THE DAILY CLIPS

May 4, 2010

News, commentary, and opinion
compiled by the East Carolina University News Bureau from:

The Greenville Daily Reflector
The Raleigh News & Observer
The New York Times
The Wall Street Journal
USA Today
The Charlotte Observer
The Fayetteville Observer
The Greensboro News & Record
Newsweek
U.S. News & World Report
Business Week
Time

East Carolina University News Bureau
E-mail to durhamj@ecu.edu  Web site at http://www.news.ecu.edu
252-328-6481
East N.C. disease rate ‘close to the bottom’
Laura Oleniacz
2010-05-03 17:48:40

The prevalence of some chronic diseases like diabetes is greater in Eastern North Carolina than elsewhere in the state and there are also grim statistics for strokes, heart attacks, hypertension and kidney disease, according to a report from The Brody School of Medicine in Greenville.

The region would rank 48th in the nation for premature mortality if it were counted as a state compared to a ranking of 38th for the rest of the state, according to the report from the East Carolina University medical school that examines how the school is meeting its goals and what its future plans are.

“If you’re looking at the United States, and compare Eastern North Carolina with the rest of the United States, it would rank close to the bottom,” said Paul Cunningham, the school’s dean and senior associate vice chancellor for medical affairs. “For me, that indicates that we are close to being our own little Third World country surrogate.”

The school’s report, which was released April 27, looks at how the school is meeting the needs of the region. Cunningham said the school faces challenges given socioeconomic factors and the prevalence of chronic illness in the region, such as diabetes.

The prevalence of diabetes in the region is 7.4 percent, while it is 6.4 percent for the state, according to the report.

Craven County has higher rates of hospitalization due to diabetes than the state, with a rate of 2.4 per 1,000 people, compared with the state’s rate of 1.8 per 1,000, said Teresa Ellen, nursing director for the Craven County Health Department.

For other areas of concern outlined in the report — such as for strokes — the county’s rates of death fall below state and national rates, although it is a leading cause of death for Craven.

Ellen noted that Eastern North Carolina is known as the “stroke belt,” although she said “I would not say that’s the case in Craven County.”

The school’s report also notes concerns of increased demand on its multi-specialty group practice ECU Physicians from uninsured populations or those on Medicaid, and notes that the physician “shortages in Eastern North Carolina are more acute” compared with the rest of the state.

To answer that need, Cunningham said the school hopes to increase its medical school class size from 80 to 120, although the school’s next incoming class will have 78 students, an increase from the 72 students in the fall of 2008.

“We already have a physician shortage in the state,” he said. “We expect it to get much more acute over the next 10 years — again, with physician population being a part of the issue. It’s rural, and that makes it even more vulnerable.”

Megan McGarvey, director of public relations for CarolinaEast Health System that serves Craven, Pamlico and Jones counties primarily, also said there are issues with diabetes, stroke, and hypertension in the area.

McGarvey added that the system responds proactively to that with educational and screening services, and
she added that health care providers across the country have felt the effects of the economy on its uninsured population.

She said the system gave $28 million in care last year for patients who "could not or would not pay their bills."

"Caring for a very rural area of the state, we've always had a large number of uninsured and Medicaid patients," she said.

Laura Oleniacz can be reached at 252-635-5675 or at loleniacz@freedomenc.com.
Team seeking answers about painting

GREENVILLE, N.C. -- Each week, as many as a dozen faculty and curious students ride or climb to the top of East Carolina University's Joyner Library. They cluster in a room with a conference table in the center and lined with ancient books.

All chat excitedly as they wait for her arrival, talk about what they've found the last two months as they gazed at her under magnification or ultraviolet light.

ECU conservator Susanna Grieve lifts a blue, quilted blanket off an inconspicuous black box in the corner and folds back two protective wooden panels. The flashes of visiting media fire, but she remains still, not looking altogether pleased - the left side of her face screwed into a near grimace.

But the flaming hair and porcelain skin equally saddled with heavy, dewy pearls leave no doubt. It's Queen Elizabeth I immortalized in paint, the portrait the size of so many posters hanging in nearby dorm rooms.

There is much more the experts in the room don't know. Those details include when she was painted, who painted her and how she wound up sitting in a gatehouse where visitors paid admission to visit a Dare County historical attraction.

A team at ECU is determined to find out.

The portrait was purchased from the Berry-Hill Gallery in New York City, according to June Bell, governing board chairwoman for the Elizabethan Gardens. She and Dare County historians have been cobbling together a past for the painting in attempts to help the authentication process.

Bell thinks a North Carolina garden club and a private donor matched funds to purchase it for about $3,000, and it was bought specifically to hang in the gatehouse.

It's been cleaned several times, twice in-state but once in Washington, D.C. People passed the queen every day, but no one ever expressed a thought that she might be worth something, Bell said. Six million dollars, actually, is where estimates have come in if she's all she's cracked up to be.

And cracked she is, Grieve said, and weathered. It's Grieve's job to verify the information estimates are based on: that the portrait was painted in 1592, possibly by Tudor court artist Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, and was crafted late in the queen's life - a period which historians say she went to great lengths to destroy.

"I looked at her, and she was amazing," Grieve recalled. "The way she's posed and looks at you, it's like 'Wow. This is the queen.'"

She described the persistent glare as they tried to photograph the work, quipping, "It's almost like she wasn't giving us anything to work with."
Grieve was hired last July to reinvigorate ECU's conservation program, and history professor Larry Tise put her to work straight away. He noticed the painting years ago in his prior work as director of the state archives. It became his personal goal to see it identified and properly stored. It took more than two years to convince the board.

Tise has done some authentication of his own though he, like Grieve, is more at home with artifacts than art. Honored as the Wilbur and Orville Wright Distinguished Professor of History, he's identified a table from the Wright brothers' camp and targets they used for shooting practice.

"Eastern North Carolina is a treasure trove of things sitting around that people have seen ?EUR? and don't really know what they are," Tise said.

The team tries a different authentication procedure on the painting every Wednesday from 3-5 p.m. Each is non-invasive. This week, they used an X-ray fluorescent spectrometer, which measures levels of elements on the painting's surface. Those can help identify the type of pigments, which are matched with the time period artists used them.

"We do science," Grieve said.

There are symbols on the back - a V and a six - and the professors conjecture the body and background may have been painted prior to the head and face. The portrait has been restored a few times, each one masking potential clues, Grieve said. Many details remain a mystery.

There's been no "smoking gun" to prove authenticity, Grieve said. But the team also has found nothing that proves otherwise, including a prior study conducted in 1985.

This high-profile project could show the world ECU is equipped to take on this kind of research. Tise hopes it will be "a lightning rod" for other challenges and notes that no other state schools are actively authenticating and preserving state artifacts.

Professors already made headway with preservation work on the Queen Anne's Revenge, the remains of a 300-year-old ship piloted by infamous pirate Blackbeard. That's been possible because the university has one of only three underwater archeology programs in the nation.

"We're here to help preserve North Carolina cultural heritage, their family heritage," said Grieve, who said her students are doing pro-bono work for the Village of Yesteryear and are willing to take on more local projects.

As for the queen, she again will be on display Aug. 19, as Dare County and the Elizabethan Gardens celebrate the anniversary of Virginia Dare's birth. Historians believe Dare to be the first child born in the new world.

Bell said her board is not even talking about how conditions might change if the painting is as valuable as estimates project.

"I don't even want to get my hopes up that high," she said.
Rufin McNeill Jr. right at home at East Carolina

Rufin McNeill was selected as the new head football coach at East Carolina University, where he played in the seventies.

Staff photo by Raoul R. Rubeke

By Sammy Batten

Staff writer

LUMBERTON - Grass has long since overtaken the sandy base paths in the vacant lot next to the home where Rufin Home McNeill Jr. grew up.

Children rarely play here anymore, in this neighborhood known as East Pine.

The old guard has gradually moved away or died, and the streets that once gave rise to some of the city’s best athletes are showing their age.

But in the late 1960s and early ’70s, the vacant lot came to life almost every afternoon when a young McNeill ran from door to door gathering his friends.

“I’d hear a knock on my door and Rufin would be there going, ‘Let’s go play, man!’ ” said Jimmy Huggins, now a Wake County teacher. “He’d gather all the guys up and we’d go over to the lot next to his house — we called it McNeill Stadium — and we’d play anything. Basketball, football, baseball, kickball, wrestling, gymnastics. We did it all.”

McNeill probably had no way of recognizing it back then, but his early days organizing the neighborhood kids would become the seed for his success as an adult.

On Jan. 21, that little boy from gritty East Pine became the head football coach of East Carolina University.

“I think it’s funny how things work out,” McNeill said. “One door closes and another one opens.”

The trail leading McNeill to his first head coaching job began in an area of historical significance, especially for Lumberton’s African-Americans.

“The city’s first school for black children, the Redstone Academy, was established in East Pine by Bethany Presbyterian Church in the early 1800s. The church can trace its origin to 1875, when it was established in the homes of former slaves.”

One of East Pine’s original houses sits at 604 E. 11th St. Built in 1920, the neat brick bungalow belonged to the family of McNeill’s late mother, Bonnie.

Rufin McNeill Sr. met and married Bonnie in 1957 while he was serving with the Army’s 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg. They moved into the family home in the early 1960s. Bonnie became an elementary school teacher in Lumberton, her husband taught math and science at the junior high.
As a former football star at Fayetteville's E.E. Smith High School and Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, McNeill Sr. certainly passed on some of his athletic genes to his eldest son. But he credits the East Pine community with helping Ruffin Jr. develop as an athlete and a coach.

"I think it was the combination of his love for sports and our community," McNeill Sr. said. "Some of the best athletes in Lumberton came from right here in this neighborhood, and Ruffin learned about sports from them."

McNeill's neighborhood contemporaries were future high school stars; almost all of them lived on 10th or 11th streets in East Pine. As elementary students, they assembled daily on the vacant lot next to the McNeills' home or at the nearby Hayswood Hut to play whatever sport was in season.

"If you heard a ball bouncing, you were running out there," said Ruffin's younger brother, Reginald McNeill. "If you heard gloves popping, you're getting out there."

"Tuffy," as McNeil Jr. was known to friends, was one of the best athletes in the neighborhood. He was so good that boys two and three years older would invite him to play in their games. "Ruff was sort of a big dude for his age, and he was physical," Huggins said. "He wasn't afraid of anything. But what I remember most is that Ruff could run. I thought I was fast, but he was a little faster."

McNeill's speed and size would serve him well when he became old enough to compete in the city recreation leagues. For boys in East Pine, participating in Lumberton's recreation activities took them only a few hundred yards from their doorsteps to the Bill Sapp Center. The center became a home away from home for McNeill once he entered his early teens. He was especially fond of the center's gymnasium.

"He spent a lot of time shooting hoops at the Sapp Center," said Bennie McFarland, who lived around the corner from the McNeils. "If there was a game going on there, Ruffin was playing."

McNeill was once honored as the Recreation Department's athlete of the year. Bobby Sessoms ran the department at the time. Sessoms said McNeill was well liked and never caused problems. "Ruffin was always a polite young man," Sessoms said. "He had this great athletic talent but was so easy to get along with. His teammates loved playing with him. We never had a problem with Ruffin."

Sessoms recalls few troublemakers among the children participating in rec sports from East Pine. McFarland believes that was because of the discipline dealt by their parents. "If we did give them trouble, all they had to do was say they were going to call your mama or your grandmother," he said. "We knew if they did that, we'd get our tails whipped. So we stayed respectful and listened when adults told us what to do."

Ruffin Sr. said he left the tough discipline in his household to his wife, who had a special way of getting her sons' attention. The McNeill brothers shared a room growing up, which naturally led to a few scuffles. "My mom had these slippers that women wear with hard bottoms," Reginald McNeill said. "When we'd be fighting or making too much noise, she could throw one of those slippers where it would hit the door jamb, ricochet in our room and hit one of our beds. We knew she meant business when she did that."

About the only negative thing Ruffin Jr. could ever be accused of in those early days happened during baseball season. A notorious big swinger, McNeill had a tendency to strike out.

"He struck out a lot, but when he hit it, he'd knock the mess out of it," Reginald McNeill said. "But when he struck out, he'd throw that bat and everybody in the dugout would start moving because they knew it was coming. He'd huff and puff all the way to the bench. He was so competitive and couldn't stand any kind of failure."

Bonnie McNeill enrolled Ruffin Jr. in tae kwon do lessons in an effort to help control such outbursts. "She thought that would calm me down," McNeill Jr. said. "It did help me learn that's not the way to handle failure."

But losing was something Ruffin Jr. couldn't accept, even when it didn't involve him. "I was a pretty good baseball player, and one year I was on an all-star team that played in a tournament down in Fairmont," Reginald McNeill said. "We played some team and lost. My mother, Tuffy and I are riding back to Lumberton after the game, and we're listening to the radio. I'm sitting in the back seat, and I start humming along with the music. He turned around and starting yelling at me. 'I can't believe you're not crying! You just lost an all-star game and you're humming to the music.'"

"I thought he was crazy. But that's how bad he hates losing."

Ruffin McNeill Jr. went on to win 10 varsity letters at Lumberton High School - in football, basketball and track. He earned all-conference honors in all three sports as a senior in 1976.

"One of the best athletes I ever coached," said Tommy Thompson, now chairman of the health, physical education and recreation program at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. Former East Carolina football coach Pat Dye was watching a video highlight tape of another prospect when he saw McNeill run down a player from behind. McNeill's speed and effort impressed Dye, who would eventually offer a scholarship.
McNeill became a three-year starter in the secondary at ECU and served two years as team captain. He got his first taste of coaching as a student assistant for Dye while completing requirements for a bachelor's degree in education after his senior season.

McNeill was hooked. He returned to his roots to begin his coaching career.

His former basketball coach at Lumberton High School, Tunney Brooks, hired McNeill as head basketball coach and assistant varsity football coach.

During his coaching tenure at Lumberton, McNeill was introduced to his future wife, Erlene.

Also an ECU graduate, Erlene grew up in Columbus County but was working in Lumberton at the time.

"He was very charming, and he was fresh out of college, so being an athlete he also had those physical attributes that were attractive," Erlene McNeill said. "I wasn't really into sports until we started dating. So I was very excited to be marrying a coach, who would be doing all this traveling and other wonderful things.

"But then I realized there is a downside to this, that you can lose games."

McNeill stayed in Lumberton for five years before deciding to return to school.

Then-Clemson coach Danny Ford hired McNeill as a graduate assistant in 1985. A year later, McNeill helped the Tigers win the Atlantic Coast Conference championship. He worked with the linebackers while earning a master's degree in secondary counseling during a two-year stay in Death Valley.

Stops as a full-time assistant would follow at Austin Peay, North Alabama, Appalachian State, East Carolina and again at Appalachian State before McNeill achieved one of his career goals - becoming a defensive coordinator at the Football Bowl Subdivision level.

Nevada-Las Vegas gave him that opportunity in 1996, but it resulted in one of the few bumps in McNeill's career.

UNLV had a 3-20 record in the two years before McNeill arrived. A defense that surrendered more than 500 yards and 40 points a game was a major factor for the Rebels.

The defense improved in the two years under McNeill. But at the end of the 1998 season, head coach Jeff Horton was fired. McNeill was asked to remain on the staff of new coach John Robinson, but he declined.

"I didn't feel right staying because it wasn't the staff I was brought in with," McNeill said at the time. "Yeah, I was upset. It was the first time that had happened.

"But the day after we got dismissed, I got a call at 8 o'clock (in the) morning and it was (Texas coach) Mack Brown.

"He said, 'Ruffin, if you ever need me for anything, you put my name down. I'm putting your name out there right now."

McNeill landed at Fresno State, a stop that lasted only a year before Mike Leach came calling.

Leach, a flamboyant, offensive-minded coach, had just been hired to rebuild the program at Texas Tech. He brought McNeill along to coach the linebackers, beginning a relationship that lasted 10 years.

Leach named McNeill assistant head coach in 2003 and in 2007 handed him the reigns of the Texas Tech defense.

The Red Raiders became an annual bowl participant and contender in the Big 12 Conference under Leach. Their rise earned McNeill plenty of recognition and fueled his desire to one day have a program of his own.

McNeill had no clue at the time that his opportunity would come just a couple of hours north of his home in East Pine.

In January, Leach was fired for allegedly abusing a player. McNeill was named interim head coach and led the Red Raiders to a bowl win against Michigan State University.

Many football analysts thought McNeill was a shoo-in to replace Leach as head coach, but Texas Tech decided to hire seasoned head coach Tommy Tuberville instead.

That decision became a blessing in disguise for McNeill, who would get his first head coaching job at the college where he starred as a defensive back in the 1970s.

Ruffin McNeill Jr. has returned to his old neighborhood often through the years. Every summer, he spends vacation time at his childhood home and can be seen around town working out at a fitness center or playing golf at Pinecrest Country Club.

He'll drop by to spend time with his father when in the area recruiting players he hopes will help continue the success at ECU established by the coach he replaced, Skip Holtz.

Holtz directed the Pirates to back-to-back Conference USA championships before leaving in January for the University of South Florida. Twenty-eight seniors graduated from the 2009 title team, and a 29th player, defensive tackle Linval Joseph, left a year early for the NFL.

Maintaining ECU's success after such losses won't be easy for McNeill. But he believes applying the lessons he learned growing up in East Pine will help him cope with the challenges.

"I learned how to compete on a day-in and day-out basis growing up in East Pine," McNeill said. "That helped me develop an attitude where I'm not intimidated by the moment or the situation.

"But within that competitive nature was great love and caring for one another. It's the old adage, 'It takes a village to raise a child.' Each parent helped raise everybody else's child in East Pine.

"I use that now with our team. The older guys take the younger guys under their wings. They help influence them positively and encourage them to become the best they can be.

"I wouldn't have that knowledge to share without East Pine."

Staff writer Sammy Batten can be reached at battens@fayobserver.com or 486-3534.
Former Raider on track to become doctor, return home

by Hollie Nivens
04.30.10 - 09:29 pm

Richmond County native Mary Catherine Moree will graduate from the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University on May 7 with a doctorate of medicine.

Moree is the daughter of Phillip and Deborah Knight of Rockingham and the granddaughter of Julia Knight of Rockingham, the late John Knight and the late Barnie and Jean McDonald.

“The day that she walks across the stage will be the proudest day of my life because I know that she has achieved her life-long goal,” said Julia Knight. “I could not be happier.”

Moree is a 2002 graduate of Richmond Senior High, where she was co-vedictorian for the class.

“Growing up in Richmond County was the best,” Moree said. “It is great being able to go somewhere in town and know most of the people you meet.”

Moree also believes Richmond County played a key role in her success.

“I was presented with several opportunities because of the close-knit community that I would not have been exposed to elsewhere,” Moree said. “Throughout my high school and college careers, I was able to work with amazing mentors, Dr. Vetter and Dr. Schaeffer to name a few.”

Moree earned a bachelor of science in Biology and a bachelor of arts in Chemistry, from East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina, in December 2005 with summa cum laude distinction.

She also earned the University Honors distinction and was awarded the Phi Beta Kappa Outstanding Senior Award in May of 2005.

After graduation she will be doing her residency in family medicine at Cabarrus Family Medicine in Concord. The residency will last three years.
"I am so excited that I can finally say ‘Is there a doctor in the house’, and the answer is ‘yes!’,” said Phillip Knight.

"Scotland Memorial Hospital has been overly gracious in helping fund my medical school career and I will be working with them in the future," Moree said.

Scotland Memorial Hospital is actively recruiting medical students to serve in under-served areas. "I am grateful for the opportunity that they have given me to serve this community," said Moree.

Following completion of her residency, Moree and her husband Joseph Moree, a former history teacher of Rockingham Junior High, plan to make Richmond County their home.

"As most people who come from Richmond County, I still enjoy going to Raider football games with my family," she said.

"Going into Family Medicine, it is so important to understand the community in which your patients live in. It helps to put some context to their life outside of the doctor’s office," Moree said.

Moree has two sisters, Keri Cook and Regan Elsenpeter of Rockingham.

Hollie Nivens can be reached at (910) 997-3111 ext. 19 or by e-mailing at hnivens@yourdailyjournal.com.

© yourdailyjournal.com 2010
Some colleges are opting out of magazine's annual survey

By Daniel de Vise
Washington Post Staff Writer
Monday, May 3, 2010; B01

A small but determined group of college presidents is boycotting one of higher education's little-known spring rituals: the practice of lobbying each other for better "peer assessments" in pursuit of a higher spot in the coveted rankings compiled annually by U.S. News & World Report.

The reputation survey is the most important component of the preeminent collegiate rankings and the only factor that depends entirely on the opinions of college leaders, as opposed to objective metrics such as admission rate or student-faculty ratio. Every year, hundreds of college presidents seek to improve their scores by sending their counterparts at other schools glossy mailings, interactive CDs and books that celebrate their institutional feats.

In the midst of this promotional blitz, an opposition movement has emerged: A clutch of presidents, largely centered around the nation's capital, says that the lobbying campaign is unseemly and unworthy of a process that has profound impact on the trajectories of the ranked institutions.

"We have other things to do with our money," said William Durden of Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pa. Durden said he had received faculty-penned books, bound volumes of presidential speeches and coffee-table art tomes this spring at a rate of 10 to 15 a week. "We know it's a PR gimmick."

Durden opts out of promotional mailings, as do the presidents of Goucher College in Baltimore, St. John's College in Annapolis, Washington College on the Eastern Shore, Trinity Washington University in the District, Earlham College in Richmond, Ind., and others.

The reputation survey, part of every U.S. News ranking since the first in 1983, asks college presidents, provosts and admissions deans to rate dozens of colleges in the same institutional category on a scale of 1 ("marginal") to 5 ("distinguished") for overall undergraduate academic quality.

The results make up 25 percent of the rankings, published in August. Upward movement can boost applications, donations, faculty recruitment and everything else that comes with rising currency. Downward mobility bespeaks failure. (The Washington Post Co. publishes Newsweek, a competitor of U.S. News.)

To mail or not to mail

In May 2007, a dozen college presidents signed a letter pledging to ignore the reputation survey and urging colleagues to do the same. The presidents of Trinity, Dickinson and St. John's helped organize the protest, and several colleges in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania joined it, giving the movement a mid-Atlantic flavor.
Some colleges are opting out of magazine's annual survey

These critics said it would be impossible for any college president to confine another college, let alone dozens of other colleges, to a five-point rating system. "I would better be able to fill out a survey on refrigerators than on colleges I've never visited, never interacted with," said Sanford Ungar, president of Goucher.

Many of the same presidents have taken the boycott a step further by opting out of the annual marketing campaign directed at survey voters, a routine that Washington College President Baird Tipson terms "sordid."

Bob Morse, director of the rankings, said he thinks colleges that participate in lobbying efforts are "trying to raise themselves out of what they believe is academic obscurity." He said he has "never seen real proof that such mailings have actually moved a school's score."

Morse defended the validity of the reputation survey, which attempts to measure the "accumulated standing" of each college in the eyes of institutional leaders. "We think those views are important," he said.

A 2009 study by researchers at Michigan State and Penn State found that, of more than 1,000 colleges studied, 20 had reputation ratings that varied by more than half a point in a nine-year span. The average rating across academia held constant at 2.9, one-tenth of a point below "good," suggesting that the marketing blitz might be a zero-sum game.

Presidents send the mailings anyway, with "the faint hope that for producing and sending out expensive, pleading materials, voters will think better of them -- and vote for them," said John Strassburger, president of Ursinus College in Collegeville, Pa.

Most presidents acknowledge receiving the brochures. Few acknowledge sending them.

Patricia McGuire, president of Trinity, said she received one brochure this year that chronicled "An Academic Rebirth" at Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg. Another brochure recounted "A Decade of Excellence" at Saint Peter's College in Jersey City, N.J.

R. Mark Sullivan, president of the College of Saint Rose, sent a magazine along with a letter, noting a recent mention in the New York Times, a "gleaming new academic building" and a host of "new and exciting programs" at the Albany, N.Y., campus. Drew Bogner, president of Molloy College in Rockville Center, N.Y., told of record enrollment and plaudits in the Princeton Review and, yes, U.S. News.

"It's a tsunami of glossy, four-color magazines," McGuire said. "I have this huge box that I toss these things into."

Tipson, at Washington College, used to play along. His marketing staff would send brochures touting the Chestertown, Md., school to dozens of other college presidents whose ratings shaped its ranking. And then, a few years ago, he stopped.

"It's money that could be spent on educating students," Tipson said.

**Direct approaches**

There is a subtle art to collegiate self-promotion, especially when the target audience is other presidents. A direct appeal for votes is bad form. Most mailings make no mention of U.S. News or its rankings.
Lately, reports have circulated of colleges using a more direct approach to improve their ranking.

In June, a Clemson University official said at a public gathering that her administrators gave low marks to competitors on the reputation survey to make the South Carolina institution look better. A subsequent investigation by the online publication Inside Higher Ed found a University of Wisconsin administrator who rated all but two of the school's peer colleges "adequate," including Harvard and Yale.

Many college leaders remain supportive of the survey, whose instructions allow presidents to rate only the colleges they know. Morse said the average voter rates about half of the colleges listed on the form.

Antoine Garibaldi, president of Gannon University in Erie, Pa., said he finds time to read some of the promotional mail from his peers. This year, Garibaldi said, his own college sent the latest issue of Gannon Magazine to every Catholic college in the country and to many other schools in its region. Garibaldi said they were sent in the spirit of sharing and not to burnish Gannon's reputation. There was nothing in the actual correspondence to prove otherwise.

Garibaldi completes the survey every year. "It's not perfect," he said. "But the fact of the matter is, people look at it."
Female athlete slain; fellow UVA athlete held

Death of lacrosse player attributed to violence

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — A senior on the Virginia men's lacrosse team was charged Monday with the slaying of a fellow student on the women's team, stunning students at the picturesque campus.

George Hugley, 22, of Chevy Chase, Md., was charged with first-degree murder in the death of 22-year-old Yeardley Love, also a senior, of Cokesville, Md., Charlottesville Police Chief Timothy Longo said.

Longo said Love's roommate called police around 2:15 a.m. concerned that Love may have had an alcohol overdose, but police found her dead with obvious physical injuries.

"It was quickly apparent to them that this young lady was the victim of something far worse," Longo said.

The police chief said that Hugely and Love were in relationship at some point and that Hugely quickly became the focus. Longo would not detail the extent of Love's injuries but said there did not appear to be any weapons used in the slaying.

A steady stream of students preparing for finals later in the week wandered down the street that runs by the house where Love's body was found. Drivers slowed and pointed as they approached the building.

"Everybody's kind of taking a wait-and-see approach," said Drew Cook, 22, a senior from Burke.

Cook said an e-mail was sent to the university community. He said suggestions from police that it could be a domestic incident and that there were no other suspects didn't ease tensions.

Kyle Cecil, 22, of Newport News, said he was shocked to see police cars at the building Monday morning. He lived in the same hall as Hugely as a freshman and knew him well enough to say hello.

"It's sad that two people with a lot of potential, one their life is over and the other's life is significantly altered," Cecil said.

Hugely was being held in the Albemarle-Charlottesville Regional Jail.

Hugely and Love were to graduate this month. Leonard Sandridge, executive vice president of the university, said the campus was saddened over Love's death.

He added the shock is magnified by the fact that the accused is "one of our own," he told reporters.

Both highly ranked teams are preparing for the NCAA tournaments this month. Virginia's men's team was ranked No. 1 for most of the season and expects to host a first-round game in the tournament after winning the Atlantic Coast Conference title last month. The women's team also was expected to get into the tournament.

Hugely, a midfielder, wasn't a starter but played in all 15 games this season. He had four goals and three assists. Love played defense and started in three games.

When asked how the death would affect the tournament, athletic director Craig Littlepage said it was "not even entering into our thoughts" but that for the players' sake they wanted to "try to get back to some things that are normal."

By coincidence, Hugely attended the same prep school as some of the Duke lacrosse players who were accused of sexually assaulting a woman at a team party. The charges were dismissed.

Hugely played varsity lacrosse and varsity football at the Landon School, a private school in Bethesda, Md., and was co-captain of the lacrosse team in his senior year, school spokeswoman Jean Erstlin said. She said the school had no comment on his arrest.

In a 2006 interview with The Washington Post, Hugely defended his former Landon School teammates who were involved in the Duke scandal. "In this country, you're supposed to be innocent until proven guilty," he told the paper.

Associated Press writers Dena Potter in Richmond and Dave Ginsburg in Baltimore, Md., contributed to this report.
Pack's Fowler under scrutiny

RALEIGH -- N.C. State's new chancellor has not taken a deep look yet at the athletic department, but the Wolfpack sports program is among the university departments that he plans to assess.

As a natural part of beginning his new job, Chancellor Randy Woodson said Friday that he was scrutinizing the performance of every university official who reports directly to him, including athletic director Lee Fowler. Woodson was asked to address Fowler's status at a time when speculation about the veteran athletic director's future at N.C. State has spiked. But in a telephone interview Friday afternoon, Woodson said he hasn't made a decision about Fowler, who has been at State since September 2000.

"I've been here four weeks, and I'm evaluating all university operations," Woodson said. "I'll be prepared to talk about any decisions in the coming weeks."

The Triangle Business Journal, citing several unnamed sources "with ties to the university," reported Friday that some university officials were "working on a strategy that would end his decade-long tenure."

Reached for comment, Fowler said the report caught him by surprise Friday. He drove back from a Wolfpack Club function in Lumberton late Thursday night, and less than 10 hours later, Fowler woke up Friday to a full voice-mail box on his cell phone.

"I've been getting calls all day from everybody about it," Fowler said, declining to comment specifically on the report or his future at State.

Despite progress in fundraising and a major upgrade in facilities under his watch, Fowler has drawn criticism by a vocal portion of the Wolfpack fan base - particularly on the Internet message boards - for the stagnant performance of the football and men's basketball programs in the second half of his tenure.

The football team hasn't had a winning season since 2005, and the basketball program hasn't reached the NCAA tournament since 2006. In both programs' cases, the recent struggles have come under coaches hired by Fowler.

"I know there are fans out there who don't like me," Fowler said. "I also know there are ones that do, like the ones that came up to me on Thursday [at the WPC event in Lumberton]."

Fowler's travels this week have kept him in touch with State alumni and Wolfpack fans. On Wednesday, Fowler said he was in Raleigh for N.C. State's year-end sports banquet at Reynolds Coliseum. A day later, he was on the road with State football coach Tom O'Brien, men's basketball coach Sidney Lowe, women's basketball coach Kellie Harper and women's tennis coach Hans Olsen for the Wolfpack Club's spring Caravan tour stop in Lumberton.

Fowler returned from the Wolfpack caravan event at about 11 p.m. Thursday, and the 58-year-old former basketball coach said he spent the night just as excited as the estimated 400 gathered fans about the Wolfpack's future in men's basketball on the heels of recruit C.J. Leslie's commitment earlier in the
week.

Fowler said he has talked to Woodson about his job and the expectations for the AD position. He said he
met with Woodson last month and will do so again in early May before the ACC's annual meetings
begin.

Fowler and Woodson attended the N.C. State football reunion together at the Wolfpack's practice field
on April 16.

"He's going to be really good for N.C. State," Fowler said of Woodson. "He has been impressive in only
a short time here."

Fowler has more than three years remaining on his contract, which expires Sept. 30, 2013, with an
annual compensation worth $280,000.

jp.siglio@newsobserver.com or 919-829-8938
State attorney general demands ex-professor's files from University of Virginia

By Rosalind S. Helderman
Washington Post Staff Writer
Tuesday, May 4, 2010; B01

RICHMOND -- Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli II is demanding that the University of Virginia turn over a broad range of documents from a former professor to determine whether he defrauded taxpayers as he sought grants for global warming research.

The civil investigative demand asks for all data and materials presented by former professor Michael Mann when he applied for five research grants from the university. It also gives the school until May 27 to produce all correspondence or e-mails between Mann and 39 other scientists since 1999.

The actions by Cuccinelli (R) -- who has sued the federal government over its regulation of greenhouse gases and has become a leading national voice in alleging that scientists have skewed data to show evidence the Earth is warming -- were cheered by those on the right, who have long targeted Mann as a leading proponent of the theory.

Mann, who works at Penn State, was one of the authors of the "hockey stick" graph, a study that used a variety of data, including tree rings, to chart climate change. His research showed a rapid recent increase in the Earth's temperature.

Mann's work has been repeatedly targeted by global warming skeptics, particularly after an e-mail from him referring to a statistical "trick" he used in his research surfaced in a series of leaked e-mails from the University of East Anglia's Climatic Research Unit. Mann has said the e-mail was taken out of context, and an inquiry by Penn State concluded that there was no evidence Mann has engaged in efforts to falsify or suppress data.

Mann and several academic groups decried Cuccinelli's subpoena as an unprecedented inquisition that could threaten academic freedom.

"I think he's simply trying to smear me as part of a larger campaign to discredit my science," said Mann, who left the University of Virginia in 2005.

Rachel Levinson, senior counsel with the American Association of University Professors, said Cuccinelli's request had "echoes of McCarthyism."

"It would be incredibly chilling to anyone else practicing in either the same area or in any politically sensitive area," she said.

In an interview, Cuccinelli said the request is part of an "open inquiry" into whether there were
"knowing inconsistencies" made by Mann as he sought taxpayer dollars to fund research.

"In light of the Climategate e-mails, there does seem to at least be an argument to be made that a course was undertaken by some of the individuals involved, including potentially Michael Mann, where they were steering a course to reach a conclusion," he said. "Our act, frankly, just requires honesty."

Carol Wood, a spokesman for the University of Virginia, confirmed that the school had received the April 23 request. She said that it will take time for the university to decide how to proceed but that "the university has a legal obligation to answer this request and it is our intention to respond to the extent required by law."

According to the document, the demand was issued under the Virginia Fraud Against Taxpayers Act, a 2002 law that gives the attorney general the right to demand documents and testimony in cases in which tax dollars have allegedly been obtained falsely by state employees. The document indicates that Cuccinelli is investigating possible violations of sections of the act forbidding employees from making false claims for payment, submitting false records for payment or conspiring to defraud the state.

If Cuccinelli were to successfully pursue a civil allegation against Mann, the professor could be forced to return research money or pay a civil fine.

"It's essentially a subpoena," said Steve Benjamin, a Richmond defense attorney who advises the General Assembly on legal issues. "It permits the issuance of that subpoena without the filing of any lawsuit and without the intervention or permission of any court."

Tim Donaghy, a scientific integrity analyst with the Union of Concerned Scientists, said that although Mann and other climate scientists have been called to defend their science before Congress and other bodies, he was not aware of a previous attorney general investigating their work as fraud. "It would be a disturbing precedent," he said.

But Mark R. Levin, president of the Landmark Legal Foundation, a leading group challenging climate change science, said Cuccinelli's inquiry is logical given his suit against the Environmental Protection Agency.

"There is no scientific consensus on global warming or Mann's influence on global warming, if indeed it is occurring," Levin said. "The federal government is relying on junk science. So it's perfectly reasonable the attorney general is raising these issues."

This is not the university's first brush with the political sensitivities of the climate change issue. In 2006, then-Gov. Timothy M. Kaine (D) asked that former Virginia state climatologist and university professor Patrick J. Michaels make clear that he was not speaking on behalf of the state when he publicly offered skepticism about global warming.

Michaels, who is a fellow at the Cato Institute, said: "There was a great deal of academic intolerance shown to me, and, because of that, I don't want to comment on this. That's not the way we should behave."

Post a Comment

View all comments that have been posted about this article.
Poet Nikki Giovanni bequeaths copyrights to Virginia Tech

By Associated Press  
Friday, April 30, 2010; 8:50 AM

Poet and activist Nikki Giovanni plans to turn over her copyrights to Virginia Tech after her death.

President Charles Steger said Thursday that Giovanni and Virginia Fowler, both English professors at Virginia Tech, have pledged a joint donation to the school's $1 billion capital campaign that includes copyrights to Giovanni’s literary works.

The joint gift includes an $800,000 bequest. The university will become the trustee of Giovanni's estate and will own the copyrights to her 30 books, recordings and other materials.

English department chairwoman Carolyn Rude says royalties and fees from the copyrights will support a visiting arts and humanities speaker series and a student-opportunities fund.

Post a Comment