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Community Development Initiative goes green

By Mike Grizzard
The Daily Reflector

Many concepts of the green movement are new to Abdul Rasheed, chief executive officer of the North Carolina Community Development Initiative in Raleigh. But he does have a firm hold on preservation, especially when it comes to people and communities.

That’s where he has been able to find some common ground with environmental groups.

“They’re teaching us about these principles and values and we in exchange, I think, are helping them to appreciate that not only do we need to preserve the land and the trees and the birds and the wetlands, but we also need to preserve those communities that are at risk and are vulnerable,” Rasheed said.

Rasheed and the Community Development Initiative have been in the business of encouraging investment in low-income communities since 1994.

He and Ebonie Alexander, president of the organization, visited Greenville this week to discuss the NCCDI’s impact and the direction it hopes to take.

The Community Development Initiative has joined a conservation effort called Land for Tomorrow, a statewide partnership of citizens, businesses, interest groups and local governments urging the General Assembly to provide $200 million a year for five years to protect the state’s land and water resources.

Rasheed’s focus is on providing “conservation-based affordable housing” that incorporates green technologies, from land planning to passive solar energy to dual-flush toilets.

“We’re trying to move from just getting people into a house to getting people into a smart house,” Rasheed said, “... We’re making every concerted effort now to bring those technologies to low income communities based on our ability to afford the technology.

“If we don’t do it now, as this curve moves, to come back and try to reinvest and re-establish these principles as we have done historically would be a shame on us that know better during this generation.”

The Community Development Initiative is a nonprofit, public-private partnership that has worked primarily with community development centers but is extending its reach to faith-based organizations, historically black colleges and other non-profits. Primary funding has come through the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the State of North Carolina. Financial institutions also invest, which helps them meet regulatory requirements under the Community Investment Act.

The NCCDI provides annual operational grants to about 30 established CDCs, including the Rocky Mount/Edgecombe CDC, the Wilson Community Improvement Association, East Carolina Community Development Inc. in Beaufort, the Metropolitan Housing and CDC in Washington, and Rebuilding Broken Places CDC in Goldsboro. Loans are also available through the Community Development Initiative’s sister company, Initiative Capital, a certified community develop-

See BEAT, B3
Diploma, poster honor Carson

BY JANE STANCILL
STAFF WRITER

CHAPEL HILL - Eve Carson, the slain UNC-Chapel Hill student body president, was honored in a simple, private ceremony this month when university officials presented her parents with her diploma, a pewter model of the Old Well and a watercolor painting of her favorite spots on campus.

The painting was also reproduced on a poster that featured a quote from Carson describing her love of all things Carolina. About 2,000 copies of the poster were printed and offered for sale at the campus bookstore, where they have been a popular item for graduating seniors.

The posthumous diploma ceremony occurred two weeks ago during commencement weekend, when Carson would have graduated. Margaret Jablonski, vice chancellor for student affairs, described the event to trustees Thursday.

"I just got a beautiful thank-you card from Mrs. Carson," Jablonski said after the meeting. "They were very, very appreciative."

The painting, by Goldsboro artist Brenda Behr, features well-known UNC-CH campus sites — a leafy quad, the Graham Memorial reading room, the Coker Arboretum and the Pit — that Carson mentioned in what has become a well-known quote on campus:

"I love UNC. I love the quad in the spring and the arboretum in the fall. I love the Pit on a sunny day and Graham Memorial Lounge on a rainy one. I love Roy [Williams] all the time. But what makes UNC truly special is not our beautiful campus, our distinguished reputation or even our basketball team. It's us — the student body — who make UNC what it is."

The shooting death of the popular student leader was a blow to the campus this spring. Carson's body was found in a wooded Chapel Hill neighborhood March 5. Two young men, Demario Atwater and Laurence Alvin Lovette, have been charged with murder in the case.
Moeser receives gifts for UNC, self

Departing chancellor is given a new car

BY JANE STANCILL
STAFF WRITER

CHAPEL HILL — Retiring UNC-Chapel Hill Chancellor James Moeser got two big gifts Thursday.

The first was $6 million from the William R. Kenan Jr. Charitable Trust that moves the university closer to Moeser's goal of doubling the size of the Honors Program. The program offers small classes and a more rigorous curriculum to select students. The donation was announced during the chancellor's last meeting with the Board of Trustees.

The second gift caught Moeser off guard. Trustees led him to the parking lot of the Carolina Inn, where they presented him with the keys to a shiny new Toyota Camry festooned with a big Carolina blue ribbon. It was a personal retirement gift from the trustees.

"I don't know what to say," Moeser said as he walked toward the new car, a stand-in until an ordered hybrid version arrives. "I love it. I really love it."

The trustees heaped praise on Moeser for his eight-year tenure, during which he helped raise $2.38 billion, created a nationally recognized financial aid program and forcefully defended academic freedom in a post-Sept. 11 debate over teaching about the Quran.

Trustee Rusty Carter of Wilmington read a resolution honoring Moeser and then described how early on the new chancellor visited a historic church in Wilmington, sat down at the organ and played, "Hark the Sound," the university's alma mater. "I was a little stunned, but it really did underscore your early passion," Carter said.

"It's a sacred song," Moeser said.

The chancellor will retire June 30. After a year of paid leave, he will return to the faculty. Until he steps out of his administrative office, he said he intended to raise the remaining $4 million needed to double the number of students in the Honors Program. The gift from the Kenan Trust goes a long way toward Moeser's long-stated goal. The money will add faculty to teach honors courses and is expected to qualify for a $3 million matching grant from a state fund that supports distinguished professorships.

Richard Krasno, executive director of the Kenan Trust, said the gift was in honor of Moeser and newly elected chancellor, Holden Thorp, now dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The university has 120 honors courses. About 200 of the 3,800 first-year students were invited into the program.

"You can't overstate the importance of the intellectual excitement they add to this campus," Krasno said. "Almost all of these students could have selected another university, but they chose to become Tar Heels."

Moeser noted with pride that a new ranking known as the Lombardi lists UNC-CH with only six other public universities in the United States that achieved a top-25 rank in key objective measures: research funding, endowment assets, annual private giving, national academy members, faculty awards, doctorates granted, postdoctoral appointees and SAT/ACT scores.

After all the accolades for the retiring chancellor, Moeser's eyes teared up. He said he was confident the university was in good hands in its third century.

"The best story is yet to be written," he said. "I'll be very, very proud to watch it."

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