THE DAILY CLIPS

June 4, 2007

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

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

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ECU graduate students chosen for state internships

The Daily Reflector

Three East Carolina University students are among 68 N.C. college, graduate and law students selected for 10-week summer internships with state agencies.

The N.C. State Government

ECU Notes

Internship Program, in its 37th year, is coordinated by the Youth Advocacy and Involvement Office of the N.C. Department of Administration.

Students are paid $8.25 an hour for their jobs, which take them across North Carolina to perform a wide range of important tasks. The ECU students are:

- Thomas Dixon of Roanoke Rapids, a junior political science student, is scheduled to work as a legislative research assistant in the state House of Representatives.
- Korie Amberger of Kinston, a junior finance student, is scheduled to work with the Information Technology & Nanotechnology Center Project at the Department of Commerce's International Trade office in Raleigh.
- Sarah Wittmer of Cary, a sophomore art education and printmaking student, has accepted the virtual internship at the Department of Cultural Resource's Historical Resources office in Raleigh.

"I am pleased that we have been able to expand this highly competitive program, which provides hands-on experience in dozens of diverse jobs," Gov. Mike Easley stated in a news release. "These opportunities help to prepare our students for the challenges of the global marketplace and encourage public service."

Faculty awarded

The Division of Research and Graduate Studies awarded 21 faculty members more than $485,000 this spring in development awards for research projects.

"These awards provide seed funds for faculty members to develop preliminary data for a major research grant application to an external sponsor," according to the division's Vice Chancellor Deirdre Mageean.

"The goal of this program is to increase both the amount of externally supported research at ECU and the number of faculty members with external support."

Past recipients of these awards have obtained, to date, 17 grants totaling almost $2.3 million.

This year's projects cover a range of subjects from obesity research to language studies. An example of one project is a $35,000 award to study on gastric bypass surgery's effect of diabetes being conducted by Timothy Gavin and Joseph Homard of exercise and sports sciences, G. Lynis Dohm of physiology and Dr. Walter Porries, a pioneer in the process.

Other projects included research into biodiesel uses, respiratory problems among farm workers, language development in rural North Carolina and erectile dysfunction.

The annual Research Development Award Program also provides a supplement of up to $15,000 to support a doctoral students to work on an awarded project. This year, seven students will receive such support.

The researchers will receive the grant in July and will be expected to submit a grant proposal to an external sponsor by January 2009.

Jeweler featured

Robert Ebendorf was selected as a featured artist in GlassWear, an international exhibition of the world's leading contemporary jewelry makers, opening in November.

Ebendorf, the Carol Grotnes Belk Distinguished Professor in the Department of Art and Design, is internationally recognized as a leader in the studio jewelry movement.

Announcement of Ebendorf's inclusion in the GlassWear exhibition comes on the heels of recent news that a private collector has made a gift of 25 examples of Ebendorf's work to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

The GlassWear exhibit is jointly sponsored by the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City, the Schmuckmuseum in Pforzheim, Germany, and the Toledo Museum of Art in Ohio.

The GlassWear exhibition "celebrates the marriage of two of the most challenging practices in decorative arts—glass and jewelry," Ebendorf said. "Over 120 exceptional works were chosen for the show. I'm deeply honored to be included in such a stellar international coterie."
Drew Steele-Skip Holtz Golf Classic seeks to help out special-needs kids

Erin Rickert
The Daily Reflector

Drew Steele spent much of Sunday setting up the Greenville Convention Center for a two-day event in his honor, pausing only for impromptu greetings as guests filtered in.

His chipper attitude was contagious, drawing smiles on a number of faces walking through the doors of the Greenville Boulevard facility.

The 22-year-old, who has Down Syndrome, has that effect on people, said his mother, Sandy Steele.

"We see him change more people than people change him," she said. "He's pure at heart. He loves to make people happy."

That same positive attitude is what inspired East Carolina University Head Football Coach Skip Holtz at a Special Olympics fundraising golf tournament at Bradford Creek Golf Club in 2005.

From the meeting, the Drew Steele-Skip Holtz Golf Classic, now in its second year, was born. The event, which featured a fundraising dinner and auction Sunday night, before the tournament today, is instrumental in helping raise money for special needs kids through a foundation that bears Drew Steele's name.

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During about three hours Sunday night, more than 1,000 people mingled while enjoying buffet food donated from area restaurants, and beverages from Pepsi and R.A. Jeffreys Distributing. During a silent auction at the beginning portion of the dinner, guests bid on items including a photograph and ball cap autographed by Lou Holtz, Skip Holtz's dad and famed football coach; a baseball bat signed by Mickey Mantle; jewelry, and other sports memorabilia. Photographs from last years event flashed on three large projection screens during the auction.

A live auction featured prizes including a two-day private jet trip for four people; a chance to play football for a day in Norfolk, Va.; and activities with BMX rider Dave Mirra, PGA Tour Pro Will MacKenzie and Skip Holtz.

Throughout today, about 84 four-person teams are expected to participate in the golf tournament, played at both Ironwood Golf and Country Club and the Greenville Country Club.

Last year's classic generated about $225,000 before expenses, and the organizers contributed $15,000 to the Greenville Recreation and Parks Department to pay for wheelchair access at several municipal parks, said Mike Steele, Drew's father and former ECU basketball coach.

The first tournament also helped give rise to the Drew Steele Greater Greenville Foundation, an endowment fund Holtz hopes will become a driving force behind establishing a permanent local facility specifically for special needs children.

The Drew Steele Center will be housed in the city-owned Elm Street Gym, which will be renovated with these children in mind.

The facility will include a computer and life-skills center, among other features, Mike Steele said. A date to start renovations has not been set.

Reflecting Sunday, Holtz said the event was an opportunity to give back to a community that welcomed him with open arms in 2005, and a chance for others to get to know the man behind the positive attitude that inspired both him and his football team. Drew Steele has been a big supporter of Pirate football, and often accompanies players as they run onto the field at game time.

"I think we can all learn a little bit from Drew," Holtz said, noting Drew has every reason to complain, but chooses not to.

Quoting from the Bible, he summed up why he holds the event.

"To whom much has been given, much is expected," he said.

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Benefit helps injured woman

The Daily Reflector

A “Walk Again” fundraiser to benefit Elizabeth Clarke, a graduate of East Carolina University who sustained a severe spinal cord injury in a 1997 automobile accident, was held May 18 at the Greenville Museum of Art.

More than 100 people attended the benefit, which featured a live auction, drinks and hors d’oeuvres provided by Jeffrey’s Beer and Wine and Debu Café and Catering, a silent auction and raffle for jewelry donated by Bailey’s.

More than $35,000 was raised to help pay for Clark’s physical therapy and medical expenses.
Nursing board eyes FSU program

Low graduation rate criticized

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FAYETTEVILLE - A nursing program at Fayetteville State University has come under scrutiny in recent weeks after 25 of 32 students in the program failed to graduate this spring.

The state Board of Nursing has delayed full approval for the two-year-old program, saying school officials have failed to comply with rules aimed at helping students understand standards and graduation requirements. The program awards bachelor's degrees in nursing.

The students who did not graduate failed a test during their last semester that university officials said was meant to assess student preparation. But some of the students who did not earn diplomas said they learned only in January that they would have to pass the test before graduating, The Fayetteville Observer reported.

Passing the exit exam, developed by Health Education Systems Inc., was not mentioned in student handbooks and catalogs from 2004 to 2006, the newspaper reported. And school officials originally had not planned to use the test until fall 2007, The Observer reported, citing university documents.

Luke Largess, a lawyer representing some of the students who did not pass, said the students have been made scapegoats for problems with instruction and administration. Largess contends that university officials decided to use the test to protect themselves. He said that if too many students failed the licensure exam after graduation, it would make the university and the nursing program look bad.

“This change of rules is not about helping these students, who have spent their money and sweated through the program,” Largess wrote in a letter to the university.

University officials have defended the program. Juliette Bell, the university's provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs, said officials learned of some problems shortly after the program started and have worked to address issues as they arose.

“Our intent all the time is to have a quality program,” Bell told the newspaper last month. “If changes needed to be made, they were made. If issues needed to be addressed, they were addressed.”

University officials have said the students were well informed that they would have to pass the exit exam before graduating.

While the state Nursing Board did not cite the test in a letter to university officials last month, the board said the department is not in compliance with rules requiring clear communication of standards and graduation requirements.

The university has until Aug. 1 to confirm whether problems have been addressed. David Kalbacker, a spokesman for the Nursing Board, has said the board will work with school officials. He said it is not uncommon for the board to scrutinize new programs.

“A lot of times when new programs stumble, they need to step back and get assistance from outside schools and programs,” Kalbacker said.

Still, some said criticism of the nursing program because of the low graduation rate is unfounded.

“I feel that it is totally unfair to place blame on the university for a student's incompetence,” said Marl-Newton McCormic, who passed the exam.

“The nursing department offered numerous opportunities for us to prepare.”
Some at NCCU get head start

Summer classes' goal is retention

BY ERIC FERRERI
STAFF WRITER

DURHAM — If applicants to N.C. Central University who don’t quite meet minimum requirements want to enroll as freshmen, they first must spend five weeks of their summer on campus.

The university this week mandated that applicants with high school grade point averages below 2.5 or SAT scores below 680 must take part — and successfully complete — the Aspiring Eagles program, created last year to better prepare young students for college and keep them there.

A chief goal of the program is to increase NCCU’s retention rate. Like many public universities in North Carolina, NCCU has seen many freshmen drop out; about 30 percent who enrolled in fall 2005 did not return for their sophomore year. That’s close to the national average, though a bit worse than the average for the 16-campus UNC system, which includes NCCU.

The Aspiring Eagles program is an acknowledgement, NCCU officials say, that some students come to campus without the proper math, reading, writing and test-taking skills. But the officials also insist those students are far from a lost cause.

“The potential is there,” said Provost Beverly Washington Jones, who refers to these students as “diamonds in the rough.” “They just need more support and enhancement.”

Courses are taught by eight faculty members, and students receive a structured, personal introduction to college so they don’t get lost in the crowd. The residential summer program offers small-group study and plenty of personal attention.

“We want them to get a feel for being on campus and not going home every weekend,” said Debra Parker, the program director. “They will be successful in college if they just have some en-

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hancement — not remediation, but enhancement.”

Building Eagle spirit

The Aspiring Eagles program began last year with 50 students who lived together for five weeks over the summer while taking seven credit hours. The close-knit nature of the program — these students are together all the time — helped foster a sense of responsibility and confidence, Jones and others said. As freshmen this past year, students in the program occupied four of five freshman class officer positions and took part in a slew of other extracurricular activities, Parker said. The program demands a lot of the students, she said. On some days, when students are giving presentations or taking part in career planning, there’s even a dress code requirement.

This summer, NCCU officials expect 100 students to take part in the program, but it is mandatory only for those applicants without the minimum GPA or SAT scores. Thus far, about 15

BY THE NUMBERS

Applicants to N.C. Central University without a 2.5 grade point average or a 680 SAT score must take part in the Aspiring Eagles program. The average SAT score of last year’s freshman class was 860.

The 15 UNC system campuses measure graduation rates over six-year spans. At NCCU, just 44.9 percent of students who enrolled in 1999 graduated within six years; the system average was 59.1 percent. At N.C. State University, 70.5 percent of students graduated within six years; at UNC-Chapel Hill, 83.7 percent did so.

NCCU is a historically black institution that ballooned to 8,600 students over the past five years under a growth mandate from the UNC system. While enrollment boomed, the average SAT score of incoming freshmen stayed essentially level. And the retention rate — the percentage of freshmen who return as sophomores — dipped from about 75 percent in 2005 to 70.8 percent last year.

Last month, UNC-system officials began floating the idea of tougher admissions standards. Though there is no clear proposal yet, one idea under consideration would raise the minimum grade point average for high school students who want to go to a UNC campus. It’s unclear what that threshold would be, but data show that students who enter UNC campuses with a high school grade point average below a C don’t fare well, with only one quarter earning a diploma within six years.

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Staff writer Eric Ferreri can be reached at 956-2415 or eric.ferreri@newsobserver.com.
Lawmakers picture UNC at front in cancer research

BY J. ANDREW CURLES
Staff Writer

North Carolina legislators and UNC-Chapel Hill leaders want to put the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center on a level with household names in the field: Memorial Sloan-Kettering in New York, the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota and Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore.

The state Senate is backing that ambition with a proposal to pump $50 million annually into the Lineberger center.

The center's director, Dr. Shelley Earp, said he's almost speechless at the proposed level of support.

"We are revealing in the challenge of becoming the best," Earp said. "The quality of what we are doing is very good. This will enable us to go that last step. We're going from terrific to superlative."

An aggressive plan, outlined in the Senate version of the state budget last week, aims to spur advances that will help cancer victims across the state and beyond.

Officials say the number of people treated at UNC-Chapel Hill could rise to 5,000 cases a year from about 3,000 now, keeping many people in North Carolina for treatment.

The new spending would come mostly from taxpayers. The money would be devoted to cancer research at UNC Hospitals, and it is expected to attract millions more in grants and other donations. Some other campuses in the state might share in the money through ties to Chapel Hill.

The university's cancer center now gets about $170 million a year for research from all sources, much of it from the federal government.

Senate leader Marc Basnight, a Democrat from Manheo, is backing the effort. He said he has seen too many tin-can collections in convenience stores, special walk-a-thons, road races and other fundraisers to help a North Carolina traveler get care in hospitals around the nation.

"It's a big investment — but we're going to be one of the

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very best at treating, at researching, at defeating cancer," Basnight said. "There is much sadness and sorrow across this state because of this disease. ... We're going to be proud of doing this."

Duke University in Durham is already a leader in the field — and has its own plans to expand. But the number of cancer victims nationally and in North Carolina is not dropping.

About 16,500 people died of cancer in the state last year and there were about 41,000 new cases, according to the American Cancer Society. That's up from 16,000 deaths a decade ago and roughly 39,500 new cases.

Elite place, with needs

The cancer center at UNC-Chapel Hill is also regarded now as a top-flight center for treatment and research, one of about 40 with a special designation from the federal National Cancer Institute that recognizes its depth and breadth.

But the center is in the midst of major change, too.

Its outdated, 50-year-old building is being replaced. Lawmakers a few years ago approved $207 million to construct a stand-alone cancer hospital on the campus. Cranes hover over the shell of the N.C. Cancer Hospital, which will rise to seven stories. The doors are expected to open in late 2009.

And now, the proposed research money will ensure the investment isn't wasted, officials said.

"We want to be the place for research on cancer," said state Sen. Kay Hagan, a Greensboro Democrat and key budget writer in the Senate.

UNC had not sought the research money from lawmakers this year, but Earp, the center's director, recalled an increasing level of interest in cancer research from legislators as the decision to build the cancer hospital was made. The late Sen. Jeanne Lucas, a Durham Democrat who recently died of cancer, had been persuasive in directing attention to the issue.

Earp said the money would be used in all efforts to tackle cancer, among them:

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$16 million this year

The North Carolina plan would start in the fiscal year that begins July 1 by diverting $16 million to cancer research from a trust fund that gets money from tobacco companies as part of the major, nationwide lawsuit settlement in 1998. That level of support from the tobacco trust fund would continue in perpetuity, according to the Senate plan.

But taxpayers would then add another $16 million to it next year. By 2009, legislators want to add more and start spending at least $50 million a year on the research, according to the plan.

Earlier this year, a similar proposal to increase cancer research relied on an increase in the state's cigarette tax. But tobacco company lobbyists beat it back, Bashnight and other legislators said, which led to the current approach. House members have not taken up the Senate plan, but several expressed support in interviews. Rep. Hugh Holliman, the Democratic floor leader in the House and a cancer survivor, said it's an especially worthy goal.

"We are going to be a leader in this," he said, "and not just another cancer hospital."

More efforts elsewhere

North Carolina is not alone in its goals. Many others are spending millions on their centers.

In Texas last week, the legislature and governor adopted the idea of curing cancer in a decade, and would borrow $3 billion to do it. If Texas voters agree, the state would float $300 million a year in bonds for a cancer institute.

In the late 1980s, the Florida legislature created a nonprofit, stand-alone cancer center at the University of South Florida that now is considered one of the best nationally. It gets more than $50 million a year in research grants.

At Vanderbilt University in Tennessee, leaders made a push over the past decade and became one of the best after putting more than $200 million into cancer research. The center's founding director, Dr. Hal Moses, said in an interview that the North Carolina plan is a "transformative" type of investment.

"This is a very big deal," said Moses, a past president of the Association of American Cancer Institutes. "With that type of very significant money, UNC can go to the very top, if that's the intent."

He cautioned that the money must go to research if it is to have that kind of effect and not be used on general operating costs or to cover shortfalls in hospital operations.

The Senate plan specifies the money is "only for the purpose of cancer research."

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Top 10 cancer centers' federal support

A look at 2006 rankings by U.S. News & World Report of cancer hospitals and funding provided in the last fiscal year by the federal government's National Cancer Institute:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cancer hospital</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Total NCI funding, Fiscal Year 2006</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>$78.7 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>U. of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center</td>
<td>Houston</td>
<td>$118.5 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johns Hopkins Hospital</td>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>$87 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mayo Clinic</td>
<td>Rochester, Minn.</td>
<td>$56.6 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dana-Farber Cancer Institute</td>
<td>Boston</td>
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<td>Seattle</td>
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<td>Duke University Medical Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of California, San Francisco Medical Center</td>
<td>San Francisco</td>
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Not Ranked, UNC-Chapel Hill                   | Chapel Hill   | $46 million                         |

SOURCE: NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE AND SURVEY BY RTI INTERNATIONAL FOR U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT.
Study asks how ADHD teens cope

Researchers return to Johnston County to assess those with disorder

BY PEGGY LIM
STAFF WRITER

Paula Luper failed her end-of-third-grade test in 1998, leaving 14 questions blank.

"I remember being very embarrassed I couldn't finish," Luper, 18, said. "I didn't tell any of my friends."

A study that was begun that school year in Johnston County — one of the largest ever conducted anywhere on attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder — prompted Luper's parents to consult a doctor, who formally diagnosed her with ADHD.

A decade after that original study, researchers are back. They hope to clarify how the disorder evolves as students navigate their teenage years and adulthood.

Luper, who stopped taking ADHD medication last year as a high school junior, had doubts about taking part in the follow-up study. After weeks of consideration, she decided to participate.

Researchers say they need her help.

The closest example of a large community-based study of ADHD — outside of the Johnston County one — dates back to the 1960s in California. Researchers at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences in Research Triangle Park, UNC-Chapel Hill and Duke University chose Johnston County because of its diversity and manageable size.

Most of what is known about ADHD stems from smaller clinical studies, predominantly of Caucasian boys with the hyperactive form of the disorder. Much less is known about ADHD in young adults, especially females, African-Americans and children with the inattentive type of ADHD.

"This information is crucial for doctors, therapists, teachers or social workers," said Andrew Rowland, now an epidemiology professor at the University of New Mexico.

The original study, involving 6,009 first- through fifth-graders in all Johnston County elementary schools, revealed some alarming initial results. Parent surveys showed that about 10 percent of the elementary school students had been diagnosed with ADHD.

The finding challenged previous studies citing estimates that 3 percent to 5 percent of children have ADHD.

Staff photo by JULI LEOARD

Senior Paula Luper takes a business quiz in the teachers lounge at North Johnston High School so she won't be distracted by noises.

The study also indicated that 7 percent of children were taking stimulant medication to help them calm down or concentrate. Many of the children taking stimulants, however, continued to show symptoms of ADHD, suggesting problems with the doses or with how they were taking the medication. ADHD remains hotly debated because some see it as a result of poor parenting, not a disorder, and they worry that the nation is excessively medicating millions of youngsters.

In the long run?

Rowland said hundreds of studies have shown that stimulants, such as Ritalin and Concerta, help children with ADHD concentrate in the short run.

"What is not known," he said, "is how well those medications work over the long term and if they make a difference in important everyday areas like grades, sleep, ability to make friends or get along with family members."

Luper said she began taking Ritalin in the fourth grade. She swallowed a pill with breakfast before school. The drug made her queasy. It made her feel as if she were the only one in a room.

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Rather than chat with friends as she might normally want to, she would just feel like sitting quietly. But the sacrifice was worth it.

Before that point, anything would distract her — classmates talking, paper being crumpled, a pin dropping.

"I was making better grades than I would without it," she said. "I knew in 10 years it wouldn't matter how I had felt — it would matter what I'd learned."

**Focused, but different**

Denise Luper, a teacher at North Johnston High School, said she didn't see the full effect drugs had on her daughter until she taught her SAT prep in ninth grade. By then, Paula had switched to another medication, Concerta.

"I told my husband I didn't like it," Denise Luper said. "She's just a zombie sometimes. She's there in body, focused, but it's not her. I'm used to this happy-go-lucky person."

Jesse Paul Luper was no fan of the way the drugs seemed to drain his daughter's energy either. He didn't want the medication to slow her down when she competed in volleyball or soccer games.

Gradually, Paula Luper eased off the drugs. Second semester last year, she took a new drug, Strattera, but only in the weeks around major tests or during final exams. This year, she refrained from taking any medication.

"I try to be more alert," she said. "I know if I do bad, I'm going to have to get back on it."

Her teachers say she has compensated well, continuing to earn A's and B's on her report cards.

"She's good about listening and carrying out assignments," said Anne Wyman, her business teacher. "I would not know she had ADHD, if it was not documented."

**Learning to cope**

Still, Luper has continued to make small modifications to cope with ADHD.

In her English class this year, the teacher would assign short stories to read, such as a Sherlock Holmes mystery. But on quizzes afterwards, Luper's mind would go blank.

"It was a zoning-out problem," said Curtis Mangum, her English teacher, "not an intelligence problem."

Denise Luper asked the teacher if her daughter could take notes about the stories as she read. Soon, she was acing the quizzes.

Luper's record seems to run counter to one theory researchers think this new study will test — that people with ADHD are more prone to risky behaviors, such as drinking, having unsafe sex or substance abuse.

"There is some evidence that teens with ADHD have more health risk behaviors and more accidents," Rowland said. "We don't know if that is true when you look at a community sample."

But whatever results the new study finds, they could help Paula Luper down the road. After studying at Johnston Community College and East Carolina University, she hopes to become a high school sports coach and a resource teacher.

"Because I'm ADHD," she said. "I want to help kids like me."

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Staff writer Peggy Lim can be reached at 836-5799 or peggy.lim@newsobserver.com.

**WHAT IS ADHD?**

It is a set of disorders characterized by attention problems of a disorganized and daydreamy "inattentive" type, an impulsive, talking-all-the-time "hyperactive" type or a combination of both.

**KEY FINDINGS OF THE ORIGINAL JOHNSTON COUNTY STUDY**

About 10 years ago, researchers asked Johnston County families of 7,333 children in grades 1 through 5 to participate in an ADHD study. About 6,069 — or 83 percent of those asked — agreed. The researchers went a step further, doing in-depth interviews or questionnaires with parents and teachers of about 1,160 children.

According to their parents, about 10 percent, or 607, of the elementary school students had been previously diagnosed with ADHD by a health professional. (In a smaller study done the year before on 424 children, the researchers estimated the prevalence of ADHD in Johnston County elementary school children was 18 percent when they combined symptom information from parents and teachers, rather than parent reports of previous ADHD diagnosis.)

Parents reported that 7 percent, or 434, of the children were taking a stimulant medication to treat ADHD.

Among those diagnosed with ADHD, Caucasian children were more likely to receive treatment than African-American or Hispanic children. Researchers said less access to health insurance, less ability to pay for medication or cultural differences in acceptance of treatment may have been factors.
WHAT THE NEW STUDY WILL EXAMINE

- How ADHD affects young adults of different genders, races and economic backgrounds.
- How well medications work over time, affecting areas like grades, sleep and ability to make friends or get along with family members.
- Whether ADHD youth are more likely to engage in risky behaviors, like smoking, drinking and unsafe sex.

HOW THE STUDIES AFFECT JOHNSTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

Concerned that screening all children for ADHD would become a large burden on the schools, the school system and researchers teamed up to win a $300,000 grant shortly after the 1997-98 study began, to train parents, teachers and medical workers in dealing with ADHD. About 400 ADHD students were evaluated and helped through an ADHD clinic over several years.

"This was very successful," said Keith Beamon, an associate superintendent of Johnston County Schools. "We still use some of the educational materials that were purchased as we work with parents."

The grant that finances the new study will support additional education and training for Johnston County school psychologists in the area of ADHD.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Researchers have sent out information packets to 266 families of the original 1,160 who participated in in-depth interviews. The students invited back are now in 11th or 12th grade, or if they are not in school, they would have been in 11th or 12th grade.

To spur more participation, the researchers recently decided to increase compensation. Students would receive $50 for a two-hour interview. Parents would get $25 for one interview and $25 for a mail-in questionnaire. Teachers would also get $22 to complete forms.

Participation could happen during the rest of this school year or during the summer. For families that have lost packets but want to participate, the toll-free number to call is (866) 214-2041.

Over the next two years, researchers will invite another 622 of the original families who completed interviews. Some students who graduated last year or the year before will not be included in this round of follow-up.
Rising sea level is redefining North Carolina’s coastline

If climate predictions hold, the transformation of islands and rivers will speed u

COASTLINE
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

A panel of international scientists projects the seas will rise 7 to 30 inches in the next century unless there is a substantial reduction in the emission of man-made greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide. Those gases spew from our cars, power plants and appliances, accumulating in the atmosphere and trapping heat.

Hundreds of scientists from 40 countries this year proclaimed that climate change is “unequivocal.” Global air and water temperatures are inching up, causing seas to warm and expand, and polar ice to melt — triggering higher sea levels.

There's still debate over how much of the observed change in temperature is due to man-made carbon dioxide and how much comes from the natural cycles of weather. But there's little argument that North Carolina's water, air, food and land are being altered. And more rapid change is predicted.

Swamps turn salty

Gray trunks of dead cypress trees line the shore of the Northeast Cape Fear River a few miles upstream from downtown Wilmington. The trees have been essentially drowned by salt water. Tupelo gum, red maples and other tree species have already disappeared, unable to tolerate the chemical reactions of salt water in soil.

Rising sea levels are pushing high ocean tides of salt water farther up the river.
The soil, exposed to salt, gradually disintegrates, leaving tangles of gnarled cypress roots clinging to air where a riverbank once stood. The disintegrating soil releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, adding to global warming. As the trees die, a freshwater swamp changes into a salt marsh.

As the bank crumbles, the river is broadening and transforming into an estuary such as the Pamlico Sound or Chesapeake Bay. The Cape Fear River basin has 200,000 acres of timber that will eventually turn into marsh, said Courtney Hackney, a marine biologist at UNC-Wilmington.

The enlarging estuaries will create more habitat for saltwater fish, crabs and shrimp. But the freshwater swamps will disappear, along with the trees that provide homes for songbirds that thrive there. Ultimately, some landowners will lose their land.

"This swamp was alive when I first arrived and started working on the river in the 1980s," Hackney said as he accompanied a group of students upriver to monitor water levels in swamps. "This has all happened in 30 years, basically. This will all be marsh in five to 10 years."

The Northeast Cape Fear River, which flows into the Cape Fear at Wilmington, is showing effects of rising seawater. The fresh water flowing downriver isn't enough to keep the salt water from intruding upriver.

During the drought of 2001, the researchers detected low levels of salt water more than 16 miles up the Northeast Cape Fear. That's 45 to 50 miles from the ocean.

"We're going through a transition that is far beyond the history of humans on the continent," Hackney said. "There hasn't been salinity where we're seeing it on the Coastal Plain in 50,000 or 100,000 years."

Vast areas of Eastern North Carolina were ancient ocean beds at a time when sea levels were 20 feet higher. Pete Parham, a graduate student in geology, and Dave Mallinson, an assistant professor, have been drilling east of a low ridge thought to mark an ancient barrier island shoreline that existed between 125,000 and 80,000 years ago.

The line of sand is called the Suffolk scarp. It runs north-south near the present towns of Edenton, Plymouth and Bath.

Mallinson said that about 130,000 years ago, the shoreline was about where it is today. Then, polar regions grew significantly warmer for an extended period. Sea level rose 15 to 20 feet. All or parts of a dozen counties of present-day Eastern North Carolina were submerged, making areas of Gates and Washington counties beachfront.

"Some evidence suggests it rose fairly rapidly up to the Suffolk shoreline," said Mallinson, a geologist at East Carolina University. "That is what we think may be beginning to happen today."

Two factors in rise

Two things are contributing to rising seas. Rising temperatures cause ocean waters to warm and expand, like water heated in a teakettle. Rising temperatures near the poles cause massive ice sheets to melt, adding to the volume of water. Scientists are particularly worried about ice melts in Greenland and the Canadian Arctic, where giant shelves of ice, some the size of Manhattan, have begun crumbling.

"As the Greenland ice sheet melts, that is where the shoreline is going to go," Mallinson said, referring to the ancient shoreline. "Sometime in the next few hundred to 1,000 years, maybe less."

Scientists can observe ancient climate change by studying the layers of sediment. What they don't understand is what triggered the big changes: Did carbon dioxide levels rise in previous eons as a result of warmer temperatures, or did carbon dioxide levels drive temperature increases?

The ECU scientists try to tease answers from the mud, sand, shell and sediment they pull from the depths of the swamp. The drill, mounted in a pickup truck bed, sounds like a jackhammer as it drives the hollow, 2-inch-thick steel tubes into gray mud to collect the samples of sediment. Each 4-foot cylinder contains a snapshot of the time when the sediment was deposited.

"It's important to understand the past sea level cycles so we can better understand the one we're in now," Parham said. "Sea level is rising. We'd like to get an idea what is going to happen. We can do that by looking in the past when sea level was higher than it is today."

Vulnerable Outer Banks

Nowhere are rising sea levels more pressing than the Outer Banks, which are among the nation's most vulnerable land forms. The low-lying barrier islands stretch from Currituck County to Core Sound and for centuries have defined North Carolina's coastal culture. The most dire scenarios predict collapse of the Outer Banks within a century.

It's a process that has historic precedent. Scientists think the Outer Banks have collapsed and reformed more than once — they held far more inlets at the time Columbus landed in the Americas.

The natural tendency of undeveloped barrier islands is to move toward the mainland in response to rising seas. Sand on the oceanfront side gets pushed by waves and blown by wind onto the backside in a gradual, yet massive rolling motion. That pattern has been disrupted on parts of the Outer Banks by artificial dunes, which stop waves from washing across the island and depositing sand on the backside. So the islands grow thinner and thinner.

With global warming, they may grow thinner still. A new study by Laura Moore, a geologist at Oberlin College in Ohio, said sea level rise is the most important factor determining movement of the barrier islands over the next century.

Moore and her colleagues at the U.S. Geological Survey used a computer model to simulate the movement of the Outer Banks over the past 8,500 years. They used the model to predict the Outer Banks' response to various amounts of sea level rise over the next century, as presented by the Intergovernmental Panel on
Climate Change, the leading source of scientific consensus on climate change.

Moore's study suggests that by the next century, the barrier islands might move toward the mainland up to 2.5 times faster than current long-term erosion rates. That's based on projected sea level rise of 19 to 34 inches. Houses would be washed into the sea more quickly, and highways overtaken by sand, but Moore said the Outer Banks would likely remain intact.

But other scientists, including ECU's Riggs, have said that the international panel's projections are too conservative and that warming might cause the Greenland ice sheet and West Antarctic ice sheet to melt more quickly, possibly causing much higher sea levels by 2100.

Riggs said the rate of sea level rise in northeastern North Carolina around Nags Head and Kitty Hawk is already approaching the climate change panel's midrange predictions for 100 years from now.

A state panel is studying the potential impact of global warming but has yet to make substantial recommendations. Meanwhile, the Coastal Resources Commission, which sets rules for shoreline development, is re-evaluating how close to the shore developers may build houses. And the state spends hundreds of thousands of dollars maintaining the highway that cuts through the Outer Banks.

Higher sea levels turbocharge erosion especially during storms — putting more houses in peril and increasing the costs of maintaining the beaches.

Riggs said about 22 miles of the Outer Banks are already starting to collapse right now, including narrow, low-lying stretches of Hatteras Island, Ocracoke, Pea Island and Rodanthe. He said only constant bulldozing has prevented the ocean from washing over and cutting through the islands.

Anthony Roper, a state transportation division engineer who oversees the area, doesn't use the term collapse. But transportation officials battle the ocean nearly every year to keep N.C. 12 open. Roper said a half-dozen hot spots on the thinning islands require frequent repairs and rebuilding of dunes to keep them passable.

At Rodanthe, the edge of the highway is about 50 feet from the ocean at high tide. The surf washed over the highway during an extended nor'easter at Thanksgiving, costing more than $1 million to repair.

A little farther north, highway planners propose to replace a section of N.C. 12 through Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge by building an elevated roadway as the island erodes. In the meantime, the planners project spending $23.7 million to $36.3 million on more sand through 2015 to protect the threatened road.

"The right storm event, if we don't do anything different, we'll have challenges maintaining the road," Roper said.

Riggs holds up a map depicting the disintegration of the Outer Banks, leaving only higher sections of the islands.

"If we had a Katrina-like storm," he said, "it could look like that this summer. This is what nobody in North Carolina is prepared for."

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A VULNERABLE COAST

Scientists rated the vulnerability of the Atlantic states' coastline to physical change from rising oceans based on variables such as the slope of the beach, erosion rates, wave height and historical rates of sea level rise. More than half of North Carolina's coast is very highly vulnerable.

Coastal vulnerability to sea level rise

[Map showing vulnerability levels]

Source: U.S. Geological Survey

The News & Observer

SHIFTING ISLANDS

Rising sea level accelerates storm-driven erosion and causes barrier islands to shift toward the mainland.

Rising sea level pushes ocean tides farther inland...

[Descriptive text about shifting dunes and possibly breaching them, destroying homes.]
IN THE GREAT DISMAL SWAMP East Carolina University graduate student Curt Smith, left, and professor Dave Mallinson retrieve a core sample taken in Virginia. They're trying to trace ancient shorelines in Virginia and North Carolina.
UNC to push online degrees

As more students take classes on the Web, UNC goes after those who would enroll at University of Phoenix.

BY TIM SIMMONS AND JANE STANCILL STAFF WRITERS

Educators who run the University of North Carolina system are hungry to enroll more students like Rob Gray.

A physicist at Duke Hospital by day, he drives about 20 miles west each evening, where he eventually settles in for a few hours of coursework at the Rob Gray campus of East Carolina University in Efland. The location is better known as Gray's home, where he is earning his MBA online in addition to spending time with his wife and his 2-year-old son, and working full time.

That type of interest in UNC's online programs has convinced system leaders that it’s time to launch the University of North Carolina Online, which will aggressively promote more than 90 existing degree programs on one Web site: http://online.northcarolina.edu/. The campaign takes direct aim at the nation's largest online institution — the University of Phoenix — with ads on Yahoo and Monster.com that boast: “All of our online degrees come from universities your prospective employer has actually heard of.”

But more than a decade of online education has taught educators that classes online are far different from the classroom. If the UNC system is serious about going toe-to-toe with Phoenix — a for-profit university that enrolls more than 300,000 students — it will inherit the problems of online education as well as the profits.

Online learning has grown dramatically in the past few years. As of 2009, about 1.5 million students took classes online in the United States, according to Eduventures, a company that specializes in education information services. In North Carolina last fall, nearly 25,000 UNC students took online classes, as did about 75,000 in the community college system.

Increases have run more than 10 percent every year.

That growth attracted UNC, which this week will launch its site. Hoping to capitalize on people's familiarity with the 15-campus system — in North Carolina and throughout the world — UNC President Erskine Bowles has declared the university will “market the hell out of this.”

The UNC system isn’t the first to compete directly with Phoenix. Universities such as Columbia and Temple tried to establish programs a few years ago that failed to meet expectations for growth. What Phoenix enjoys is a big head start in enrollment and a keen understanding of how to mix marketing and classroom efficiencies.

INSIDE TROUBLES: Financial and legal problems plague University of Phoenix. p. 9A

A nontraditional model

More than half of the 300,000 students who attend the University of Phoenix never step into a classroom. Their online classes follow a tightly scripted syllabus. Students who choose to physically attend classes are served by about 200 locations in 37 states, the District of Columbia, Canada and Puerto Rico. The locations are typically leased space in office parks or business suites near highway interchanges for easy access.

Little about the university follows the traditional model. There are no athletic facilities or big research labs. Programs are confined to the most popular areas, such as business, technology, health care and education.

“Our students are more likely to be midcareer, working adults who are looking for additional education on their terms and their schedule,” said Nicole Darmody, who oversees the campuses in Charlotte and Raleigh. “We are built on that premise.”

UNC can draw on a curriculum developed over the decades, but it isn't likely to match the net profit margin of about 15 percent posted by the company that owns the University of Phoenix. In fact, a study provided to the legislature last year suggests online classes will initially cost UNC more than its traditional classes — about $1,300 to teach a student online compared to an average of $892 in regular classrooms.

The gap can be traced largely to startup expenses, which is why system officials believe costs will drop. And the classes could eventually save taxpayers money if the online university means fewer buildings and less duplication of courses throughout the system. Even a venture that breaks even would be considered a success because the UNC system will expand its reach.

"The thing we in public higher education should recognize is they are filling a gap that's a legitimate need in society," Robyn Render, UNC vice president for information services said of Phoenix. "We either step up or kind of concede."

From a student's perspective, UNC offers a big price advantage. Costs vary, but Phoenix tuition ranges from about $500 per credit hour for undergraduate classes to almost $700 per credit hour for students working on a doctoral degree. For North Carolina residents at UNC, prices are typically less than one-third of Phoenix's tuition.

And UNC is almost certain to benefit from people's skepticism about the quality — and sometimes the authenticity — of online programs offered by nontraditional schools. Legitimate online programs battle those doubts by making sure people know they are academically certified, although their credentials fall short of UNC's in some areas.

The University of Phoenix, for example, is accredited by a regional agency that is the basic equivalent to the agency that accredits UNC system schools. Program accreditation — a higher standard for areas such as business — is tougher to come by. The business program at Phoenix is accredited, but not by the group most schools prefer.
Schools such as Phoenix are also open to the rants and attacks that are common online. A casual search turns up hundreds of critical posts by tech-savvy students who say Phoenix is more interested in boosting enrollments than helping students learn.

University of Phoenix President Bill Pepicello said it would be counterproductive to respond to the online attacks, but he does not contest the dismal figures reported by the National Center for Education Statistics.

According to those numbers, more than two-thirds of all first-year online students at the University of Phoenix don’t return for a second year. Only 4 percent who have no previous college experience graduate in six years.

Pepicello said some of those numbers are wrong and others are misleading. He said many students are counted as "not returning" when they stop taking classes temporarily.

The graduation rate is based on traditional teenage students with no previous college experience — a group that represents less than 10 percent of the university’s total. He said internal records show the total graduation rate is above 50 percent — a figure competitive with the overall rate of the UNC system.

The problem for Phoenix, Pepicello acknowledged, is the best way to improve graduation rates would be to drop its open admissions policy. The school enrolls 99 percent of applicants.

But he said that would not only contradict the school’s mission of educating working adults, it would also cut into the bottom line of a company that relies on new students to maintain its revenue stream — and its stock value.

Still, he is not overly concerned about competition from UNC. The growing market, he said, is large enough for both institutions.

Classes and geography

UNC system officials said their first goal is not to make money but to extend education to those who can’t get to a campus. Admissions standards for online programs will be the same as those for traditional students at the various campuses.

At East Carolina, which offers 60 online degrees, the majority of the MBA students are online — coming from 61 counties. They are often older, more likely to be female and will take the courses at a slower pace to balance work, family and school.

“We don’t force people to do things on our schedule," said Rick Niswander, dean of ECU’s College of Business. “This notion that you’ve got to physically come to a place and that’s the only way you can learn, that’s baloney."

Niswander said students in the future could take online courses from UNC-Greensboro, Appalachian State and ECU while earning a degree at UNC Charlotte.

He believes ECU’s online students get the same quality of education as those who participate in traditional classes, partly because faculty who teach online also teach classes in a face-to-face setting. The professors also create and control the content. Niswander said, as opposed to University of Phoenix faculty, who act as facilitators of prescribed courses.

Gray, the psychologist at Duke Hospital, said he got to know his online professors and classmates better than those on the ECU campus, where he earned two previous degrees. They communicate by e-mail, teleconference and Internet chat rooms. "I know a lot about a lot of them, except for what they look like, which is very strange," he said. He will meet his classmates for the first time at graduation in December.

Those who have worked in the field for a while say it’s important to realize online classes won’t work for every student — or teacher. Students must be motivated and able to understand topics without a lot of hand-on experience, said Linda Nefls, distance learning coordinator for the community college system. And instructors must stay on top of student responses or risk losing their interest entirely.

But when it works, online education can produce surprising success stories. Render, the vice president for information services at UNC, is well aware of that. When she wanted to earn her master’s in organizational management, she turned to the Internet.

She was impressed with the classes, and her diploma hangs on the wall at home. It’s from the University of Phoenix.

Staff writer Tim Simmons can be reached at 629-4535 or tim.simmons@newsobserver.com.
### ONLINE COSTS

North Carolina students have several options if they want to take classes online. The following samples some of those choices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Cost per credit hour (undergrad)</th>
<th>Typical length of class (weeks)</th>
<th>Complete programs available</th>
<th>Individual courses available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNC Online</td>
<td>$127*</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>More than 1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Phoenix</td>
<td>$494</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.C. community colleges</td>
<td>$39.50</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21*</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Cost per credit listed for N.C. State University but varies by base tuition at each campus for North Carolina residents; community colleges offer associate’s degrees.

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**Sources:** University of Phoenix; UNC, Community Colleges
Phoenix struggles outside the classroom

BY TIM SIMMONS
STAFF WRITER

It doesn’t take a business degree to know the University of Phoenix has had a tough year outside the classroom.

A steady performer on Wall Street just a year ago, Apollo Group Inc. — the company that owns Phoenix — saw its stock price drop almost 40 percent in the last half of 2006. The decline coincided with news that the company needed to restate prior financial statements because it had improperly dated past stock options.

In February, when Apollo had regained much of its market loss, The New York Times published a story saying “its reputation is fraying.”

Then in May, the U.S. Supreme Court allowed a lawsuit to proceed against the company that could potentially cost Apollo more than $1 billion. The suit alleges the university violated federal financial aid laws by paying recruiters a commission based on students they enrolled.

Critics say the problems come with the university’s approach to education.

Whether students take classes at a physical location or online, the school is designed to move working adults toward a degree as quickly as possible. The curriculum is standardized to the point that every online student in every location works on the same assignments each week — often toward the same goal.

Phoenix operates with an eye on the bottom line and an efficiency that is unseen — and largely unwanted — on most traditional campuses.

Supporters of the university say none of the efficiencies prohibit students from learning, and problems involving faculty turnover or low completion rates can be found on many traditional campuses. And they say its size — more than 300,000 students — makes it an easy target for critics.

But Nicole Darmody, who oversees the physical campuses in Raleigh and Charlotte, rejects the idea that the university cares more about enrolling students than teaching them.

“They are not customers,” Darmody said. “They are students.”

While the university’s goal is to keep growing, it must be judged by its basic mission, Darmody said.

“We are here to offer working adults a better option,” she said. “We are not a traditional school, and it is not fair to measure our progress by traditional standards.”

For example, Darmody said, a majority of students have some college experience but no college degree. In North Carolina, about 55 percent of the students are also African-American. That level of diversity is unusually high.

“We are bringing people back to the classroom and giving them options,” she said. “These are success stories. I’m helping them finish what they started. I sleep very well at night knowing that.”

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