be quick, especially given the level of experience the ECU roster already possesses.

“They’ve already proven that they’re a talented team with the success they’ve had of late,” Moore said of the Lady Pirates, who scored a WNIT victory over Drexel as part of a 23-win season last year. “Hopefully that great foundation that has been laid and that taste of winning they’ve enjoyed will make them hungry to win championships and to continue to try to go to the next level.”

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Contributed photoComedian Joe DeRosa will perform as a part of the Bonnaroo Comedy College Tour at 7 p.m. today, Hendrix Theater. He will also be at a special Meet and Greet at U.S. Cellular from 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Amy Schumer
Chris Haston
No joke: Comedy tour brings acts to ECU?'s campus
By Kristin Day
The Daily Reflector
Tuesday, April 27, 2010
This year, the Comedy Theatre of the Bonnaroo Music & Arts Festival is hitting the road for the first-ever Bonnaroo College Comedy Tour, and East Carolina University is among a handful of schools on the initial schedule.

The tour, featuring Amy Schumer (“Last Comic Standing”), Joe DeRosa (Comedy Central) and Pete Holmes (“Best Week Ever”), will stop at ECU’s Hendrix Theater at 7 p.m. today and is free to those with a valid ECU student ID.

U.S. Cellular, a partner with Bonnaroo this year, also will host a meet-and-greet session with DeRosa from 2:30-3:30 p.m. for all potential customers in its store at 310-A E. Arlington Blvd. (across from WITN). The first 100 people to arrive will get to meet DeRosa and will be entered to win an Xbox, a Blackberry and other prizes on site.

“It is because we are much more than just a phone company,” Marcel Bekers, director of sales at U.S. Cellular, said of the event. “We’re in the business of connecting people. ... We love supporting events like these because it’s a great opportunity for us to bring people together and what better way to do that than to have a good time.”

Prior to tonight’s show, students and potential customers also have a chance to win VIP tickets to the festival — held June 10-13 in Manchester, Tenn. — at the meet-and-greet, at the show or by registering at www.getusc.com/bonnaroo. The prize comes with airfare to Nashville, Tenn., all-access VIP passes, three gourmet meals a day and private accommodations on a fully stocked, luxury rock ‘n’ roll bus. Winners will be notified near the end of May.

Bekers said aspiring comedians can upload a video of their routines to that site and receive a $25 gift card. The videos might be shown during tour stops.

The Bonnaroo Music and Arts Festival announced its first-ever College Comedy Tour on March 24, but ECU didn’t sign up until last week or so, Bekers said.

“We constantly work with the universities in our footprint,” he said. “... Because this is a big market for us, we wanted to see if ECU wanted to partner with us on it and they agreed to do so.”

The Bonnaroo Music & Arts Festival is a four-day event featuring more than 100 musical acts, arts and comedy. Headlining this year are Dave Matthews Band, Stevie Wonder, Kings of Leon and Jay-Z. Conan O’Brien, Margaret Cho and Aziz Ansari, who will host the MTV Movie Awards in June, will be among the performers in the comedy tent.

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Comedy Tour
What: Bonnaroo College Comedy Tour featuring Amy Schumer, Joe DeRosa and Pete Holmes
When: Today, 7 p.m.
Where: Hendrix Theater
Admission: Free to ECU students with a valid ID
Editorial: **Bowles set to tackle deficit in new leadership role**

Wednesday, April 28, 2010

Retiring University of North Carolina system President Erskine Bowles accepted a tremendously difficult task when President Barack Obama asked him to help lead the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform. That group will be expected to recommend strategies for slashing the federal deficit and seeking a responsible return to solvency in Washington’s budgeting.

Thankfully, however, Bowles has been here before, serving as chief of staff for President Bill Clinton when Congress approved a balanced federal budget that created a significant annual surplus. His willingness to return to Washington is commendable, and reminds North Carolina of the shoes it must fill in finding his replacement.

In February, Bowles announced his intention to leave his post as head of the UNC system by the end of the year. When he does, it will close the curtain on a laudable term of service that began in 2006, and which has focused on strengthening the ties between the 16 member schools. Bowles has been a reliable champion of East Carolina University during that time, making his departure of particular concern to this community.

His reasons for leaving are sound. Not only does he recognize the value in bringing new ideas to that important leadership position, he was asked to return to service in the nation’s capital, where he will look to tackle one of the most pressing issues facing the nation. A ballooning federal deficit has fueled a skyrocketing national debt, one that has accelerated amid the economic recession. Bringing revenue and spending back into line has emerged as a possible area of bipartisan cooperation.

Agreement on the problem is the easy part, though, and Bowles and committee co-chair former U.S. Sen. Alan Simpson, a Wyoming Republican, will have to find initiatives that can win widespread legislative and public support. Obama has said that all options are on the table, and that he has invested this committee with the latitude to consider all possible solutions. That likely means that a combination of spending cuts and modest tax increases, perhaps through a flatter tax code or closed loopholes, will be the proposal.

Clear, however, is that Americans should have both confidence in and support for this effort. Bowles’ experience, both in Washington and while at the helm of the UNC system, makes him a perfect fit for bringing people together, finding common ground and making thoughtful recommendations that address the problem. North Carolina’s loss may well be the nation’s gain.
Big East gets Liberty Bowl option
C-USA champion loses automatic slot in Memphis, Tenn., game

BY CAULTON TUDOR
STAFF WRITER

An agreement announced Tuesday between the Big East Conference and the AutoZone Liberty Bowl could add up to bad news for ECU and its Conference USA rivals.

The Big East has moved in as an option for the Memphis game, which will be played on Dec. 31 this year.

The league will have the option of sending a team to the Liberty Bowl or to the Papa johns.com Bowl in Birmingham, Ala.

Both games will choose from a pool of teams that includes the SEC, Big East and Conference USA. Previously, the Conference USA champ faced an SEC foe in the Liberty Bowl. The Big East will place a team in the Liberty Bowl at least once, but perhaps more often than that, during the next four years.

The C-USA champion Pirates played in the past two Liberty games, losing by close outcomes to Arkansas last season and to Kentucky in 2008.

There was no immediate reaction from Conference USA, which is headquartered in Irving, Texas. The league had six bowl berths in 2009.

With the Liberty, the Big East now has seven possible games — the BCS, the Champs Sports Bowl, the Meineke Car Care Bowl, the New Era Pinstripe (Yankee Stadium) and the Beef O' Brady's Bowl (St. Petersburg, Fla.) in addition to the Liberty and Papa johns.com games.

Last season, Conference USA had six spots, but none more prestigious than the Liberty.

The good news for the 12 Conference USA teams is that the Liberty opening will fall to sixth in the Big East's pecking order. And with only eight

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ECU's Patrick Pinkney helped Pirates win back-to-back C-USA championships to earn Liberty Bowl berths.

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football members, the Big East may not be able to qualify six teams. In 2009, Louisville and Syracuse both finished 4-8 overall and failed to gain postseason eligibility.

With a new coach, Ruffin McNeill, and heavy personnel losses from last season's 9-5 team, the Pirates will be a long shot to repeat as C-USA champ. The likely preseason favorites will be Southern Miss and Marshall in the East Division and Houston and Southern Methodist in the West.

ECU's nonleague schedule features Virginia Tech, North Carolina, N.C. State and Navy; the Pirates will be fortunate just to finish 6-6 overall. In league play, however, the Pirates have a chance for a smooth start under McNeill, a former defensive back star for the school.

His first two games will be in Dowdy-Ficklen against league foes Tulsa (Sunday Sept. 5, 2 p.m., ESPN2) and Memphis (Sept. 11, time to be announced later).

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Weighty themes await freshmen

Incoming freshmen at area colleges and universities are being asked to read books with heavy themes - the oppression of women, the wrongful conviction of a man for rape, the end of the world - before arriving on campus this fall.

Schools recently announced their summer reading selections. Though some assignments have proved controversial in the past, the books this year - sometimes dark - all have a message of hope, campus leaders say.

UNC-Chapel Hill freshmen will be reading "Picking Cotton," a memoir co-written by a rape victim and the man she wrongly accused of the crime. Authors Jennifer Thompson-Cannino of Winston-Salem, and Ronald Cotton of Mebane have become unlikely friends over the past 12 years.

In 1984, Thompson-Cannino, then a student at Elon University, picked Cotton out of a police lineup as the man who broke into her apartment and raped her. Cotton was sentenced to life in prison and served until 1995 when DNA testing became available and he was exonerated.

"There are several themes; certainly one of them is sexual violence against women and ... what the aftermath is for these young girls," Thompson-Cannino said.

Cotton shares his point of view about being an innocent man who served a third of his life in prison. The book also discusses how they forged a friendship based on faith and forgiveness, Thompson-Cannino said.

"We're extremely proud and grateful our book was chosen," she said. "Young people do need to read it because they are the future jurors, judges, lawyers and police officers who will hopefully fix the system and make it better."

The end of the world

N.C. State University and Meredith College both chose "Half the Sky," written by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, a husband-and-wife reporting team. The book explores issues faced by women around the world, and it offers ways readers can help make a difference. The book's title refers to a Chinese saying, "Women hold up half the sky."

"This is one of the hardest books I've had to read," said Roger Callanan, an assistant undergraduate dean at NCSU. "This is not pleasurable. But it's important. We're talking about real brutality and grotesque abuse. But if you persist, at the end it is hopeful, and it is challenging. Now that you know, what are you going to do?"

Duke University has selected "Everything Matters," a novel by Ron Currie Jr., about a comet destroying Earth in 2010.

"With this book, Duke makes the Class of 2014 imagine an interesting, yet scarily plausible scenario:
The world is going to end," said Meredith Jewitt, a student member of the summer reading committee.

Peace College's pick is "The Blue Sweater," a nonfiction book by Jacqueline Novogratz about social entrepreneurship. Novogratz takes readers on her journey to Rwanda, where she helped women set up a bank.

"It's the story of her life and how she chose her career path and her passion," said Dawn Dillon, director of Peace's "first year adventure." "I think it's an inspiring story that one person can make a difference ... and just the value of service."

N.C. Central University does not have a summer reading assignment.

Seeing hope

UNC-CH's assignment used to be required reading for incoming freshman. But after controversies in 2002 and 2003, the assignments now are recommended reading. Three freshmen and a conservative Christian organization sued the university in 2002, saying the assignment of "Approaching the Qur'an" was unconstitutional. In 2003, a group of students protested the selection of the book "Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America."

Priscilla Wald, an English professor at Duke, said she thinks the themes this year reflect hope.

"We're living in a moment - partly because of the last public election - where people are not afraid to hope and believe that if they take action they can make a difference," she said. "You can only look at dark subjects when you feel you can make a difference. People are feeling both that they are responsible for the world and that they can translate that responsibility into action, no matter how small."

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Autism program halts bonuses

CHAPEL HILL -- UNC-Chapel Hill medical school officials ended employee performance bonuses in its renowned autism program after an audit found the cash awards were given out improperly.

Since 2002, 296 bonuses were given to employees with TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children), an internationally acclaimed autism treatment and education program. Two managers requested and received bonuses for themselves, one for $1,500, the other for $300.

Employees received $48,150 in bonuses in all.

Employee recognition programs are not uncommon. But employees must be nominated, and a committee must decide who receives the awards.

That never happened, according to the recent university audit requested by William Roper, dean of the medical school.

"We found no justification of why employees should receive an award/bonus," the audit says. "In two cases, [managers] asked for and received bonuses for themselves."

The program was stopped last year after auditors raised questions about it, said Karen McCall, a university spokeswoman.

The employees receiving the awards were not identified in a redacted version of the audit provided to The News & Observer.

Their identities are protected by personnel laws, McCall said.

The bonuses, which were included in paychecks, averaged between $100 and $200 and were as low as $40, said Margaret Dardess, a medical school administrator now serving as TEACCH's interim director.

The audit doesn't address whether employees deserved the bonuses.

"These are fairly small payouts. It doesn't necessarily mean the whole program was wrong. It just wasn't keeping with all the policies and procedures," Dardess said. "And it doesn't happen anymore."

The two managers who requested their own bonuses did so just once, in 2005.

"They seem to be totally isolated cases," Dardess said. "They were paid out one time, and it never happened again."

TEACCH was created in the late 1960s by Eric Schopler, a UNC-CH psychiatrist who believed treatment could improve dramatically if parents, who he felt knew their autistic children best, were trained properly to help them.
Gary Mesibov, who worked with TEACCH for three decades and succeeded Schopler as director, resigned earlier this year. He has not responded to requests for comment about his resignation or the audit.

A second employee recognition award within TEACCH still exists. It gives a $200 award to an employee each year.

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Nursing mothers get a break, starting now

At SAS Institute, nursing mothers who need to express milk during the workday can go online to schedule a lactation room that features a recliner and soft music.

The Cary company, known for its family-friendly business model, has provided the service for 12 years. Now, all businesses are required by law to offer such a room for nursing mothers. (The recliner and music are optional.)

Way down in the federal health care bill that Congress passed in March is a little known amendment for nursing mothers. Under Subtitle C, called Creating Healthier Communities, section 4207, the bill, effective immediately, requires employers to provide a "reasonable break time" for nursing employees to express milk during the first year of a child's life. Breaks must be given upon request as often as needed. (Mothers who have infants up to six months of age need to express milk every three hours.)

The law also requires employers to provide "a suitable place, other than a bathroom," for an employee to pump. The provision excludes employers with fewer than 50 employees if the employer can prove that allowing such breaks would "impose an undue hardship" to the business.

"Some employers are already doing this," said George Ports, senior human relations advisor with CAI, a nonprofit employers' association with offices in Raleigh and Greensboro.

For those who aren't, it should not be too difficult to implement, Ports said. The room can be a conference room or an empty office, and it should have a lock so that no one can walk in.

Where the law might get tricky is payment, Ports said. The law does not require employers to pay women for pumping breaks. But if an employer allows smokers to take paid smoke breaks and doesn't pay a woman while she pumps, the employer risks breaking discrimination laws, according to Ports.

Miriam Labbok, director of the Global Breastfeeding Institute at the UNC Gillings School of Global and Public Health, calls the new legislation "very exciting."

Industries such as factories or fast-food restaurants, where women are needed on the floor, may have a hard time allowing women to take breaks to pump, Labbok said.

"But it's possible because people do have breaks," she said, adding that UNC-Chapel Hill's campus has eight to nine private rooms for nursing mothers to pump.

Employers scramble

The new legislation is taking some area businesses by surprise.

Dean Ogan, owner of Rocky Top Hospitality, which operates several Raleigh restaurants, including Michael Deans, Hi5 and Bogart's, said he had not heard of the law.
Ogan said he has never had an employee request breaks to pump. But he would provide nursing employees with breaks and a room if asked, he said.

"It's common sense for a caring employer," he said. "I'm a parent. I get it."

Paul Stone, president of the N.C. Restaurant and Lodging Association, said the group's national arm is poring over the health care law to see how it affects association members. Then, the group will publicize the changes.

"Ninety-nine percent of restaurants have no idea this is in the bill," Stone said. "But to us, this is not a big deal. It's specific as far as the room requirements, but we support employers accommodating nursing moms. It makes sense, and I hope they are doing it anyway."

Other area workplaces, such as Belk, are working to find nursing rooms.

The SAS model

Gale Adcock, director of corporate health services at SAS, said she was providing breastfeeding information to employees 12 years ago and decided the company needed to actually do something, too.

She polled a group of nursing moms, and the first pumping room was created. SAS has a day care on campus, where providers call moms when their babies are ready to nurse, Adcock said. SAS also has two lactation consultants on staff.

The company provides such care, Adcock said, because it's good for the mothers, and it's a business decision that saves money. Half of SAS's employees are women, and the company wants mothers to come back to work after maternity leave, she said.

Plus, breast-fed babies get sick less often, Adcock said, so employees miss fewer days of work and it is less costly to the health insurance plan. And providing a lactation room is easy, Adcock added.

"It's as simple as a room with a lock and a chair," she said. "It's super simple and super cheap, but the goodwill it engenders is priceless."

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Student loan options studied

RALEIGH -- This summer, the legislature will consider a dramatic expansion of the types of financial aid available to community college students.

North Carolina is one of four states that don't make federal loans available to a large share of its community college students.

As many as 55 percent, or 177,000 students seeking a degree or certificate from a state community college have no access to federal student loans, which offer lower rates and more repayment options than loans from a commercial lender. Of the state's 58 community colleges, 21 offer access to the loans.

A student's options for financial aid depend on where they live. Wake Technical Community College offers the loans. Durham Technical Community College does not, nor does Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte.

A legislative commission recommended Tuesday that the legislature force every campus to provide the federal loan program by 2011.

"It is uneven, and that's the point," said state Rep. Ray Rapp, a Madison County Democrat, a co-chairman of the commission, adding that it's unfair that half of the state's community college students couldn't get the loans. "That's just unacceptable."

It's not clear what level of support the idea will have in the full House and Senate. To make the change more palatable to college administrators, the bill includes a provision that allows the campuses to move up to $50 million from the classroom to handle the costs of administering the program.

Even so, college presidents at campuses that don't offer the loans would not be thrilled about being forced to change course, said Kennon Briggs, chief operating officer of the N.C. Community College System.

Risk of default

Colleges take on risk when they offer the loans. Other federal financial aid offerings, including the Pell grant for the neediest students, could be in jeopardy if too many students at one campus default on federal loans. Federal rules say that if 25 percent of students in a graduating class default for three consecutive years or 40 percent default in one year, a college can lose its federal financial aid support.

Campuses offer options such as grants and other aid that would help a student graduate without debt, opponents of the mandate say. The loan programs offer too many easy ways for students to get into too much debt, they say.

Supporters say that if students can't get a federal loan, they would just turn to the commercial market or even a credit card, which costs more and is less forgiving.
Rep. Hugh Blackwell, a Burke County Republican, said he objected to forcing the campuses to offer the federal program because of the risk it carries.

Supporters of expanding the availability of the loans say the risk to campuses is overstated. Since 2004, no campus has had its financial aid revoked, and the federal government offers plenty of options and appeals for any campus with a default rate that is too high, said Sam Watts, a policy analyst with the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research, which has studied the issue.

"What's at stake is access to the safest and most affordable way to borrow money for community college for 177,000 students across the state," Watts said.

Watts said federal direct student loans would have rates as low as 3.4 percent in 2011. Commercial loans might carry a 12 percent rate. Plus the federal loan program, which includes subsidized loans for those who can demonstrate need, allows deferred payments or even a temporary halt on payments in certain cases, Watts said.

At Edgecombe

Edgecombe Community College, which has campuses in Rocky Mount and Tarboro, has offered federal loans since 1993. Like all campuses in the state, enrollment has surged as the recession has put more people out of work, said college President Deborah Lamm.

Likewise, the number of students seeking grants and loans has risen along with enrollment. In fall 2007, 8 percent of students got federal loans that totaled $353,000. In the fall of 2009, 18 percent of the college's students received federal loans, and the total amount had increased nearly tenfold. The average loan last year was $3,140.

Lamm said her campus's default rate in 2007 was 13.3 percent, which she acknowledges is a concern.

Her financial aid staff counsels students who have marginal grades or who appear to be risky borrowers to explore other options.

At Durham Tech

Campuses have no say in who gets a loan but are punished if too many default, which is one of the reasons Durham Tech has not offered them, said President Bill Ingram. Students can easily run up debt that they can't pay.

"We're emerging from a pretty significant economic downturn, the Great Recession, and it was built through a large degree on people borrowing money," Ingram said. "Managing debt or the inability to manage debt was one of the factors that led us to where we are now."

If the legislature decides to require the campus to offer the loans, Ingram said, the college would include a greater emphasis on money management in its orientation sessions.

"We will certainly follow the wishes of the General Assembly," Ingram said.

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