THE DAILY CLIPS

May 10, 2010

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Erskine Bowles, President of the University of North Carolina system, speaks during ECU’s graduation ceremony. (Rhett Butler/The Daily Reflector)

**Bowles encourages ECU graduates at ceremony**

By JOSH HUMPHRIES
The Daily Reflector
Saturday, May 8, 2010

Produce work that exceeds expectations. That was the message from Erskine Bowles, president of University of North Carolina system, to East Carolina University’s graduating class during his address at ECU’s 101st spring commencement Friday morning.

The Class of 2010 includes about 3,400 graduates, a majority of whom attended the commencement ceremony at Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium with their families. University officials estimated that 75-80 percent of graduates — the largest number ever — attended Friday’s ceremony. About 100 nursing graduates and some faculty members were seated in front of the stands instead of on the field after they marched into the stadium.

“Don’t over-promise,” Bowles told the graduates. “My advice is to do the opposite. Be that person who under-promises, and for God’s sake, don’t over-promise.”
Bowles gave graduates five principles that he has learned during his career that has included serving as head of the federal Small Business Administration and White House chief of staff for President Bill Clinton.

Bowles has served as president of the UNC system since 2006. Recently selected to co-chairman of President Barack Obama’s National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, Bowles said he will continue to fight for ECU in his final six months as university system president. He also told graduates to always do quality work, encourage creativity and embrace change, save time for the family and take time to “add to the wood pile.”

“Everyone needs to take time to help their fellow citizens,” Bowles said. “And when you look for a job, look for a family-friendly place to work — one that will allow you to spend time with your family, and then do it.”

As part of the ceremony, Clarice Goodyear of the UNC Board of Governors presented the board’s award for excellence in teaching to Thomas Raedeke, associate professor in the Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences.

Five graduating seniors received the 2010 Robert H. Wright Alumni Leadership Award, which recognizes academic achievement, service and leadership qualities. Daniel Landon Allen of Wake Forest; Brooke Jacinda Barton of Lake Toxaway; Kyle Shane Bowen of Chesapeake, Va.; Jason Lewis Morton of Jacksonville, and Nina Fay Rose of Charlotte accepted their awards from Carl Davis of the East Carolina Alumni Association.

Graduates also heard from Dorothy Spruill Redford, who was awarded an honorary doctor of letters degree. An extensive lecturer on African-American genealogy, antebellum history and slavery’s legacy, she is former manager of Somerset Place. She has published “Somerset Homecoming: Recovering a Lost Heritage” and “Generations of Somerset Place: From Slavery to Freedom.”

Taffye Benson Clayton, associate provost for equity, diversity and community relations, offered a moment of reflection. She told the crowd about Terry Paul, who passed away on campus Thursday from cardiomyopathy, a disease in which the heart muscle becomes inflamed, according to the State Medical Examiner’s Office in Greenville.

In addition to the university-wide ceremony, many colleges, schools and departments held ceremonies Friday. Departmental ceremonies continue today.

Contact Josh Humphries at jhumphries@reflector.com or (252) 329-9565.

Saturday’s graduation events.

Minges Coliseum
9 a.m. Human Ecology
12 p.m. Health and Human Performance
3 p.m. College of Technology and Computer Science

Wright Auditorium
9 a.m. Psychology
12 p.m. Brody

Hendrix Theater
9 a.m. School of Art & Design
12 p.m. College of Music

Minges Coliseum
9 a.m. — Human Ecology
Noon — Health and Human Performance
3 p.m. — College of Technology and Computer Science
Ten-year journey over for East Carolina grad

By Kim Grizzard
The Daily Reflector
Saturday, May 8, 2010

Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Katherine Tripp has spent two years as a combat photographer in conditions so dangerous that she sometimes had to lay down her camera and take up arms to defend herself. But the image she had to work longest to obtain is a portrait of a senior in her cap and gown, preparing to receive her university diploma.

Today, at 28, Tripp is the picture of a college graduate. A decade after enrolling at East Carolina University, she is receiving her undergraduate degree in nutrition and dietetics at a ceremony for ECU’s College of Human Ecology.

“IT’s been 10 years — 10 years! She’s finally graduating,” Tripp’s mother, Debbie Hammeren, said.

Those are not the words of a parent perturbed by a child who squandered her college years. They are the words of a mother who is proud of a daughter who sacrificed a shorter route to graduation in order to serve her country.

Tripp, a 1999 graduate of D.H. Conley High School, started sizing up military service back in middle school as a way to help her pay for college. She joined Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps at Conley and decided on the Army Reserve in 1998.

“I never thought that we would even be in war,” she said. “I thought I would do my one weekend a month, two weeks during the year, and I’d get my money for college and be done with it.” But the events of Sept. 11, 2001, turned many students into soldiers. Tripp received her first deployment orders in 2003, several weeks into her spring semester. She had four days to withdraw from school and report for duty.

She spent the next year in Mosul, Iraq, with the Wilson-based 982nd Signal Company as part of the combat camera unit. Known as ComCam, these combat camera units provide a visual record of military operations.

Though her father, Billy Tripp, was a part-time wedding photographer and her grandfather, Richard Nachman, was a portraitist for the National Security Agency, Tripp dismisses the notion that her inherent abilities played a role in her assignment.

“I had a choice between a petroleum specialist, which is basically a gas pumper,” she said, laughing, “or a combat photographer.”

A relatively unusual assignment for a woman, combat photography units are required to go wherever the infantry goes, whether it’s heading into battle or jumping out of aircraft. Two platoons in Tripp’s company are airborne.
The training alone took the better part of a year, causing Tripp, whom friends call “Kat,” to put college on hold. A second tour in Iraq put her out of sequence with some of her coursework. She missed another semester while working in Egypt.

“You have to factor in three and a half months of training beforehand,” she said. “I probably lost about four years.”

She watched as friends she started college with graduated, got jobs and moved forward with their lives. Even her younger brother finished ahead of her.

“I think it was hard for her when she came back, having to go to school with all these 18-year-olds,” Hammeren said. “I did worry that she would lose her motivation to keep with it.”

But each time Tripp returned from a tour of duty, she also returned to the classroom, often to find that there were no longer professors that she recognized.

Airborne Platoon Sgt. Thomas Broadway said that kind of determination is characteristic of many college students in his detachment, which has about 100 members.

“They’re probably more successful (than traditional college students),” he said. “Maybe they don’t do it in four years or five years, but they do a pretty good job of going after it and getting it.”

Though college students who also serve in the military take longer to complete their degrees, Broadway believes they have more to show for it.

“That life résumé is pretty full,” he said. “(Tripp) loaded that side of the résumé that most people don’t.”

Diana Saum, an instructor in ECU’s Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, agrees.

“The military has made her disciplined and mature,” she said. “No challenge scares her or daunts her.”

Not even graduate school. After 10 years in undergrad, Tripp plans to pursue a master’s degree, though she also is considering volunteering for an assignment in Germany.

“My grad school is online,” she said, “so I could definitely still go to grad school and go over there as well.”

She laughs at the idea that she might be tired of school.

“I definitely feel like I’ve been in school forever,” she said. “But I can’t say that I’ve been in a big rush to finish. I have the rest of my life to work.”

She is even considering re-enlisting, but whether she stays with the military or not, she wouldn’t trade her experience with the Army Reserve.

“My whole life has revolved around it,” Tripp said. “I feel like I’ve kind of grown up with the Army. I definitely can’t imagine my life without having joined.”
ME: ECU student dies from cardiac problems

Terry Paul, 21, of Warsaw was moving out of College Hill Suites, where he was a resident, when he collapsed about 2 p.m. on Thursday.

The Daily Reflector

An East Carolina University junior who collapsed outside his college dorm on Thursday died from heart problems, according to autopsy results.

Terry Paul, 21, of Warsaw was moving out of College Hill Suites, where he was a resident, when he collapsed about 2 p.m., university spokesman John Durham said.

"ECU police have reviewed videotape of the area and spoken with two students who were with him," Durham said. "Police say there does not appear to be any reason to believe that foul play was involved."

Paul was majoring in chemistry.

He died from cardiomyopathy, but it will be several days before the specific cause of the problem is identified, according to the State Medical Examiner's Office in Greenville.

Cardiomyopathy is a disease in which the heart muscle becomes inflamed and doesn't work as well as it should. There may be multiple causes including viral infections. However, nothing in Paul's recent medical history indicates he had been sick, according to the office.

ECU graduates observed a moment of reflection in memory of Paul during Friday's commencement ceremony.

Paul was a rising leader at the university, said Taffye Benson Clayton, associate provost for equity, diversity and community relations.
ECU honors excellence in teaching, service
Saturday, May 8, 2010
ECU News Services
East Carolina University honored faculty, staff and students for their excellence in teaching, research, service, leadership and commitment to quality during its Founders Day-University Awards ceremony on April 27 in Hendrix Theatre.
Six recipients for the Board of Governors Distinguished Professor for Teaching Awards were announced. They were Shanaz Aziz, Department of Psychology; Shanan Gibson, Department of Management; Kim Larson, Department of Undergraduate Nursing Science; Gary Levine, Department of Family Medicine; Katherine O’Connor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction; John Stiller, Department of Biology.
“These faculty members represent the best of the best,” Provost Marilyn Sheerer said. “They represent the heart and soul of why we are all here.”
On April 1, ECU Scholar-Teacher Award recipients were recognized at a symposium in which each scholar-teacher gave presentations about their integrated approach to research and creative activity in teaching.
Recipients were Michael Behm, Department of Technology Systems; Martha H. Chapin, Department of Rehabilitation Studies; David Collier, Department of Pediatrics; Melani W. Duffrin, Department of Nutrition and Dietetics; Frances R. Eason, Department of Adult Health Nursing; Erik Everhart, Department of Psychology; Christine Gustafson, Instrumental Department; John F. Kros, Department of Marketing and Supply Chain Management; Keith Nelson, Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology; Katherine O’Connor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction; Randall E. Parker, Department of Economics; Kindal A. Shores, Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies; Michael J. Spurr, Department of Mathematics; and Robert J. Tanenberg, Department of Internal Medicine.
Twenty-three faculty members were nominated for the East Carolina Alumni Association Awards for Outstanding Teaching, and Michael Harris in the Department of Management was designated as the Robert L. Jones recipient.
The ECU Alumni Association Awards recipients were Kindal Shores, Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, and Wendy Whisner, Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies. Clayton Sessoms, director of the Division of Continuing Studies, announced the Max Ray Joyner Award for Faculty Services through Continuing Education. Joyner is a former ECU Board of Trustees chairman who earned his ECU degree as an adult learner after military service. He and his wife, Kitty, endowed the award.
The award recipient was Scott Dellana, Department of Marketing and Supply Chain Management.
Deirdre Mageean, vice chancellor of research and graduate studies, announced the recipients of the five-year award in research or creative activity, who were recognized also during Research and Creative Achievement Week.
They are Kyle Summers, Department of Biology, and Scott Curtis, Department of Geography. Mageean also announced six ECU faculty members have received U.S. patents in the last year. They are Gregg Givens, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders; George Sigounas, Department of Internal Medicine; Joseph Kalinowski and Andrew Stuart, both of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders; Orville Day Jr., Department of Physics; and David Pravica, Department of Mathematics.

The Centennial Awards for Excellence were presented recognizing service, leadership, ambition and spirit. These honors replace Founders Day, Chancellor and Synergy awards. This year, 65 nominations were received for the 12 awards. Marianna Walker, chairwoman of the faculty, and Johnnie Eastwood, chairman of the staff senate, announced the winners.

Service: Elmer Poe, Department of Technology Systems; Andie Harrell, Administrative Support Specialist in the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities; and Scott Buck, associate vice chancellor for Business Services.

Leadership: Elaine Scott, College of Nursing; Lola Thompson, administrative support associate in the Office of Academic Affairs; and Patricia Anderson and Austin Bunch for their work as co-chairs of the Centennial Committee.

Ambition: Jennifer Hodgson, Department of Child Development and Family Relations; Elizabeth Coghill, associate director for Academic Advising and Support and director of the Pirate Tutoring Center; and the ECU CORS Site Team, which worked to expand the network of Global Positioning Systems (GPS) in eastern North Carolina. Members of that team are William Bagnell, associate vice chancellor for campus operations; Wayne Reeves, assistant director for maintenance engineering; Paul Carlson, mechanical engineer; Tim Below, technology support analyst; Ed Traynor, masonry supervisor; Ron Causey, Chad Stokes, J. Alan Peaden, John Phillips, James Boyd, all are journey masons; James Boyd, lead mason; Thomas Santana, steam maintenance technology; Eric Norris, electrician; Keith Washer, ITCS Business and Technology application analyst; Gray MacDonald, ITCS Business and Technology analyst; Richard Fraboni, ITCS assistant director; Paul Zigas, associate university attorney; Tom Allen, Department of Geography; and Karen Mulcahy, Department of Geography.

Spirit: Loren Limberis, Department of Engineering; Laura Sweet, senior associate dean of students; and the “Wear Red Team” from the Brody School of Medicine, which sponsored activities to promote cardiovascular health in women. Team members are Martina Christie, lab compliance coordinator for ECU Physicians; Debi Crotts, marketing coordinator for Division of Health Sciences; Martha Darrt, director of nursing at ECU Physicians; Susan DeAntonio, nurse manager at the East Carolina Heart Institute at ECU; Carolyn Erwin, administrator for ECU Physicians; Drillious Gay, nurse administrator at the ECHI at ECU; Donna McDonald, associate director for Multimedia and Technology Services; and Karen Warren, director of campus wellness.

Military science prof to command battalion

Lt. Col. Steven L. Delvaux, professor of military science and commander of ECU’s Army ROTC program, will leave ECU to command the 3rd Battalion of the 13th Infantry Regiment, Fort Jackson, S.C.

Delvaux will leave in June 2011 to take command of the unit, which provides basic combat training and is charged with teaching the fundamentals of being an Army soldier. He will be responsible for all drill sergeants, officers and staff along with the training of more than 5,000 new soldiers a year.

“Being selected for this position is a great honor, and I welcome the opportunity to continue contributing to the national security of our remarkable republic,” Delvaux said. “My family and I have enjoyed our time at East Carolina University and can’t imagine a university and community that is as military friendly and as supportive of its Army ROTC.”

cont’d
Dr. Glen Gilbert, dean of the College of Health and Human Performance said, “Since the ECU Air Force and Army Reserve Officer Training Corps became a part of HHP in 2008, I have had the opportunity to work with Steve. He is an outstanding role model and has enthusiasm and the motivation needed to guide training programs for personnel at all levels.”

After high school, Delvaux joined the Army and earned a bachelor’s degree in management from the U.S. Military Academy in 1990. He holds a master’s degree and a doctorate in history from Florida State University. A native of South Dakota, Delvaux has served in Germany, Korea and Iraq during his military career.

**Professors are fellows in terrorism studies**

Two ECU political science professors have been named 2010-11 academic fellows by the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a nonpartisan policy institute based in Washington, D.C. Carmine Scavo and Alethia Cook will travel to Israel in early June for an intensive course in terrorism studies and how democracies can defeat the worldwide terrorism threat.

“Terrorism is the greatest threat today to the world’s democracies, including the United States and our allies around the globe,” Clifford May, president of the FDD, said. “To win the war against terrorism, we must win the war of ideas by promoting democracy and defeating the totalitarian ideologies that drive and justify terrorism.”

The FDD Academic Fellows program provides a 10-day learning experience to U.S.-based teaching and research professionals to provide them with cutting-edge information about defeating terrorist groups.

The 2010 program, which will be at Tel Aviv University from May 30 to June 8, includes lectures by academics and military and intelligence officials, as well as diplomats from Israel, Jordan, India and the United States. It also includes “hands-on” experience through visits to police, customs and immigration facilities; military bases; and border zones to learn the practical side of deterring and defeating terrorists.

Cook is an assistant professor of political science at ECU, where she also is assistant director of the security studies program. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on terrorism and emergency/disaster response.

“I am looking forward to the opportunity to listen and participate in the exchanges and interactions which we will all have in Israel. It should be useful experience for a course I plan to teach on international terrorism next year and other related academic activities,” she said.

Scavo is an associate professor of political science at ECU, where he teaches undergraduate courses on American politics and graduate courses in public administration, including a course on intergovernmental/interagency relations.

“The U.S. has a lot to learn from the Israelis in terms of emergency and disaster response and how different agencies can work together to combat terrorism and respond to natural and human-caused disasters,” Scavo said.
The national Center for Disease Control has said, “The United States cannot effectively address escalating health care costs without addressing the problem of chronic diseases.” Any serious policy proposal that aims to improve health care in America and control rising health care expenditures must address chronic disease.

In eastern North Carolina, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has just published comparative health statistics for each state by county. In North Carolina, the two counties with the poorest health statistics are here in the East — Columbus County, No. 100, and Bertie County, No. 99. Tonight, I will focus on our children, our future. We are blessed by having a faculty of dedicated doctors at the Brody School of Medicine, including David Collier, MD, Ph.D., director of Pediatric Healthy Weight Research Treatment Center in the Department of Pediatrics at ECU. He and his colleagues work tirelessly to treat a condition destined to take the lives of our young children — obesity.

The Brody School of Medicine, in partnership with 4-H and the North Carolina Cooperative Extension has sponsored a Take Off 4-Health healthy-lifestyle camp program, which is a three-week camp for obese 12-18 year olds with an average Body Mass Index, called BMI, of 41. Results show a two-thirds success rate.

Cornerstone Missionary Baptist Church has a North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund grant for health screening and lay health counseling for adults in African-American congregations in Pitt County called “Healthy Lives/Healthy Choices.” Drs. Skip Cummings and Collier have served on the steering committee for this very successful program.

CONT...
This epidemic of obesity in our children is receiving deserved attention at every level. The childhood obesity rates in eastern North Carolina are high with 45 percent exceeding a healthy weight and 30 percent already obese — about twice the national prevalence.

At ECU, the leadership university, we are leading through action and example. We have demonstrated an institutional commitment to creating a university community that values racial and ethnic diversity and is eager to promote social, personal and academic growth. We unlock potential.

Mobilize ourselves to call for change in support of our leaders, employers and health institutions. We need to focus on the chronic diseases that afflict our community. Challenge policymakers on the health policy changes that are necessary to effectively fight diseases that afflict us disproportionately.

We can add education — the academic difference.

The mission of the Brody School of Medicine is a partner with you in the educational process. On the personal note, we can walk and exercise more; make healthy nutritional choices; reduce alcohol intake; quit smoking. Let us each pledge to create a healthier community, state and nation. ...

Advocate for their health at the schools, as schools can be the model environments to promote health. Public policy originates at the grass root level, and is inclusive of informed advocates, business representative and our government leaders working collaboratively together. Let us endeavor to build on prior successes — tobacco legislation is an example.

This then is a call to action, for us all here tonight, for the NAACP, and for our children's sake. It is not for us, it is for our future.

Dr. Paul R.G. Cunningham is dean of the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University.
Transplant surgeons join Brody staff

Dr. Robert Harland and Dr. Jason Rolls, both transplant surgeons, have joined the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University and its medical group practice, ECU Physicians.

Harland joins ECU as a professor of surgery. He comes from the University of Chicago Medical School, where he was associate professor and director of the Multi-Organ Transplant Fellowship Program.

Harland has a bachelor's degree from Whitworth College in Spokane, Wash., and a medical degree from Duke University School of Medicine. He completed residency training in internal medicine, general surgery and a fellowship in transplant surgery at Duke. He has also been on the medical faculty at Duke, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Massachusetts.

Harland's clinical interests include kidney, pancreas and liver transplantation as well as dialysis access procedures. He is trained in advanced laparoscopic surgery, in particular, laparoscopic and robotic donor nephrectomy procedures.

His clinical research interests focus on treating difficult-to-transplant patients, including retransplant patients and HIV-positive patients, as well as optimizing immunosuppressive medications.

Harland is certified in internal medicine by the American Board of Internal Medicine and general surgery by the American Board of Surgery.

Rolls joins ECU as a clinical assistant professor of surgery. He comes from Columbia University, where he completed a fellowship in abdominal organ transplantation. Rolls has a bachelor's degree from Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pa., a medical degree from Columbia University in New York, and he completed residency training at the New York Presbyterian Hospital, Cornell Medical Center. He also completed a fellowship on the Weill Cornell Burn Unit at New York Presbyterian Hospital.

Rolls' clinical interests are renal transplantation, laparoscopic live kidney donation, dialysis access creation and maintenance, pancreatic transplantation, deceased-donor multi-organ procurement and liver transplantation. His research interests involve understanding and correcting disparities in health care access as it relates to end-stage organ disease and transplantation and finding better ways to procure and preserve donor organs. Rolls is certified in general surgery by the American Board of Surgery.

Harland and Rolls see patients at the Brody Transplant Surgery Clinic in the Brody Outpatient Center at ECU.
HOLTZ ADJUSTS TO BIG MOVE

Former coach finds leaving hard

BY CAULTON TUDOR
STAFF WRITER

The transition from East Carolina to South Florida has been smooth, but there's still a lot about Greenville that Skip Holtz misses.

"Not just the barbecue, either," the former Pirates football coach said this week. "I miss the people, the players and the friends I still have there. There are a lot of things really, but I knew that would be the case when I made this decision. ECU became home."

In Tampa, there was a familiar welcome wagon for Holtz, his wife Jennifer and their three children.

"My folks are in Orlando, and Jennifer's are very close by," Holtz said. "That was a big part of what made this situation different from the others from the start."

But there's no secret that another lure was the chance to move into a Bowl Championship Series conference.

Winning two straight Conference USA championships at ECU was good enough to get Holtz and his team to the Liberty Bowl in Memphis.

If he can bring that title to the Bulls in the Big East Conference, the reward will be an invitation to the Orange Bowl.

Holtz's first South Florida team won't be the Big East favorite. But with B.J. Daniels at quarterback, the Bulls could have the league's best offensive player and certainly the most versatile. On an 8-5 (3-4 league) team last season, the 6-foot-1, 210-pound Daniels passed for 1,983 yards and rushed for 772.

"He's a very special talent," Holtz said. "We asked him to do a lot of things in spring drills, too. There wasn't anything he didn't do well."

The rest of the personnel isn't nearly so set, however.

Two of Daniels' favorite targets return, but the defensive unit is undergoing full-scale reconstruction, and there are a lot of offensive line question marks.

"Defensively, we have a lot to get done before we're ready to play," Holtz said. "There are a lot of good players with great attitudes, but it's a little different from last season when we had so much defensive experience at ECU."

With an opening game against Stony Brook, it's a safe bet Holtz will get off to a successful start on Sept. 4. The following Saturday - a trip to Florida - is another matter.

Holtz's first Big East game won't be until Oct. 9 against Syracuse. Eventually, he would like to see that Big East schedule include the program he left.

"I absolutely would love to see ECU in the Big East," Holtz said. "It'll be great for the school, and I think it'll be great for the Big East, too. That's what I thought there, and it's what I think here. I'm not changing. I'll always be a big supporter of that."

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Editorial: ECU will expect action if conference shift occurs
Monday, May 10, 2010

After several years of relative quiet, the plate tectonics that govern the landscape of Division I college sports appear poised to shift yet again. With the Big Ten and Pacific-10 conferences exploring the possibility of expansion, their peers in places like the Atlantic Coast Conference, the Big East Conference and East Carolina University’s own Conference USA are considering their options as well.

There can be little doubt that, here in Greenville, East Carolina Chancellor Steve Ballard and Athletics Director Terry Holland are keeping apprised of each development and positioning the university for any move it might make to ensure a stable future for Pirate sports. However, the East Carolina community should also expect that elected officials would keep the interests of the school at heart and be willing to provide assistance should the situation necessitate it.

In 2004, the expansion of the ACC dramatically changed college athletics as the conference, a traditional basketball power, added three schools to increase its influence in football. The new members allowed for a money-making conference championship game and more lucrative television contracts, which have benefited the 12 ACC schools.

At the time, Commissioner John Swofford also emphasized that the ACC sought to encourage academic partnerships between member schools as well as athletic rivalry. That point was echoed by Virginia Gov. Mark Warner, who waded into the expansion fray to ensure that his state would benefit by the inclusion of Virginia Tech in the ACC’s expansion plan. His lobbying worked, as Tech was included when the ACC moved to 12 members.

East Carolina has only rarely enjoyed such support at critical moments. Though eastern North Carolina would have benefited from the academic partnerships Swofford touted, voices in favor of East Carolina’s inclusion in the ACC were absent from Raleigh. And when the Big East looked to respond to the ACC’s expansion, only those with East Carolina’s interest at heart worked tirelessly toward that end.

Athletics should never be a determinant of a school’s reputation or influence, but none can argue that Division I athletics are all liability and no benefit. Indeed, a higher profile draws more qualified applicants, and successful teams can reap a windfall for a university.

East Carolina would suffer lasting harm if it is again neglected should the conference landscape change dramatically. Those who claim to want better things for eastern North Carolina — and the public university that is its heart — must monitor these developments closely and lend their support if the moment demands it.
Obituary

Carol E. Hignite

Carol E. Hignite Mrs. Carol Eubank Hignite, 85, passed away on Saturday, May 8, 2010, after a period of declining health in Pitt County Memorial Hospital, surrounded by her loving family. A memorial service will be conducted on Tuesday at 4 p.m. in The Memorial Baptist Church with the Rev. Randy McKinney officiating. The sky is less blue, colors are grayer and senses are dulled for all who loved her, and Heaven's grandstands are aglow with the reception of one of Heaven's earthly angels, Carol Hignite. Her Christian belief was a lighthouse that guided her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Her unconditional love and acceptance for all people, sense of humor and infectious laugh were a beacon for all to follow. A talented vocalist and musician, she sang on live radio broadcasts in her youth. Physically beautiful, she was the sweetheart of Sigma Chi at N.C. State University while attending and graduating from Hardbarger's Business College in the 1940s. Originally from Maysville, she was the epitome of a loving and supportive wife and a career state employee, having retired after serving as administrative assistant to ECU's Registrar and the Pitt County Health Department. She and her late husband, Leonard E. Hignite, enjoyed traveling during his career and after their retirement to Spain, Italy and Hawaii and many other exotic locations. Her first love, after her Savior, was her family and she embraced every success they attained. She was the perfect wife, mother and grandmother. Mrs. Hignite was preceded in death by her husband, Leonard E. Hignite, in 2007. She is survived by sisters, Christine Eubank Cox of Wilmington and Pat Eubank Ray of Raleigh; sons, Ronald E. Hignite, of Ahoskie, Col. (R) USA, Baron G. Hignite and wife, Ellen, of Raleigh, Darrell K. Hignite and wife, Janet, of Greenville, and Randy Hignite of Swan Quarter; daughters, Dr. Beth Hignite Carter and husband, Lt. Col. (R) USAF Donald Carter, of Yorktown, Va.; 10 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. The family will receive friends immediately following the memorial service in the church fellowship hall and at other times at the home of Darrell and Janet Hignite at 208 Gloria St., Greenville, NC, 27858. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorials be made to The Memorial Baptist Church. The family would like to thank her home health care providers, Alice Forbes, Alice Tyre and Patricia Lawrence. Arrangements by Wilkerson Funeral Home & Crematory. Online condolences at www.wilkersonfuneralhome.com.

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Bicyclists leave out of the Bicycle Post parking lot onto Evans Street on Thursday. May has been proclaimed “Bike Month” by Greenville Mayor Pat Dunn.
Justin Falls/The Daily Reflector

Cyclists gather outside of the Bicycle Post in the parking lot as they prepare to ride together on Thursday.

Justin Falls/The Daily Reflector

**Bicycle Friendly Task Force to present recommendations**

By Kathryn Kennedy
The Daily Reflector
Sunday, May 9, 2010

Racing cyclists, trail riders, BMX athletes. People riding to work, riding to class, riding for exercise, riding with their kids. Greenville’s got residents in every category and more. Though they’re employing bicycles for a variety of purposes, each rider has similar concerns when navigating the city on two wheels.

As the Greenville Bicycle Friendly Task Force prepares to present recommendations to City Council and disband, committee members are wondering what the cycling community’s next steps should be and the best means of making progress on issues they’ve identified.

The task force was formed after residents across the community were shocked by injuries sustained by riders in Pitt County — some ending in paralysis or death. Participants set out to advise the City Council on getting Greenville designated as a bicycle-friendly community, encouraging a culture change in the way motorists and others understanding bicycling and developing 100 miles of bikeways in Greenville and the surrounding area.

“We want a Lance Armstrong society, and we’re living in a Dale Earnhardt world,” bicycle commuter Tony Parker said at an April 28 task force meeting.

Brian Glover balked at that analogy. While admitting that Armstrong has done a lot for community bicycling in Austin, Texas, he said many people simply think Tour de France.

“What biking does not need is an emphasis on sports,” he said. “Cycling as a sport is doing just fine. What we don’t have is people going to the supermarket. Maybe a little bit less Armstrong and a little bit more my grandmother.”
The East Carolina University professor bikes to work daily, to get his hair cut, to visit friends. He’s so consistent that he put gas in his car recently for the first time in September. He doesn’t want people to see biking as some “big athletic feat ... some macho thing just for young, white men.”

Many hope mix of planning, infrastructure improvements and outreach education will make a difference.

Mayor Pat Dunn declared May “Bike Month” in Greenville with a proclamation read aloud at City Hall last week. The document pledges to promote awareness of bicycle operation and safety education because it’s good for the environment, fitness, affordable transportation, and the creation of a vibrant community.

“It’s a real way to travel,” Dunn said. “It’s also an opportunity for a lot of fun.”

She was presented a purple bicycle helmet as thanks for her support.

There are several local groups advocating for safe and accessible bicycle travel. A permanent committee to address concerns of cyclists and pedestrians was the first recommendation made by the task force. That request was granted late last year and the first meeting of the Greenville Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission was held in March.

“It’s going to be pushing for infrastructure and other needs for people wanting to walk, bicycle ... use motorized wheelchairs or other methods as transportation,” said co-chair Bradley Beggs, who will lead the meetings with Glover. “We want to get them from point A to point B in a way that is safe and enjoyable.”

They’ll meet at 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month excluding July and December. The meetings will be televised on GTV-9, and Beggs predicts once people see infrastructure is available, they’ll be more likely to either utilize or appreciate it.

East Carolina Velo Cycling Club organizes and leads recreational rides and training rides to help promote all aspects of cycling. Members launched their first community safety project for Pitt County recently, purchasing several hundred red LED lights for volunteers and local police departments to share with any bike rider they see at night who is not lit.

That effort aligns with a need Beggs sees for bicyclist outreach. They, too, need to know the rules of the road so they can “ride predictably,” wear a helmet and not use sidewalks.

Friends of Greenville Greenways also creates opportunities for bikers and pedestrians through their narrowed scope of work, developing and maintaining greenways throughout the city. And Transportation Planner Daryl Vreeland confirmed the Public Works Department will soon update the 2002 bicycle master plan and add a pedestrian component.

Task Force President Herb Garrison sees value in all these efforts, but has called for an umbrella group that would encompass everyone. The new commission is a formal body, he said, who will advise the council on proposals but not be able to raise funds or host numerous events.

“We won’t get to be a Boulder (Colorado) or a Davis (California) or even an Asheville or a Wilmington without an advocate group,” Garrison said at that April 28 meeting.

What that group will look like, where they will meet or what they might accomplish is yet unknown.

Contact Kathryn Kennedy at kkennedy@reflector.com or (252) 329-9566.

Upcoming Events

May 19: The annual Ride of Silence will begin at 6 p.m. at the Bicycle Post on Cotanche Street, and follow a police escort through a 10-mile loop of Greenville’s streets at a family friendly pace. The silent ride recognizes and remembers bicyclists who have been hurt or killed while riding. More information at ecvelo.org.

May 21: The inaugural Bike to Work Day will be organized by the Greenville Bicycle Friendly Task Force. They are working to establish some meet and mingle locations, as well as a network of safe routes to aid those working all over the city and county.
National Lab Day links kids to science pros

BY T. DeLene Beeland
CORRESPONDENT

WANTED: Scientist to lead an eye dissection lab for fifth-graders in a Durham biology class, money for the Robotics Team of Pitt County in Winterville to compete, and career advice from a professional chemist to high school students in Wachow.

These are just a few of the 28 projects in North Carolina listed on the National Lab Day website, where more than 3,500 middle- and high-school teachers across the U.S. have posted wish lists for hands-on, discovery-based science and math lessons. About 3,000 scientists and relevant professionals have also signed up on the site, seeking matches with teachers based on their skills and interests.

In this way, National Lab Day operates like a cross between Craig’s List and an online dating service, pairing a teacher’s project or equipment needs with professionals or organizations in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, known as STEM fields.

May 12 marks the first official National Lab Day, but don’t let the name and date fool you; it is a year-round effort first announced by President Barack Obama last fall.

“The name kind of got ahead of us, so look out for a name change,” said Samantha Israel, an NLD program coordinator. Israel explained that though it was originally conceived of as a single day event to “sweep the nation’s classrooms” with interesting lab projects, once the online platform was developed, the group realized it was a powerful tool to link teachers and STEM professionals year-round at the grass-roots level.

Non-experts can also sign up to volunteer on the site. “If you don’t feel confident claiming that you are an expert in engineering, but you could have an impact on students and inspire them to go into engineering, then we have a way for you to sign up as a volunteer,” Israel said. About 200 organizations have also aligned with National Lab Day, either giving resources or pledging to help with outreach.

“We’re a public-private partnership. Our funding is private, but then we have public support for outreach,” Israel said.

A strong link exists between STEM education and economic development, said Jason Painter, who directs the N.C. Science Olympiad that organizes statewide science competitions. The U.S. is falling behind globally in the number of scientists and engineers it produces compared with countries such as India and China, he added.

“The more we can get scientists involved in early education, to get kids excited about going the science, math and engineering route, the better, but it does need to be a sustained effort,” Painter said. “There’s a lot of literature showing that some kids get turned off to science and math by the fourth and sixth grade, so what they’re doing and what we’re doing with the Science Olympiad both aim to help North Carolina create and retain a STEM work force.”

Website: www.nationallabday.org
Video: www.whitehouse.gov/open/innovations/national-lab-day

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260 have state pensions of $100,000

Records from the state Treasurer's Office show that about 260 former state and local employees receive annual pensions of $100,000 or more, but state officials say the public is not entitled to know how they earned them.

Treasurer Janet Cowell has declined to release information showing what jobs they and the other 187,000 retirees worked to earn their pensions. She also won't say how long those retirees had worked in public jobs.

In both cases, she said the information is secret because of the state's personnel law, which only allows the release of current job positions, and does not require the treasurer to report a former employee's tenure.

"We are an administrator of the retirement system, and we administer it within the framework of laws that are passed by the General Assembly," Cowell said. "So if they tell us we can't issue that, then I will uphold the law."

As a result, that law prevents the public from determining whether a retiree from a state or local job is entitled to the pension he or she is receiving. Pensions are calculated for most state employees from a formula that includes the average of the four highest-earning consecutive years and an employee's length of service. Someone with 30 years' service can receive nearly 55 percent of that highest salary average annually during retirement.

The lack of disclosure was not an issue until three years ago, when legislators amended the personnel law so that it included retirees. State Sen. Richard Stevens, a Cary Republican and former Wake County manager, introduced the amendment, but he said he had no intention for it to be used to close off the information Cowell is now withholding.

"That would seem to be the kind of information that should be public," Stevens said.

His worry three years ago was that retirees' investment decisions and pension beneficiary information could be made public, and he said that was all he sought to keep private.

A recent News & Observer series, "Keeping Secrets," found North Carolina's personnel law to be among the nation's most secretive. It appears to be the only one in the 50 states to prevent the public from learning about state and local employees' salary and employment histories, and North Carolina is among a minority of states that prevent the release of nearly any information regarding disciplinary and hiring actions.

The series prompted Gov. Bev Perdue and Senate Democratic and Republican leaders to pledge to make changes in the coming legislative session. Senate Minority Leader Phil Berger, a Rockingham County Republican, has proposed the most far-reaching rewrite and said he would make sure his legislation would include the retiree information.
He noted that while those retirees were working, that information was public.

"It doesn't seem to me to make a lot of sense to now say it's not available and not something that you could find out," Berger said.

Employee pensions are funded partly by the public. State and local employees contribute 6 percent of their pay. Local governments provide a roughly 5 percent match, while the state matches 3.57 percent for most employees and teachers, and 15.11 percent for judicial system employees. Judicial employees also benefit from a more lucrative pension formula, one that would allow a district attorney with 30 years of service to retire at 75 percent of his or her final salary.

All told, employees account for 29 percent of the pension fund's income, government accounts for 11 percent and the remainder comes from investment earnings.

$315,000 a year

Cowell, a Democrat and former state senator from Raleigh, offered no opinion on whether the law should be changed. She suggested that The N&O could find a retiree's former employer by using state employee databases the paper has obtained over the years.

But that didn't help find the person the treasurer's office reported as the top pensioner, making nearly $315,000 a year. That person, the Treasurer's Office said, was Edward Davidan, 70, who began working for the state in 1974.

There is no Edward Davidan who is a state or local retiree. There is a Dr. Edward Davidian, a former UNC Hospitals anesthesiologist who retired 15 years ago. He said his pension is far less than $315,000.

"I haven't ever made that much money from the university at all," he said.

The N&O asked the Treasurer's Office to double-check its information.

The office then acknowledged the data errors, reporting that an Edward Davidian is receiving a pension worth about a quarter of what they reported.

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A time to cheer, reflect and move on

THE CEREMONY: 9:30 a.m. Sunday at Kenan Stadium, UNC-Chapel Hill.

NUMBER OF GRADUATES: 5,630. That’s 3,347 bachelor's degrees, 1,397 master's degrees, 262 Ph.D.s and 624 professional degrees.

MAIN SPEAKER: John Grisham, the best-selling novelist whose legal thrillers draw from his days as a criminal defense and personal injury lawyer in Mississippi.

WHAT HE SAID: Grisham likened writing to life itself in challenging grads to find their voices. In life, those with voice are listened to, he said. Those who simply make noise are not.

"For your ideas to be accepted, for your arguments to be believed, for your work to be admired, you must find a voice," he said.

Grisham often favored wit over wisdom in a speech laced with punch lines. He cracked about the importance of reading: "I think you should read 10 books a month, or at least buy that many!"

He also predicted that university fundraisers will soon begin a lifelong relationship with each new graduate.

"Whether you are graduating with honors or without; regardless of what you studied, or didn't study, you will not be forgotten," he said. "There are people on this campus who work in what is called development, another word for fundraising, and they're watching you as we speak. They will follow you."

Grisham's words had a ring of truth. The alumni association's fundraising pitch is on Page 19 of the commencement program.

And Grisham, a Mississippian, spoke with pride about his family's new links to UNC. His daughter, Shea, graduated two years ago and now teaches in Raleigh. And Grisham's wife, Renee, is also in the class of 2010, finally finishing work on an English degree interrupted 30 years ago when the couple got married.

'A HUGE RELIEF': The shaky job market was on plenty of graduates' minds. Meka Asbury of Winston-Salem is fortunate. She studied clinical laboratory sciences and already has a job lined up with the Durham VA Medical Center.

"It's a huge relief," she said. "There's a lot of pressure. Some of my friends who graduated last year still don't have jobs. Some are waiting tables."

HOOPS MEMORIES: Kiersten Swayne was all smiles Sunday reminiscing on a college career that went too fast. So what will she remember most fondly?
"It's hard to sum up everything; it's been such a blur," she said. "Definitely the basketball games are a highlight."

GETTING THE KID OFF THE BOOKS: Nancy Kaufman of Chapel Hill was happy Sunday to watch her son, Tyler, graduate. She may have been happier than he to bid goodbye to the cozy confines of college.

"Our son did not want to graduate; he'd sign up for another four years," Kaufman laughed. "But we're happy the four years of bills will stop."
New grads have degrees but no jobs

The thousands of college students graduating this weekend are entering a job market that is starting to show signs of recovery.

But just barely.

Unemployment in the state was 11.1 percent in March - higher than the 10.9 percent students faced last May. Also in March, the most recent month for which data are available, 507,000 people were looking for work in the state. Many are competing for the same jobs as the newly minted grads.

As the bands tune up for "Pomp & Circumstance," many students who have been job hunting for months are rethinking their careers, applying to graduate school and turning to their backup plans.

For Mark Rothrock, that's the Marines.

The UNC senior graduates this weekend with degrees in U.S. history and religious studies and plans to enlist in January. Until then, he needs a job to pay the bills so he won't have to move back in with his parents in Winston-Salem.

"Everyone tells you to go to school and get your degree and get a job, and now I can't even get a retail job," said Rothrock, 21.

"We're over-educated for a lot of jobs, and we're under-educated for a lot of jobs, which leaves us just stuck in the middle."

But if Rothrock and other graduates look, there are positive signs in the job market, said John Challenger, a workplace analyst with Challenger, Gray & Christmas in Chicago.

"It's tough out there, but it does feel like the dam's breaking a little bit," he said. "It's a lot better for this year's grads than it was last year. There's a lot more interviewing going on, and there's a lot more optimism."

Sectors that are showing improvement include accounting, sales and jobs with specific skills such as those in engineering, he said. Areas that are still depressed include the usual suspects: real estate, manufacturing and financial services.

Brendalee McCarthy, director of career and internship development for the office of undergraduate programs at N.C. State University's College of Management, points to a survey of the school's May 2009 graduating class as a sign of a better market. Fifty-four percent of the graduates responded to the survey. Of those grads who had applied for four or more jobs, 84 percent had job offers at graduation. Six months later 91 percent were employed.

She doesn't have numbers for this year's class but said that she was encouraged by stepped up recruitment from smaller and midsized companies.
Employers may be more strategic, but they are hiring, said Ray Angle, director of University Career Services at UNC.

"I have had more employers say I'm not recruiting for full-time jobs; I'm just recruiting interns. Internships can then be converted into full-time jobs. It's a more cautious way of hiring."

The fact that professionals like Angle are optimistic is good news for seniors like Courtney Thomas, 21, who is graduating this weekend from Appalachian State University with degrees in marketing and business administration.

While the job search is tough, Thomas said she's optimistic something will come along.

"After I had two interviews that didn't go anywhere, I felt really discouraged, but now I've seen there are companies that are willing to hire, and you have to find the right ones. There is work out there. You just have to find it."

Lower starting pay

Many companies are offering internships or extended training opportunities as a way to evaluate talented students while not hiring them full time, McCarthy said.

"Employers are still hiring," she said. "The salaries are lower, and they're not extending the entry level positions at the rate that they were a year ago."

Companies say they are not against hiring students straight out of school, especially those they've worked with in the past.

At 919 Marketing in Holly Springs, former intern Katy Millberg was offered a full-time position upon her graduation from UNC this weekend.

Her supervisor, Sue Yannello, said attitude is everything, and sometimes students are better new hires than people who have been in the workplace for several years.

"You can teach an enthusiastic student," she said, "versus someone who's been doing it forever and has their mind set."

And, of course, there are still success stories.

Jim Crawford, 22, secured a job offer for an analyst position with Credit Suisse in Research Triangle Park in November, even though he won't graduate from N.C. State until next weekend. His degree is in business administration.

Crawford said he thinks part of his good fortune came from work experience. He's had an internship or other work every summer since his freshman year. He also credits networking.

"In my freshman internship, I saw the financial crisis unravel," he said. "Once I knew the market was going into a recession, and that it might last a few years, I worked very hard to [situate] myself."

Many of Crawford's friends are now tapping into his networking and job-seeking expertise, asking for help with résumés and their own job searches. He advises them to set their own goals for their first job and to be able to clearly articulate what they would like in a position.
"It's kind of ironic, but that's the very thing that makes you stand out," he said.

At St. Augustine's College in Raleigh, Nichole Lewis, urges students to think more broadly when networking. Family members can be a good source of job tips.

"Your Aunt Beth works somewhere," said Lewis, who is director of professional and staff development with the college's Belk Professional Development Center. "But you don't think of Aunt Beth as part of your network."

She points out that there are jobs available within state and federal government, and with financial services companies. They're looking for flexible job candidates who can multitask, show leadership and communicate well.

"Companies have a strategy and want people who can maybe break away from what they learn in a book," Lewis said.

Moving to Raleigh

Students have strategies as well. Zack Bynum has been looking for a job in the Triangle since October. He will graduate next weekend from Wake Forest University with a degree in economics.

"I've been looking in real estate and finance, which are probably two of the most rough hit sectors of the economy right now," he said.

If no job materializes in a week, said Bynum, 22, he will move to the Raleigh area anyway, live off his savings for a few months and keep looking.

"It's not great anywhere, but I feel like Raleigh has had tremendous growth and will continue to experience it," he said. "I honestly believe it will be one of the best places to find a job when the economy comes back."

Other students are exploring different options.

For instance, many students will go on to graduate school. Last May, 17 percent of the 565 graduating students from N.C. State's College of Management were planning to go to graduate school instead of looking for a job, McCarthy said. That was a drastic increase from the 7 percent headed for grad school in May 2008.

Rise of volunteerism

Enrollment of college graduates in volunteer groups like AmeriCorps also is up.

In May 2009, AmeriCorps reported 14,266 volunteers who were college graduates, compared with 13,790 in May 2008. Many graduates are socially conscious, and volunteering is a way to get work experience while they look for jobs.

"It's not only a question of kids going into these new fields because there are no jobs, but a question of a shift in the way kids are thinking," said Ashley Etienne of the Corporation for National and Community Service, which oversees volunteer organizations including AmeriCorps.

Tiffany Langley graduated from N.C. State in December with a degree in communications, but so far
she's been paying the bills busing tables at the Herons restaurant in the Umstead Hotel and Spa in Cary.

She insisted on having two days a week to volunteer at the Triangle American Red Cross, where she interned during college.

"I needed a full-time job so I could pay my rent," said Langley, 23. "But I still send my résumé out every week."

At the Red Cross, Langley issues press releases and organizes events, which she said helps her gain work experience. And, "for me, it makes me feel like what I do has a purpose behind it. I feel like what I do affects people more."

But for some, the key strategy is to hang on and hope.

Heather Finch graduated from Peace College in Raleigh in December with a degree in communications. Since then the 22-year-old has applied for more than 100 jobs and says she only even hears back from about a quarter of the companies.

"What's scary the most is I don't have a bad résumé," she said. "I've worked really hard in college to have really good internships and recommendations and references."

Until she finds a position, Finch is living off of savings, getting health care through her parents' plan and taking any odd jobs she can, including baby-sitting.

She even works sometimes at a dance studio in Wilson - something that she says doesn't make her any money after paying for gas but, "when I've had interviews, it looks better to be doing something."

And, for students like Rothrock who have yet to find work, there are worse things than moving home for a few months.

Rothrock said his job search woes will make a convenient excuse if he does have to live with his folks.

"I can tell them I'm overqualified to take the trash out," he said.

Staff writer Eric Ferreri contributed to this report.

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