THE DAILY CLIPS

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"RN To Be" is decorated on this graduate of the nursing program's cap at Pitt Community College 2012 Graduation held at ECU's Minges Coliseum on Friday, May 11, 2012. (Aileen Devlin/The Daily Reflector)

Editorial: PCC adds value
Tuesday, May 15, 2012

The long shadow cast by East Carolina University across the community can occasionally, and unfairly, obscure the important and valuable work conducted at Pitt Community College. The thousands of graduates earning degrees and certificates from PCC may not garner the attention paid to their East Carolina compatriots, but are more than deserving of comparable adulation.

Just as the newly minted ECU graduates face the improving, but still grim, prospects of finding work in an uncertain economy, PCC graduates are likely to find an uphill climb awaiting them in the coming weeks. However, the skills and knowledge gained on the Winterville campus will propel them to achieve as that school continues to serve as an invaluable resource for this community.

PCC conferred nearly 1,200 degrees and diplomas at its spring graduation ceremony on Friday at Minges Coliseum on the East Carolina campus. Like the ceremony that marked the end of the university’s semester held a week earlier, the occasion was a festive one in which those in caps and gowns celebrated their laudable achievement with the support of family, friends and loved ones.

The work of these men and women is certainly cause for celebration as their numbers reflect the growing size and influence of PCC. One need only visit the campus to recognize the remarkable growth there in recent years, or to look at the college’s master plans to see its ambition for the future. The school adds degree programs and capital projects at a stunning rate and remains one of the largest institutions in the N.C. Community College System.

That makes PCC a tremendous asset for this community and eastern North Carolina. Students completing degrees depart with the skills needed to dive into the work force or continue their academic careers at a four-year university. The school caters to those who
are not traditional students, holding late-night and distance learning classes to accommodate the needs of those who wish to learn.

The result is a resource that acts as incubator for economic development even at its serves as a respected academic institution. And while PCC graduates face a difficult job market, their alma mater prepared them to be competitive in their hunt even as it helps this community’s elected leadership create jobs. The work being done at East Carolina may cast a long shadow on those efforts, but they are undeniable and certainly deserving of recognition as PCC sends another exceptional group into the world.
Mooneyham: UNC football rogues
Tuesday, May 15, 2012

No one has come up with a better line about the scandal surrounding UNC-Chapel Hill’s football program than history professor Jay Smith.

“We had all this news about a rogue tutor,” Smith said. “There was a rogue assistant coach, a rogue agent, now, a rogue faculty member and a rogue administrative assistant. That’s a lot of rogues.”

The ever-mushrooming scandal, which now involves widespread academic fraud within the school’s Department of African and Afro-American Studies, reminds me of some roguish history.

There was that episode back in the early 1970s, when some rogue burglars broke into a Washington hotel. They reported to a couple of rogue White House aides. A rogue U.S. attorney general tried to quash in investigation into the matter. A U.S. senator from North Carolina kept forcing embarrassing admissions from more rogue White House aides. Eventually, a rogue U.S. president resigned.

In the 1920s, rogue thieves kept stealing government documents involving rogue oil leases. A couple of rogue oil companies obtained the rogue government leases. A rogue U.S. cabinet secretary eventually went to prison for accepting bribes from the rogue oil companies.

Oh, the rogues.

OK, so a rogue tutor and a rogue football coach aren’t exactly on par with a rogue president or cabinet secretary.

But when enough rogues run around the same place at the same time doing some of the same things, you no longer call them rogues. You call them conspirators.

The conspiracy here was keeping athletes eligible to play sports.

To believe that the latest evidence, from an internal review conducted by two of the school’s associate deans, Jonathan Hartlyn and William L. Andrews, means anything else is to be naïve.

Hartlyn and Andrews don’t reach that conclusion. They found 54 suspect classes, taught between 2007 and 2011, where little or no instruction was given. They point out that any student could have enrolled in them. Not just any student did. Of the students who enrolled in the courses, 39 percent were football or basketball players. Fifty-eight percent were involved in scholarship athletics of some type.
If those numbers aren’t convincing evidence of student-athletes being steered to bogus courses, what of this incriminating fact: Former UNC football player Marvin Austin, the guy whose tweeting kicked off the sordid revelations, enrolled in one of these courses in the summer of 2007, before he had even begun his first full semester at the school.

Perhaps a sky-blue leprechaun suggested the course.

Obviously, athletic departments at other universities, intent on fielding successful football and basketball teams, steer athletes toward easy majors and easy courses.

That’s not the same as pushing athletes into sham courses. It’s not the same as unauthorized, unexplained grade changes.

Those things constitute gross academic fraud.

The internal report lays the blame at the feet of the department’s former dean, Julius Nyang’oro, along with an administrative assistant who left school in 2009.

Oh, the rogues.

They appear to have had plenty of company.

Scott Mooneyham writes about North Carolina government and politics for the Capitol Press Association.
Rose’s Briley named NCSU Park Scholar
Tuesday, May 15, 2012

J.H. Rose High School senior Meagan Briley has received North Carolina State University’s Park Scholars award.

The university has selected 45 Park Scholars for fall 2012 from a pool of nearly 1,500 applicants. The awards are valued at about $86,000 for North Carolina residents and $141,000 for out-of-state students.

Briley, daughter of Lee and Kim Briley of Greenville, is senior class president, vice president of the National Honor Society, and a school representative on the Pitt County Student Advisory Council. She is a coach for the Exceptional Communities Baseball League, volunteers with Rocking Horse Ranch Therapeutic Riding Center, and received the 2011 State 4-H Volunteer Award.

Park Scholarships are awarded based on scholarship, leadership, service and character. Established in 1996, the Park Scholarships are named for the late Roy H. Park The scholarships include opportunities for enrichment activities such as grants for undergraduate research and study abroad.

To date, the Park Foundation has committed more than $65 million to support the scholarship.
Conley’s Wobbleton receives Harvard University scholarship
Tuesday, May 15, 2012

D.H. Conley High School senior Miles Wobbleton has been awarded Harvard University’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences Scholarship, valued at more than $175,000. Harvard University received 34,302 applications for the fall and accepted 2,032 of them. The 5.9 percent admission rate was the lowest in the school’s history.

More than 14,000 applicants scored 700 or above on the SAT critical reading test; 17,000 scored 700 or above on the SAT math test; 15,000 scored 700 or higher on the SAT writing test; and 3,800 were ranked first in their high school classes.

At Conley, Wobbleton is a member of the swim team, the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, Science National Honor Society and Mu Alpha Theta. He is founder and president of Pitt County BRAKES and is involved in Pitt County Teen Court and Greenville Youth Council. Wobbleton is a graduate of the Hugh O’Brien Youth Leadership Program and the Greenville-Pitt County Chamber of Commerce Teen Leadership Institute.

Wobbleton also was offered more than $270,000 in scholarship money to other universities. He has been awarded an Elks Lodge Most Valuable Student Scholarship, which he will use for Harvard. He plans to concentrate in government and pre-law programs.

Wobbleton is the son of Pam and Joe Wobbleton of Greenville.
Rose’s Ajmera one of 20 named as EC Scholars

J.H. Rose High School senior Ajay Ajmera is among 20 incoming freshmen selected for the EC Scholars program at East Carolina University.

The four-year merit scholarship recognizes academic performance, community involvement and leadership skills.

Recipients receive a scholarship for four years, along with a stipend for study abroad, for a total value of approximately $45,000.

Candidates for the EC Scholars program are required to have an SAT score that exceeds 1300 and class ranking in the top 5 percent of their high school class. While at ECU, EC Scholars must maintain a 3.5 GPA, participate in the university’s Honors College and perform 24 hours of community service each semester.

A member of the Health Sciences Academy at Rose, Ajmera helped start the Healthy Lifestyle Club, which is geared toward educating youth.

He is a member of Rose’s tennis team, as well as the National Honor Society, National English Honors Society, Mu Alpha Theta Honor Society and Science Honor Society. Ajmera volunteers with Boys & Girls Clubs of Pitt County, Children’s Miracle Network and Sheppard Memorial Library. He also plays in the Tar River Community Band and is a member of the city’s Youth Council.

Ajmera is one of 15 students involved in a research project with Dr. Alexander Murashov in ECU’s Department of Physiology. This summer he will shadow Dr. Randolph W. Chitwood Jr., the cardiovascular surgeon who leads the East Carolina Heart Institute.

Ajmera is the son of Shiv and Rajni Ajmera.
Casey Toth - T'Kiyah Outlaw proudly displays her degree in Hospitality and Tourism as she crosses the stage during N.C. Central University's 2012 Commencement Ceremony on Saturday May 12 in Durham.

577 graduate from N.C. Central

By Monica Chen - Correspondent

DURHAM - N.C. Central University graduates donned black and maroon, jumped up and down with excitement and mugged for video cameras on Saturday, but they also received an urgent message to act in the world.

The pressure is on: Commencement speaker the Rev. William Barber, president of the North Carolina NAACP and an NCCU alumnus, beseeched the graduates to be aware of the importance of their lives and realize their purpose.
“In this moment, the soul of our state and the soul of our nation are on trial,” Barber said. “You are the hope.”

Number of graduates: 577

Full turnout: By 8 a.m. Saturday at the O’Kelly-Riddick Stadium at NCCU, the bleachers were filled with about 4,000 relatives who came to cheer the graduates. There were so many that the university ran out of programs.

Alphabet sermon: Barber launched into an ABCs of life that brought the entire stadium to its feet. Some choice letters: ‘N’ is for “Never say never.” ‘Q’ is for “Quit quitting.” ‘S’ is for “Stand for something or you’ll fall for anything.” What is Z? ‘Z’ is “God knows your zip code.”

“Here you are, alive in this moment,” he added. “There is a God who always needs to raise up a counter to injustice.”

Harriet Tubman didn’t have an iPhone: “Maybe God is counting on you, class of 2012,” Barber said. “Maybe he sees the best in you. You’re not a lost generation. You’re not the X generation. You’re the generation that is more equipped with tools than any generation ever before. Harriet Tubman, she freed 500 slaves. She didn’t have iPod, iPhone. She didn’t have Facebook, email. All she had was moss on the north side of a tree, a north star in the middle of the night.”

The class of 2012 definitely has iPhones: Many graduates had their phones out during the ceremony, tweeting, texting, taking pictures.

A beloved class: The support of relatives and even strangers for the graduates was plainly on display.

Cheryl Gill, who came to cheer on her cousin, Thomas Cozzi, congratulated each graduate who passed by after the ceremony.

Sheila Singleton and relatives carried posters for her daughter, Deirdre Brooks, who studied history. The family traveled from Richmond, Va., on a 57-person bus, and picked up relatives in Baltimore and Durham.

“There have been hard economic times before, just with different challenges,” Singleton said. “With hard work, dreams can be accomplished.”

Keep working: Corey Harris, 23, graduated with a degree in criminal justice and said Barber’s speech gave him motivation to keep working hard. Like many other graduates this year, he maintains an attitude of acceptance toward the current state of the world.
“Things happen in life. Some things, you can control. Some things, you can’t,” Harris said. “This generation of young people is a good generation. We’re going to take the world in a positive direction.”
Job prospects and quality of life key to retaining top talent

By Christopher Gergen and Stephen Martin

Daniel Mellinger is making North Carolina proud.
At 27, he’s a product of our state’s public schools – a graduate of High Point’s T.W. Andrews High School and N.C. State. He’s an accomplished inventor and a budding entrepreneur.
He’s also a YouTube sensation.
Mellinger designs and builds small robotic flying machines called quadrotors. He and a few friends produced an astonishing video of the quadrotors buzzing around a room playing the James Bond theme on musical instruments. The total number of YouTube views since they posted the short video on Feb. 28: more than 3 million.
There’s only one problem with this feel-good story: Mellinger has taken his talent out of state.
He’s earning his Ph.D. this month from the University of Pennsylvania, where he studied in the General Robotics, Automation, Sensing and Perception lab. He’ll stay there as he launches his new company KMel Robotics with a colleague.
They’ll explore practical uses for the quadrotors, which show promise for aiding emergency response efforts, among other things. Following a disaster, the vehicles could be equipped with cameras that fly around and quickly capture and relay information without putting rescuers in jeopardy.
“We have a lot of connections at Penn, so we have set up shop here in Philly,” he said in an email.
He can’t be blamed. Smart people go where there the opportunities are. And if we’re smart, we’ll find ways to keep Mellinger connected with his home state and lure him back eventually.
To better harness our talent for the future, we also need to ask two critical questions. How can we develop more Daniel Mellingers? And what will it take to keep them in North Carolina?
Raising awareness
Mellinger believes the answer to the first question involves raising awareness about STEM careers – those in science, technology, engineering and math. “Programs that show young people how these subjects are applied in the real world in interesting ways are very important. Just getting students motivated to focus on these areas will enhance their education.”

There’s some work to do. When the Thomas B. Fordham Institute released a report in February on science education standards in America, North Carolina was one of 17 states to receive a D grade.

The N.C. STEM Learning Network, launched in 2008, is working to reverse that trend.

A project of the N.C. Science, Mathematics and Technology Education Center, the Learning Network is directing a statewide plan for STEM education that was created last fall by the state board of education, UNC system, community colleges, the General Assembly and other key players. Its website at www.ncstem.org provides an array of resources for enhancing science and technology education, as well as information on important STEM initiatives across the state.

The Charlotte Area STEM Teaching and Learning Environment Coalition (CASTLE), for example, regularly brings together for more than 50 businesses, universities and nonprofits to discuss ways to advance the cause.

STEMersion Charlotte 2012 is a two-week program that helps high school science and math teachers build classroom lessons that showcase how STEM knowledge is used in the real world. Businesses that host the teachers include Coca-Cola, Siemens, Duke Energy, Piedmont Natural Gas, AREVA and Livingston & Haven engineering. Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, in collaboration with local businesses, is also creating two-week learning units that show STEM skills at work. The units include “The Physics of Safe Driving with Richard Petty Racing,” “The Chemistry of Coca-Cola” and “The Math & Science of Recycling with Gerdau Ameristeel.”

**Grow and recruit**

In the Triangle, Wake County Schools has teamed with N.C. State to form the STEM Early College High School. Ultimately, the school will involve 250 students in accelerated, hands-on learning, all in the context of major challenges STEM expertise can help address in the 21st century – such as improved health and medicine, access to cleaner air and water, affordable solar energy and improved urban infrastructure.

Once we prepare these students, how do we hang onto them?
Research by Richard Florida and others shows that retaining talent comes down to two key factors: job prospects and quality of life. North Carolina does well in the latter category; continuing to build cultural assets, improve public education and expand recreational options will further enhance our standing. On the job front, we need to recruit more STEM companies and also grow our own. That will require increased capital for entrepreneurs, strong personal networks at the university and professional levels and increasingly sophisticated graduate programs and research labs.

“Retention is absolutely key,” says Mark Ezzell of the STEM Learning Network. A statewide scorecard that tracks the success of STEM initiatives will focus not only on educational progress but also on economic development impact, including the attraction and retention of talent.

When rising stars like Daniel Mellinger decide to stay home, we’ll know we’re succeeding.

Christopher Gergen is founder of Bull City Forward & Queen City Forward, a fellow with Fuqua’s Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship at Duke University, and the author of “Life Entrepreneurs.” Stephen Martin, a director at the nonprofit Center for Creative Leadership, is author of “The Messy Quest for Meaning” and blogs at www.messyquest.com.
Orange-Chatham District Attorney Jim Woodall has asked the State Bureau of Investigation to conduct a separate probe of UNC-Chapel Hill’s African and Afro-American Studies program, following findings of academic fraud by a university review.

Woodall said he made the request on Friday and met with the SBI on Monday to discuss the investigation.

“Told them I’d like them to look in to any academic or computer fraud that may have taken place, any forgery that may have taken place, any conspiracy that may have taken place to commit any of those crimes or conceal any of those crimes,” Woodall said today. “Of course, they can look beyond that. ...This would be very extensive. They could go in a lot of different directions.”

Woodall said he was swayed to request the criminal investigation partly because it appears that UNC-CH professor Julius Nyang’oro was paid to teach summer school courses in which classes were not held and no supervision took place.

The African and Afro-American Studies program has been at the core of questions surrounding academic fraud involving UNC football players.

The findings of an internal UNC probe released this month found 54 classes within the department in which there was little or no indication of instruction. The review also found at least 10 cases of unauthorized grade changes involving students who did not complete their work.
What gives?

Enough is enough. The controversy surrounding Julius Nyang’oro, professor and now-former chair of the African and Afro-American Studies department at UNC-Chapel Hill, is expanding into possible courtroom action. A specific question is whether Nyang’oro got paid for teaching a summer school class he didn’t teach, other than giving students an independent study assignment to complete before the summer session ended.

If that’s the case, suggests Orange County District Attorney Jim Woodall, then Nyang’oro might be looking at legal trouble, and Woodall is asking the State Bureau of Investigation to start digging.

The earlier questions about the professor’s links to football and basketball players who enrolled heavily in his department’s classes (some 54 of which a university investigation found to be suspect) didn’t have much of a paper trail, Woodall said, and there didn’t seem to be a financial motive involved. But the latest issue, raised by the university itself, seems different.

Basically, the university says that a 2011 summer school course Nyang’oro “taught,” AFAM 280, Blacks in North Carolina, was supposed to be a lecture class with the usual papers and research in addition to a professor’s presentations.

According to the university, Nyang’oro didn’t do that. Had he taught the class as expected, he would have earned the $12,000 he was paid (a top rate for a summer school class taught by a senior professor). But if he didn’t teach in the conventional and approved way – that’s where the rub comes.

Flags raised

Nyang’oro, who resigned as department head and then announced his retirement, was earlier tied to questionable classes for athletes. He was listed as the professor in a class in which UNC football player Michael McAdoo turned in a paper that N.C. State fans later reviewed after it showed up in legal documents. They discovered parts that were allegedly plagiarized. McAdoo was part of a probe by
the NCAA into whether players received improper financial and academic benefits. Nyang’oro said he didn’t teach that class, which only adds to the puzzlement.

But he also was linked to Marvin Austin, a star player who also figured in the NCAA probe (Coach Butch Davis was dismissed in the course of all this). Austin took an advanced class under Nyang’oro, even though he had not yet enrolled in his first class at the university and had not completed a required remedial reading course. Austin received a high B. The class is one of 45 that the university has identified as ones in which Nyang’oro offered little or no instruction.

In the case of the summer school course now singled out, greater questions arise beyond those concerning this individual professor. Was no one keeping track of who was teaching what to whom? Doesn’t the university have a chain of command and process whereby upper level officials make sure those who are assigned to teach (and paid handsomely for it) actually do what they’re supposed to do? What internal controls does the university either lack or ignore?

**Money’s worth**

Taxpayer money is involved here. Nyang’oro, before he resigned his chairmanship, was making $171,000 annually. When he dropped back to his professorship, his pay was $159,000. Don’t university officials feel responsible for seeing that the people of North Carolina get something approaching their money’s worth, particularly when it involves young people enrolled to learn?

UNC-CH Chancellor Holden Thorp, who initially stood by Nyang’oro, and who was once his supervisor as dean of Arts and Sciences, owes the people of North Carolina a sufficient and public explanation. This does not reflect well on his leadership, particularly coming in the shadow of the earlier scandal in the athletics department and a multimillion-dollar buyout of Davis’ contract.

And Tom Ross, president of the UNC system, seemed to dismiss suggestions that a further investigation is needed and said he believed the university had moved to correct problems. That preceded the latest disclosures and questions involving Nyang’oro. Ross, who apparently would rather leave this as a matter to be handled by the Chapel Hill campus, must surely realize by now that the situation is serious enough that it warrants attention at the system level.
Duke appoints Brodhead to new five-year term

DURHAM - The Duke University Board of Trustees has appointed President Richard H. Brodhead to a new five-year term.

“President Brodhead has provided inspired leadership to Duke University over the past eight years, successfully navigating through a period of great change and challenge, and positioning Duke extraordinarily well for the future,” said Board of Trustees chair G. Richard Wagoner Jr. “The Board of Trustees wants to continue that positive momentum, and is unanimous and enthusiastic in asking President Brodhead to serve a new five-year term.”

Brodhead’s reappointment comes after a thorough review conducted by a committee of trustees and faculty chaired by Jack O. Bovender, vice chair of the
board. Over a four-month period earlier this year, the committee solicited and analyzed feedback from students, faculty, staff, alumni and national leaders in higher education.

“The board is grateful for President Brodhead’s willingness to lead Duke during what will be a period of significant changes in higher education and health care, as well as transitions on campus,” Wagoner added. “The board is committed to sustaining, and indeed advancing, Duke’s position as a preeminent research university that will be a destination for the best students and faculty. We are confident that President Brodhead will help us fulfill that vision.”

As Duke’s ninth president, Brodhead conceived and led a $300 million fundraising campaign for financial aid endowment, launched the DukeEngage civic engagement program, and began the revitalization of campus life, including the opening of Duke’s first new residence hall in seven years.

He has made globalization a major strategic priority for the university, overseeing the creation of the Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School in Singapore and forging a partnership for Duke Kunshan University in China, according to a university news release. Brodhead also has strengthened Duke’s ties to the community, and enhanced Duke’s programs in the arts and athletics. In 2011, he was named co-chair of the National Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Brodhead came to Duke in 2004 from Yale University, where he started as an undergraduate and rose to Dean of Yale College, responsible for all aspects of academic and student life.
WASHINGTON - The cost of a college education continues to increase faster than inflation; a phenomenon that's roiling family budgets and spurring calls for action on Capitol Hill. But with a little digging, parents and students can find cost-cutting deals and programs that make the paper chase a lot more affordable.

While public colleges and universities are hiking tuition to make up for dramatic reductions to state higher-education funding, private colleges - which usually receive no state funding - have greater latitude to cut costs. That's one reason that average annual tuition increases at public colleges have been more than twice as large as those at private colleges over the last decade, according to the College Board Advocacy & Policy Center.

As more students question whether to take on massive tuition debt only to end up with degrees but no jobs, many private colleges are offering discount deals that cut, freeze or even eliminate tuition altogether for incoming students.

Duquesne University in Pittsburgh is slashing tuition by 50 percent for freshmen who enroll in the school of education this year. The price cut is good for four years for students who stay in the program.

High-achieving freshmen who enrolled at Seton Hall University by Dec. 15, 2011, will get a tuition discount of $21,000 - or 66 percent - for the 2012-13 school year. The same deal probably will go to freshmen for the 2013-14 school year.

"In these tough economic times, Seton Hall understands the financial concerns of families and is offering this program to help make a first-rate private Catholic education as affordable as a public education," reads a website passage from the school's office of undergraduate admissions.

Other schools - such as Ashland University in Columbus, Ohio; Thomas More College in Crestview Hills, Ky.; and the Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston - are rolling out three-year bachelor's degree programs for the coming
school year. Students who can handle the intense workload can shave 25 percent off the cost of a four-year degree.

Jacksonville University in Florida, Medaille College in Buffalo, N.Y., and Midland University in Fremont, Neb., offer four-year "graduation guarantees" in which the school pays the additional tuition if a full-time student fails to graduate in four years. Beginning next fall, Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea, Ohio, will cover the extra cost no matter how long it takes to obtain a degree.

Some private colleges even waive tuition altogether for eligible students; eligibility standards vary.

Five years ago, only a handful of colleges offered these kinds of promotions, said Mark Kantrowitz, who publishes the college planning websites FinAid.org and Fastweb.com.

"Now we're seeing more of them, but it's still a relatively small phenomenon," Kantrowitz said.

The deals are usually one-time only offers, with colleges looking to recoup the lost revenue by attracting more students and increasing class sizes. The special offers usually mean less financial aid.

"If the tuition is going down, then the financial need is going down. So there's a natural reduction in the amount of financial aid that students get," Kantrowitz said.

The discounts serve as a publicity driver for some schools, while providing students greater predictability on costs.

"You won't get a Harvard or an Ivy League institution to do this. It's going to be a less well-known institution that can get a lot of publicity from doing it. They have to have the capacity to enroll more students to make up the difference, so it tends to be colleges that have extra capacity and compete regionally, not nationally, for students," Kantrowitz said.

Burlington College in Burlington, Vt., is a prime example. With fewer than 200 students, the small liberal-arts college takes up only half of its 80,000 square feet of building space, so there's plenty of room to grow. The school hopes to reach 300 students in the immediate future and top out eventually at 750, said Christine Plunkett, Burlington's vice president of administration and financing.

To help make that happen, Burlington is cutting tuition 25 percent for the summer semester, which begins later this month. The college won't raise tuition for the 2012-13 school year, either. And it guarantees that current and incoming students for the fall semester will pay the same tuition - $22,400 - for the next four years as long as they stay enrolled full time.
Assuming a 4 percent annual tuition increase each year, the rate freeze will save the average Burlington student about $5,100 over four years, Plunkett said.

Typically, only eight to 12 students enroll for summer classes at Burlington. This year, 20 have signed up for the discounted summer semester, and enrollment doesn't close for three more weeks.

"We have students that keep registering right up to the last minute," Plunkett said. "We have plastered our building with "25% off" signs so that all the students are aware of it. I think it does make a difference. To get an entire semester under their belt in the summer for a quarter off, that's significant."

More than a dozen private colleges offer tuition-free enrollment. Most require students to work during the school year and some are in remote rural areas. Nearly all have very selective enrollment criteria.

Alice Lloyd College in Pippa Passes, Ky., offers free tuition for students who live in 108 central Appalachian counties in Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. Students at Berea College in Berea, Ky., pay no tuition and get free laptop computers.

Deep Springs College in remote Big Pine, Calif., provides each student with a scholarship valued at $50,000 that covers tuition, room and board. Students can expect to pay roughly $2,800 a year for travel, books and incidentals. The formerly all-male college will begin accepting female students in the summer of 2013.

Several schools with strong religious emphasis also offer tuition-free education, according to FinAid.org. Barclay College in Haviland, Kan., a Bible college with just over 100 students, began offering tuition-free education in 2007.

College of the Ozarks in Point Lookout, Mo., bills itself as "Hard Work U." Every student at the Christian college must work 15 hours a week plus two 40-hour workweeks a year. Credit for the work program, financial aid and a college "Cost of Education Scholarship" cover each student's full tuition.

Full-time students who live in campus housing at St. Louis Christian College in Florissant, Mo., receive a scholarship that covers their tuition, while scholarships cover half of tuition costs for full-time students who commute.

For more than a century, Cooper Union in New York City has given each student a scholarship to cover tuition. But next year, the architectural and engineering school will start charging graduate students in order to address mounting budget woes. Undergraduate students who enroll for the 2013-14 school year will continue to get four years of tuition-free attendance, but it's unclear whether succeeding freshman classes will get the same deal.
While Ivy League schools have shunned these promotions, one of the most popular cost-cutting programs - providing financial aid grants instead of loans, especially to low-income families - was pioneered by Princeton and later adopted by other Ivy League schools.

Kantrowitz said 74 colleges, private and public, now provided the same deal. Many were spurred to action when Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, began agitating for a law requiring colleges to dedicate 5 percent of their endowment spending to aid for low-income students, Kantrowitz said.
E. Gordon Gee, the president of The Ohio State University, says that public colleges and universities need to devise a new business model to pay for the costs of education, beyond sticking students with higher tuition and greater debt.

May 14, 2012

**Slowly, as Student Debt Rises, Colleges Confront Costs**

By ANDREW MARTIN

COLUMBUS, Ohio — In a wood-paneled office lined with books, sports memorabilia and framed posters (including John Belushi in “Animal House”), E. Gordon Gee, the president of Ohio State University, keeps a framed quotation that reads, “If you don’t like change, you’re going to like irrelevance even less.”

Mr. Gee, who is often identified with a big salary and spendthrift ways, says he has taken the quotation to heart, and he is now trying to persuade Ohio State’s vast bureaucracy, and the broader world of academia, to do the same.

At a time of diminished state funding for higher education and uncertain federal dollars, Mr. Gee says that public colleges and universities need to devise a new business model to pay for the costs of education, beyond sticking students with higher tuition and greater debt.
“The notion that universities can do business the very same way has to stop,” said Mr. Gee, who is also the chairman of a commission studying college attainment, including the impact of student debt.

College presidents across the country are confronting the same realization, trying to manage their institutions with fewer state dollars without sacrificing quality or all-important academic rankings. Tuition increases had been a relatively easy fix but now — with the balance of student debt topping $1 trillion and an increasing number of borrowers struggling to pay — some administrators acknowledge that they cannot keep putting the financial onus on students and their families.

Increasingly, they are looking for other ways to pay for education, stepping up private fund-raising, privatizing services, cutting staff, eliminating departments — even saving millions of dollars by standardizing things like expense forms.

And Wall Street is watching.

Moody’s Investors Service, in a report earlier this year, said it had a favorable outlook for the nation’s most elite private colleges and large state institutions, those with the “strongest market positions” that had multiple ways to generate revenue. Ohio State, for instance, received a stable outlook from Moody’s last fall, though the report cautioned about the school’s debt and reliance on its medical center for revenue.

But Moody’s issued a negative outlook for a majority of colleges and universities heavily dependent on tuition and state revenue.

“Tuition levels are at a tipping point,” Moody’s wrote, adding later, “We anticipate an ongoing bifurcation of student demand favoring the highest quality and most affordable higher education options.”

Colleges can be top-heavy with administrators and woefully inefficient, some critics say, and some have only recently taken a harder look at ways to streamline their operations.

“Schools are very good at adding new things, new programs,” said Sherideen S. Stoll, vice president for finance and administration at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. “We are not so good at looking at things we have been doing for 20 or 30 years and saying, ‘Should we be offering those academic programs?’”

At Bowling Green, 62 percent of graduates have debt that averages $31,515, the highest among Ohio public universities that publish the data. In addition
to raising tuition, which has been limited by state-mandated caps, the university has laid off employees, encouraged early retirements, required unpaid furloughs and limited pay increases, Ms. Stoll said. The belt-tightening hasn’t yet reached the point that academic quality has suffered, she said, but Bowling Green may not be able to offer as much in the future. “We’ve done everything and anything to try to operate much more efficiently,” she said.

The problems aren’t confined to public colleges. Administrators at some nonprofit private institutions said they too had come to realize they could not keep raising tuition and fees. Families have become more price-sensitive since the economic collapse and are seeking deeper discounts on the sticker price. “We know the model is not sustainable,” said Lawrence T. Lesick, vice president for enrollment management at Ohio Northern University. “Schools are going to have to show the value proposition. Those that don’t aren’t going to be around.”

There is a dispute about why college costs have risen so much. Before the economic crisis, some critics argue, both public and private colleges participated in a costly “arms race” to provide better amenities to lure the best students and faculty: new dormitories with one student to a room, frequent sabbaticals for professors, upscale cafeteria food, expanded counseling services and gymnasiums that rival the fanciest health clubs in Manhattan.

Others say education is intrinsically expensive. Health care costs, for instance, have taken a toll, since colleges are labor-intensive. And the expense of keeping up with technology, like wireless Internet and new computers, is high. Here at Ohio State, where tuition has increased by nearly 60 percent since 2002, there is a gleaming new student union, climbing walls that can accommodate 50 students at a time and $2 billion in construction projects under way.

Mr. Gee’s compensation package this year, moreover, is worth about $2 million, and The Chronicle of Higher Education has called him the highest-paid public university president. The Dayton Daily News recently reported that Mr. Gee had billed Ohio State for $550,000 in travel in the last two years. The travel expenses prompted some to question if Mr. Gee practices what he preaches.
“He’s very capable. He’s a very smart guy, and he’s engaging and all these things,” said Dale Butland, a spokesman for Innovation Ohio, a nonprofit policy research group. But he added, “Students and their parents who are struggling, not just with coming up with the money, but paying off the debt, I think there is a disconnect between what they are being asked to do and what they are seeing the leader of the university doing.”

Mr. Gee maintains that Ohio State is getting its money’s worth. On his watch, Ohio State has become a more prestigious university, he says, while remaining a relative bargain, even with fewer resources from the state. It now receives just 7 percent of its budget from the state.

Ohio State costs about $25,000 a year for in-state residents who live on campus. The average debt for graduates who borrow is $24,480.

A lanky 68-year-old who is known for his bow ties, horn-rimmed glasses and sometimes zany antics (he has shown up, unannounced, at 21st birthday parties for his students, which he finds on Facebook), Mr. Gee has had the top job at five universities, including twice at Ohio State. He returned to the Columbus campus in 2007 after stints at Brown and Vanderbilt. Mr. Gee acknowledges that college affordability and student debt are growing problems that university presidents long ignored. He said they now needed to address them quickly.

“We have not been as conscious about costs as we should be, and that has now come home to roost,” he said.

Like many other college presidents, Mr. Gee has set about trying to make Ohio State’s highly decentralized bureaucracy more efficient. He said he planned to find $1 billion in inefficient spending in the university’s $5 billion budget over the next five years and redirect the money toward priorities.

“We are like Noah’s Ark,” he said. “We do two of everything.”

The university saved $20 million simply by switching to common vendors for pens, copiers and overnight shipping; previously Ohio State’s 14 colleges chose their own. Creating a common expense report will save $75 million.

“When I got here, I asked to see their long-term financial model, and they brought me a paper for one year, and I said, ‘What?’ ” said Geoff Chatas, a former banker whom Mr. Gee hired in 2010 as chief financial officer. “Now we have a 15-year plan.”
Mr. Gee said he was considering selling off Ohio State’s airport and golf courses, and he might privatize campus parking, though faculty members are balking at the idea. Last year, Ohio State became the first public university to issue a 100-year bond, for $500 million.

He is also trying to beef up Ohio State’s enrollment of out-of-state and international students, who bring in more tuition revenue and higher test scores. And, he is pressing donors for more money, a task in which he is particularly skilled.

At a ceremony to honor a $100 million donation from Leslie Wexner, the clothing magnate and Ohio State graduate, Mr. Gee choked back tears.

“Every time I get a lot of money I cry,” Mr. Gee told the crowd. “And I got a lot of tears left.”
North Carolina's New Ban on Same-Sex Unions Leaves Faculty Benefits and Recruitment Efforts in the Air

By Peter Schmidt

North Carolina's image as a destination for gay and lesbian students and faculty members appears to have suffered as a result of the state's overwhelming adoption Tuesday of a constitutional amendment that precludes any legal recognition of marriages, domestic partnerships, or civil unions between people of the same sex.

But whether the amendment will have much effect on the conditions of people on college campuses remains unclear. The amendment was vaguely worded, and its supporters and opponents disagree about how much it is likely to change the benefits provided to gay and lesbian college employees and the services and protections offered students. While some leading opponents of the measure have expressed fears that it will eviscerate the benefits offered college workers in same-sex relationships, some leading proponents of the measure have argued that it should be relatively easy for colleges to find ways to keep such benefits intact.

The measure, approved by more than six in 10 of the state's voters, says, "Marriage between one man and one woman is the only domestic legal union that shall be valid or recognized in this State." In its second sentence, however, it specifically exempts contractual arrangements between private parties, potentially leaving public colleges free to keep intact benefits provided to their employees by outside companies.

The amendment also does not preclude North Carolina's public colleges from working around it by defining eligibility for workers' benefits in ways that do not take marital status into account, such as through clauses making benefits available to both same- and opposite-sex unmarried partners.

Joni Worthington, a spokeswoman for the University of North Carolina system, said in an e-mail statement Wednesday that the system's lawyers "are just beginning to evaluate the potential impact of yesterday's vote." Legal analyses of the measure by professors at various public and private law schools around the state have concluded that it will very likely take
court intervention to determine how the measure affects benefits for state employees, including those at public colleges.

While some faculty members and administrators on campuses say they expect same-sex benefits to be legally challenged, at least one leader of the campaign in favor of the ballot measure on Wednesday showed little desire to get in such fights. "The colleges and universities can offer benefit plans that would benefit same-sex partners," said Tami L. Fitzgerald, the executive director of North Carolina Values Coalition and chairwoman of Vote for Marriage N.C., which promoted the measure. What has changed as a result of the measure's passage, she said, is that colleges cannot base the availability of such benefits "on a domestic partnership."

**For Better or Worse**

Among the state's private colleges, Duke University issued a statement Wednesday that said the amendment's approval "is not expected to impact Duke's long-standing policy to extend same-sex partner benefits to faculty and staff."

The University of North Carolina system does not allow its member campuses to consider the same-sex partners of their employees as spouses in providing health benefits, in keeping with long-standing state law defining a marriage as solely between a man and woman. The system does, however, let its campuses offer their employees the ability to purchase, for their domestic partners, coverage through supplemental benefits programs, such as those providing dental or life insurance.

Students throughout the university system are allowed to add a same-sex partner to their health-insurance plans, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill gives the same-sex partners of its students access to student housing and certain recreational facilities.

"All these benefits are highly questionable with the passage of the amendment," said Maxine Eichner, a professor of law at the Chapel Hill campus's law school.

Amy E. Schlag, the coordinator of the resource office for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, said she is worried that, as a result of the amendment's passage, the students her office serves will no longer get access to domestic-violence shelters and other protections from domestic abuse.

But E. Gregory Wallace, a professor of law at the Campbell University, which is located in Raleigh and affiliated with the Baptist Church, said such
fears are overblown. State laws against domestic violence are expansive, he says, and cover a wide array of living arrangements, including people who are simply housemates.

In the short term, at least, the amendment is seen as most likely to affect the state's ability to recruit or retain gay and lesbian faculty and students.

Katie R. Peel, an assistant professor of English at UNC-Wilmington, took her job there in 2008, three years after becoming legally married to a woman in Massachusetts. On Wednesday she said her decision to move to North Carolina was influenced by its status as the only state in the Southeast without a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage, which "gave us hope."

"My department has been incredibly supportive of me and I have loved working here," she said. "But I will probably have one eye on the market this year."