THE DAILY CLIPS

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Fire strikes vacant ECU warehouse

Blaze causes traffic to back up Wednesday

The heaviest damage was contained to a third of the building.

By Cassondra Lampkin
The Daily Reflector

A fire Wednesday afternoon burned a portion of a warehouse owned by East Carolina University.

The building, at 1104 Clark St., off 10th Street in central Greenville, was vacant when a fire was reported to Greenville Fire-Rescue at 1:53 p.m., said Linwood Hines, battalion chief of life-safety services.

Flames alerted an employee of the ECU Surplus Property Cash Sales store, located about 10 feet away from the warehouse, said manager Tim Daughtry. About 15 workers and customers were at the store, he said.

"I was in the back, and I saw it burning up to the roof," said employee Charles Jenkins, who reported the fire to Daughtry.

"If I didn't see it, it would have been our building," he said.

The ECU store sells used computer equipment and used furniture owned by the university.

It closed for the day due to the fire and will re-open with regular hours next week.

What ECU will use the warehouse for has not been determined, said Bill Koch, director of environmental health and safety services for the university. The building, which is owned by ECU, contains mostly office space and open area.

"We're still thinking about what to do with it," Koch said.
"We go in and do regular inspections, but it's not used on a regular basis," he said.

The heaviest heat damage was confined to about a third of the building, Hines said.

"We haven't found anything unusual, but the investigation is ongoing," he said.

The fire-fighting effort blocked traffic in the area for at least three hours.

Firefighters had contained the fire after 3 p.m. but still were soaking it down as of 5 p.m.

No one was injured during the fire, Hines said.

An estimate on damage to the building or cause of the fire were unknown late Wednesday.

About 36 firefighters and other emergency personnel arrived on the scene to help put the fire out.

"If I didn't see it, it would have been our building."

Charles Jenkins
ECU employee
Public Forum

Retiring Dr. Kalmus recognized

It is an exciting time of year, for many of us have been busy this season with graduations, recitals and other rites of passage. On April 28, I was privileged to gather with approximately 200 colleagues, students and friends of Dr. Gerhard Wolfgang Kalmus, director of ECU's graduate School of Biology, to celebrate his retirement.

Dr. K started his tenure at ECU in 1977. During 30 years, he achieved much and received many honors, but there was something evident that night that set Kalmus apart. I knew well what Dr. K meant to me, but I was blown away by the outpouring of love, respect and appreciation that night. Student after student stood and told of how Dr. K had been like a father to them. Many of them spoke of being “diamonds in the rough” and how Dr. K’s belief in them spurred them on to achieve great things.

As I got up to speak, my voice broke, as I knew it would, but I had to try and say what Dr. K had meant to me. It all came full circle for me this year when he extended the legacy by helping my 21-year-old daughter, who was struggling with anatomy and physiology. There were so many things I wanted to say and just could not.

The story that came to my mind was “It’s a Wonderful Life.” It vividly shows the impact that life can have on others. It also made me think of the story of the tapestry that has a jumble of threads on the backside, but when turned over, the threads create a beautiful picture.

As a Christian, I know that the thread of Dr. K through our lives was no accident or coincidence, but part of the beautiful tapestry that God is weaving. How very thankful we all are to have Dr. K as a part of our tapestry.

REXANNE HARRISON
Greenville
AMA urges redefining childhood obesity

By Jimmy Ryals
The Daily Reflector

New recommendations from the American Medical Association call for blunter weight assessments from pediatricians.

Released last week, the guidelines redefine obesity for children. Kids once classified “overweight”—those whose body mass index is above 30 or higher than 95 percent of their peers—are now “obese,” according to an AMA committee of medical experts.

Children who had been termed “at risk for overweight,” those with BMIs higher than 85 or 94 percent of peers, are now overweight. The new definitions would classified 17 percent of American children as obese, nearly one-third as overweight, according to The Associated Press.

The new standards put pediatric obesity standards in line with adult measures, said Dr. David Collier, director of the Pediatric Healthy Weight Research and Treatment Center at the Brody School of Medicine. They’re also a reversal of traditional opinion, which has urged doctors not to use the word “obese” children because of its negative connotations, he added.

“Obese” can be a useful term for broaching the medical effects of excess weight, Collier said: diabetes, high blood pressure and others. But it’s not one he uses to describe patients, particularly children. The term yields negative responses, he said, recalling complaints from patients who’d seen the word in their own medical record.

...I would never recommend anyone else just come in and say to a patient, ‘Well, we’ve done your measurements, and you’re obese,’” said Collier, an assistant professor of pediatrics at Brody.

Collier’s suggestion echoes that of doctors on the AMA-Centers for Disease Control panel that devised the new definitions.

“We need to describe this in medical terms, which is ‘obesity,’” panel spokesman Dr. Reginald Washington told The AP. “When we talk to an individual family, we can be a little more cognizant of their feelings and more gentle, but that doesn’t mean we can’t discuss it.”

The CDC hasn’t decided whether to adopt the panel’s recommendations, The AP reported.
Diet and exercise may not be enough in fighting osteoporosis

By Susan Morse, The Washington Post

Strength training, coupled with a diet rich in calcium and vitamin D, does your body good in many ways — some likely to reduce your risk of bone fracture. But if you're looking for evidence that diet and exercise can match the effectiveness of drugs in staying off osteoporosis in middle age, you're going to be disappointed.

That's the conclusion of several experts in the field.

That's not to say exercise and diet can build bone mass. After all, what they do is less a matter of preventing inevitable age-related bone loss than keeping it from accelerating further.

Efiel Siris, a professor of clinical medicine at Columbia University and president of the National Osteoporosis Foundation, puts the message about weight training bluntly: "I don't know of any highly reliable studies that have ever shown that exercise clearly stops bone loss in a middle-aged woman who's got adequate calcium and vitamin D."

Says Siris: "If you do more exercise once you're in your 50s and 60s, it isn't going to make you lose less bone. ... Exercise has value, but not for the reason people think." What it will do, she says, is build muscle strength, coordination and balance, making the falls that typically cause fractures less likely. Siris accepts consultancy and speaker fees from several drugmakers, including Merck, the maker of osteoporosis drug Fosamax, but says she tries "to handle (the conflict of interest) properly."

But don't put down those weights just yet. Joseph Lane, a professor of orthopedic surgery at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York and chief of its Metabolic Bone Disease Service, says that the benefit of exercise in a middle-aged adult lies not in bone density but in bone quality — its "micro-architecture" and strength — which won't show up on a DXA scan. Still, he says, exercise should be an "additive, not an alternative" to drugs if bone loss is advanced. If you're middle-aged and you've had a fracture or have a family history of osteoporosis, you should take drugs, he says. (Lane accepts speaker fees from several drugmakers, including some with osteoporosis drugs.)

What are some good weight-bearing exercises? Curls, overhead presses, lateral raises, push-ups, squats, calf raises — or just a circuit of your gym's weight machines, recommends Nicholas DiNubile, a spokesman for the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons.

What's the latest advice on diet? Between 1,200 and 1,500 milligrams of calcium (calcium citrate is better than calcium carbonate, DiNubile says) per day, either in food or supplements. And 1,000 to 1,200 units of vitamin D3 — cholecalciferol — the same form that our bodies produce, Siris says.

For more information about osteoporosis and bone density:

- www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/bonehealth/content.html
- www.johnshopkinshealthalerts.com (click on "back pain and osteoporosis")
- www.webmd.com/osteoporosis/tc/Osteopenia-Overview
By Mike Stobbe
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — For the first time, cancer experts are advising women of certain symptoms that might alert them to ovarian cancer, a medically infamous “silent killer” that is hard to spot early and is one of the deadliest tumors.

Suddenly experiencing weeks of bloating, the need to urinate frequently, eating changes and abdominal or pelvic pain — either one of these or a combination — could be a tip-off to early ovarian cancer, according to several groups of cancer experts.

The American Cancer Society and other organizations released a consensus statement Wednesday listing the symptoms.

Historically, doctors have believed there are no early signs of ovarian cancer, which is expected to kill about 15,000 American women this year.

“There’s been this myth about ovarian cancer being silent and people saying there’s nothing you can do about it. Well, that’s simply not true anymore,” said Dr. Barbara Goff, a University of Washington cancer specialist.

There is no early screening test; a regular pelvic exam is considered the main way to detect the cancer early.

The cancer society wrote the consensus statement along with the Gynecologic Cancer Foundation and the Society of Gynecologic Oncologists.

The experts say women should see their doctor if they suddenly experience any of these symptoms daily for at least three weeks:

- **Bloating**
- **Frequent or urgent urination**

But the guidelines are problematic, said Debbie Saslow, the cancer society’s director of breast and gynecologic cancer.

Many women with these symptoms are more likely to have irritable bowel syndrome than ovarian cancer, she said.

Also, there are no highly accurate tests to clearly confirm ovarian cancer at such an early stage.

That means pursuing the symptoms as a harbinger of ovarian cancer may, in some cases, lead to biopsies and other treatments that will do more harm than good.

“That was the frustration with this,” Saslow said. But experts decided to issue the statement anyway, because important recent studies by Goff have indicated the sudden appearance of these symptoms in healthy women may be an important indicator.

Doctors said they expect media coverage of the guidelines will unleash a flood of queries from nervous women.

“I would expect an increase in calls from people wanting to come in and find out what is the cause of their symptoms. But if a patient is properly evaluated, it should not lead to an undue increase in diagnostic testing,” said Dr. George Mussalli, chairman of the obstetrics and gynecology departments at St. Vincent’s Hospital Manhattan.

Proper evaluation includes asking whether a woman has a family history of breast or ovarian cancer or has tested positive for a genetic mutation associated with those conditions, said Jane Langridge, who heads the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition, an advocacy group.

Women should initially be evaluated by a gynecologist, but they should go to a specialist in gynecologic cancers if more testing and treatment is contemplated, she added.

Doctors check for ovarian cancer with ultrasound, a blood test and an exam in which a doctor feels for a mass.

Unfortunately, none are considered highly accurate.
Greenville native heads to Omaha with Louisville

Roger Williams going to College World Series as Cardinals pitching coach.

By Jim Gentry
The Daily Reflector

It's been a hectic week for Roger Williams and the rest of the Louisville baseball program.

Between putting together scouting reports and running through practices as the Cardinals prepare for their first trip to the College World Series, it's been a whirlwind week for the Louisville pitching coach. But there's nowhere else Williams would rather be.

After getting his first taste of the CWS while serving as pitching coach at Georgia last year, the Greenville native knows how hard it is to reach Rosenblatt Stadium.

"It's a special place," Williams said by phone as the Louisville squad prepared to board a plane heading to Omaha, Neb. "It's a wonderful opportunity to go again. It's the pinnacle of our sport.

"I'm tickled to death that I'm getting a chance to go back."

Williams has spent much of his life toiling on college diamonds. His father, George, was head baseball coach at East Carolina from 1974-76 and compiled a 56-32 record with the Pirates.

Williams went onto have a stellar collegiate career as a player, twice being named an All-Atlantic Coast Conference performer as a pitcher at North Carolina. He ranks fourth in the Tar Heel record books with 24 career wins and shares the ACC single-game strikeout record with 19 against Duke in 1985.

After the Chicago Cubs drafted the Tar Heel hurler in the fourth round of the 1985 draft, Williams spent six seasons in the minor leagues, including two at the AAA level, before finding his calling as a coach.

"Baseball's always been in my blood," Williams said. "But I didn't really realize I wanted to get into coaching until toward the end of my playing days."

Williams, who still has family in Greenville, didn't have to go far from home to begin his coaching career. He spent three years coaching East Carolina's pitchers on the same field his dad had skippered the Pirates almost 20 years earlier. Williams, who earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from East Carolina, led the ECU pitching staff to the fifth best earned run average (2.99) in the nation in 1993.

"With my dad having been a coach, I learned a lot from him," Williams said. "And I learned a lot from some other great baseball people like Hal Baird and Gary Overton."

After an 11-year stint as an assistant coach at his alma mater, Williams spent last season with the Bulldogs before coming to the Cardinals.

Louisville will take on Rice on Friday. Depending on how the Tar Heels fare against Mississippi State in the first round, Williams's new squad could face his old one in the second round.

"I'm fortunate to be in position to go back (to Omaha)," Williams said. "It's been a great ride so far."
DREAMS LEAD NELMS TO NCCU

Ark. native worked in cotton fields, 'but my mind was never there'

BY ERIC FERRERI
STAFF WRITER

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — The tufts of cotton are inconspicuous, tucked away in a glass jar high up on a shelf behind Charlie Nelms’ desk.

But the cotton bolls, plucked from the Arkansas farm where Nelms grew up, are never out of Nelms’ consciousness.

“I want to stay connected to those things important to me,” Nelms, 60, said from his office at Indiana University. “They keep me grounded.”

Nelms will soon leave Indiana, where he is the vice president in charge of institutional development and student affairs, and come to Durham, where he will become N.C. Central University’s new chancellor. He starts work Aug. 1.

The cotton will come with him.

Though he has spent three decades in higher education — including two stints as a university chancellor — Nelms has always stayed rooted in that rural Arkansas farm. He mentions it constantly — during job interviews, in speeches, in the preface to a book he wrote. He mentions it so often, some of his colleagues joke, “Here comes the Arkansas story again.”

Charlie Nelms was the fifth of 11 children born to Eddie and Carrie Nelms on a farm wedged between two large, white-owned plantations. The owners of the plantations wanted the Nelms’ land, but Eddie Nelms refused to sell. In retaliation, the white owners blocked the utility company from running power lines to the Nelms farm, so Charlie and his brothers and sisters grew up without electricity.

To pass the time, young Charlie read and memorized poetry. He still has his favorites: “If,” by Rudyard Kipling, copies of which he likes to give out to youngsters; and Robert Frost’s “The Road Not Taken,” which he quoted upon being introduced to the NCCU community last week.

Nelms’ parents raised cows, chickens, pigs and cotton, all while stressing the importance of education. Eddie Nelms also worked in a store and brought home out-of-date newspapers. Charlie and his siblingsdevoured them.

“It didn’t matter that the news was old,” he remembered.

Eventually, Nelms enrolled at the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff, a historically black institution that, for a poor black kid in the segregated south, was pretty much the only way off the farm. He studied agronomy and chemistry, and became student body president.

Years later, in the preface to a book, Nelms recounted his hard-scrabble upbringing and explained his motivation for getting to college.

“It was fueled by my determination to escape our leaky tin roof house, the sun-up and sun-down days in the cotton field, the outhouse, coal oil lamps, and the other evils of poverty and racism,” he wrote. “It was there, in the cotton fields, that I learned to dream and to strategize about how to help myself and to change the world. My body was in the cotton fields, but my mind was never there.”

Nelms’ time at Arkansas-Pine Bluff stuck with him. Many years later, Nelms realized that the best way he could give back was to provide his own expertise and leadership to a historically black institution.

He spoke of that desire often and was considered for at least three leadership posts at historically black institutions before taking the NCCU job.

In Durham, he will head the fastest-growing institution in the 16-campus University of North Carolina system. Founded in 1910, NCCU boasts one of just two public law schools in the state and a burgeoning biotechnology program.

Affordable education

Nelms said he is coming to Durham in part because of North Carolina’s historic effort to keep college tuition reasonable for its residents.

“That is very important to me because I think that is the only way people from low and moderate income groups can access higher education,” he said.

Nelms first became interested in access and affordability 30 years ago as a graduate student at Indiana University. He wrote his doctoral thesis on the academic performance of Indiana students on financial aid, noting that universities often don’t do enough to help poor students succeed in college.

Since receiving his doctorate in higher education administration, he has worked as a professor and college administrator, advocating for disadvantaged students, creating and promoting programs to bring more poor students to college and keep them there. At Indiana, he is currently leading an initiative to double minority enrollment at Indiana University’s main campus in Bloomington.

“He’s a fighter,” said David Hummons, president of Indiana University’s black faculty and staff council. “Most of his waking hours, he’s thinking about how to advance the cause of students, especially under-represented students.”

At NCCU, Nelms will continue that campaign. A small but growing campus with deep roots in Durham’s black community, NCCU has long struggled with the issues Nelms has spent a lifetime working on. Nearly 90 percent of NCCU’s 8,600 students receive at least some financial aid.

Enrollment has risen about 50 percent in the last six years, but the university still struggles to keep its students in school. About 30 percent who enrolled in fall 2005 did not return for their sophomore year.
Learning lessons

In 2003, Nelms wrote a small, square book called “Start Where You Find Yourself: Lessons Taught and Lessons Learned.” It is the sort of fit-in-the-palm-of-your-hand novelty often given as a high school graduation present, and it’s well-known in Indiana. The local newspaper in Bloomington quoted from it last week in an editorial lamenting Nelms’ departure.

The book is a 124-page collection of Nelms’ snippets of wisdom. Some — “No matter how dreary, there is beauty in every day” — are the stuff of motivational posters. Others, like several under a chapter titled “Equity/Equality/Diversity,” have a little more zing.

Page 67: “While it’s true that not all whites owned slaves; they all benefited from the system that supported slavery. It’s called white privilege.”

By many accounts, Nelms is a gifted speaker. He gives about 30 speeches a year to community groups and education organizations, and generally writes his own scripts — often in his head during his daily 6 a.m. workout at the campus recreation center.

“I can’t tell you how many people I’ve talked to who don’t want to be a speaker after Charlie,” said his assistant, Storme Day. “People love to listen to him talk.”

Cresclet Thigpen, chairman of NCCU’s search committee, said Nelms’ passion impressed committee members. Through the interview process, Thigpen realized Nelms was evaluating NCCU as much as the university was evaluating him. Before agreeing to take the job, Nelms asked to see NCCU’s financial records and organizational charts.

“He’s someone who is very thorough and did his homework,” Thigpen said.

‘Friend-raising’

Nelms, who will be called on to beef up NCCU’s private development, is also considered a hands-on fundraiser, said John Brooks, senior development officer within Nelms’ office at Indiana. He believes in long-term relationships — he calls it ‘friend-raising’ — and has forged many. He has had success finding common ground between the university and charitable groups.

Since 1998, Nelms has been a vice president within the eight-campus Indiana University system based in Bloomington, a sprawling college town. Nelms has been the go-to guy for big initiatives, including a project requiring Indiana’s eight campuses to define their unique qualities and rewrite admissions standards, plus the effort to double minority enrollment at the Bloomington campus by 2013.

At Indiana, Nelms has developed a reputation for being dogged in his advocacy of whatever project he’s working on. Adam Herbert, president of Indiana University, said once Nelms believes in something, he won’t let it go.

“It’s like that jar of cotton from the family farm — it becomes a part of his soul.”
Downloads put Dukies in the dock

BY JANE STANCILL
STAFF WRITER

The recording industry filed copyright theft lawsuits Wednesday against 28 Duke University students for illegally downloading music.

The Recording Industry Association of America, on behalf of major record companies, filed suit in federal court against Duke network users identified as “John Doe” after they failed to respond to settlement offers, the association said in a news release.

Duke officials said the lawsuits targeted students.

Larry Moneta, vice president for student affairs at Duke, said the university is not involved in the lawsuits except to pass on settlement offers from the association to the students. Duke received 35 notices and sent those to students, Moneta said, so apparently some chose to reach a financial settlement with the industry. Settlement amounts are generally about $3,000 but can vary based on the frequency of violations.

The lawsuits are part of the recording industry’s stepped-up anti-piracy efforts announced in February. This month the association sent 43 pre-litigation notices to N.C. State University. Students there will have a few weeks to respond to the settlement offers. In April, the association filed suit against 23 N.C. State computer users out of 37 who were offered settlements in February.

Steven Marks, executive vice president and general counsel of the association, said in a statement that the music industry provides online music options that are deeply discounted or, in some cases, free. “Those who ignore great legal ways to enjoy music and the law by stealing songs online can face serious legal consequences,” he said.

The “John Doe” lawsuits cite individuals for illegally distributing copyrighted music on the Internet via peer-to-peer services such as LimeWire. Once a lawsuit is filed, the industry can subpoena from the university the names of the individuals corresponding to the addresses involved. The industry will then contact students directly to discuss settlements, though the financial terms will be steeper than in the earlier settlement offers.

If the students do not settle, the industry can then proceed with the lawsuits, disclosing names.

Moneta said Duke officials send e-mail to students twice a year advising them not to participate in illegal downloading. But he added: “It’s an uphill battle because it’s so ubiquitous. It’s a challenge, but we’re persistent in our effort to educate students about the consequences and about their ethical obligations.”

Duke also contacts students who go beyond specified bandwidth limits, which can be a sign of illegal downloading. Moneta said Duke does not monitor the content of students’ Internet use but tells them to stop excessive use if it is not related to academics. The university can further limit students’ bandwidth access or send them to judicial proceedings for violating Duke’s rules.

The recording industry first pursued lawsuits against individuals in 2003 in an effort to deter online music theft. But illegal downloading is still widespread on college campuses, according to research.

A 2006 survey by Student Monitor, a market research company, found that more than half of college students download music and movies illegally. According to market research company NPD, college students alone accounted for more than 1.3 billion illegal music downloads in 2006.
Taheri-Azar can stand trial

An evaluation finds the suspect in the SUV rampage at UNC-Chapel Hill competent.

BY JESSICA ROCHA
STAFF WRITER

HILLSBOROUGH — In March, Mohammed Taheri-Azar was led out of an Orange County courtroom after calling his lawyer a moron and saying he hated Americans and Jews.

On Wednesday, dressed in a gray pinstripe suit, his hair parted on the left, the man accused of driving onto the UNC-Chapel Hill campus last year and striking nine people was deemed competent to stand trial.

He faces nine counts of attempted first-degree murder and nine counts of reckless assault.

After his client’s outburst in March, Public Defender James Williams told reporters Taheri-Azar, 24, had a severe mental illness. The judge ordered him to undergo a psychiatric evaluation at Dorothea Dix Hospital.

Superior Court Judge Ken Titus opened that evaluation in court Wednesday and said it indicated Taheri-Azar was currently considered competent to stand trial, though that could change.

More than a year has passed since the driving incident on March 3, 2006. Taheri-Azar has had a volatile relationship with his lawyer and family, sometimes cooperating and talking with them and sometimes not.

Initially, he declared he would represent himself. But he refused to submit to a mental health examination that the judge required and chose instead to keep his lawyer.

Taheri-Azar also vacillated between contrition and righteousness in letters written to The Daily Tar Heel.

His changes in temperament also are evident in letters he has written to the court. Two months after the March outburst in court, Taheri-Azar wrote to the court apologizing for his “distasteful conduct.”

In that letter, dated May 20, Taheri-Azar also apologized for driving a rented Jeep Cherokee through UNC-CH’s Pit area, injuring nine people, though none required overnight hospitalization. Taheri-Azar said he wanted to avenge Muslim deaths, according to police.

“I sincerely regret what I did on that day,” he wrote in last month’s letter, saying he wished to work for his father’s general contracting company in Anaheim, Calif. “Please release me from state custody so that I may pursue my goal of living a productive life in California.”

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Campus killers' warnings ignored

Analysis: Colleges took little action

By Thomas Frank
USA TODAY

About once every year, a campus murder is committed after administrators take insufficient action despite warnings about threats, flawed security or dangerous situations, a USA TODAY analysis of college homicides since 1991 shows.

In at least 15 of the cases reviewed, the campus killer showed signs of being a danger, often with either a criminal or psychotic background, or by making violent threats.

The massacre of 32 at Virginia Tech in April, like some of the 15 cases, fits a pattern of killings committed by isolated, vengeful students who turn homicidal with shocking brutality. Students have been stabbed 97 times, shot 11 times, burned, strangled, suffocated and beaten with force that one pathologist compared to falling off a TV tower.

USA TODAY reviewed information on 110 campus murders since 1991 for which detailed information was available from court testimony, depositions, psychological records and news reports.

The campus murders examined also have exposed safety flaws such as inadequate security forces and the ease with which students and workers can hide criminal backgrounds, the analysis shows. Just this week, relatives of those killed at Virginia Tech demanded the release of student gunman Seung Hui Cho's mental health records.

About a third of campus killers analyzed over the 15-year period had recently been rejected, many of them men who had killed a former girlfriend and often themselves. Seven were failing or thwarted graduate students who murdered faculty members.

"There's a lot at stake personally in college," and rejection can be daunting, says Russ Federman, head of the University of Virginia's psychological services.

Homicides on campus still remain a rarity. The nation's 4,200 campuses — home to about 17.5 million students — report a total of about 15 murders a year, according to Education Department data.

College administrators say they usually cannot prevent murders because they don't know if a student will turn violent. "It's rare that a college would have some kind of advance notice," says Brett Sokolow, a Pennsylvania lawyer who advises colleges on safety.

That may be the case because campuses often lack systems to spot violent students, says S. Daniel Carter, vice president of Security on Campus, a safety-advocacy group. "Many campus murders have been preventable," Carter says.

Colleges have paid millions to settle lawsuits alleging bad security and have tacitly acknowledged security flaws by tightening safety after a murder. Officials often face criticism and occasional legal sanctions.

In March, Edward Waters College in Jacksonville paid $2.75 million to the parents of a freshman who was shot to death at his dorm in 2004. College security director Timothy Rose said that with more security, student Jonathan Glenn "would have had a chance."

University of North Carolina Wilmington administrator James Dixon III left his job and pleaded guilty to forgery after his son was convicted of raping and strangling a student in her university dorm in 2004. Dixon had lied on his son's admission application, omitting recent criminal charges. "It wasn't like (the killer) just out of the blue lost his mind," says Thorn Goosby, a lawyer suing UNC on behalf of victim Jessica Faulkner's parents. "He was a ticking time bomb."

Schools' flaws

- 'Guard down' on campus, 3A
Campus security flaws
a pattern in slayings

By Thomas Frank
USA TODAY

The University of Washington devised a bold plan six years ago to protect students and faculty after a struggling medical resident shot to death his mentor, then killed himself.

A new safety team would be alerted to all threats. It would move potential victims to a new dorm or office, assign them police protection or take steps such as changing their phone numbers.

In March, when university employee Rebecca Griego told supervisors and campus police that her former boyfriend had threatened her in two recent calls to her office, no one told the safety team.

On April 2, former boyfriend Jonathan Rowan found Griego in her campus office. Emptying his six-shot revolver, Rowan killed Griego, 26, and himself. She was alone at the time.

The murder is one of at least 15 in which colleges have provided flawed security, ignored threats or danger signs or paid insufficient attention to disturbed students, a USA TODAY analysis of more than 100 college killings since 1991 shows.

The massacre of 32 at Virginia Tech in April, like some of the 15 cases, fits a pattern of killings committed by isolated, vengeful students who turn homicidal with shocking brutality.

The pattern revealed by campus killings points to broader security flaws at colleges that can contribute to the 2,500 annual rapes and 3,000 annual aggravated assaults at colleges, campus safety experts say.

"Murders can expose flaws in the system that go a lot deeper," said S. Daniel Carter, vice president of Security on Campus, a safety-advocacy group. Campus administrators often do a poor job telling students and one another about threats, Carter said.

'People let their guard down'

At the University of Washington, Rebecca Griego's supervisor "wasn't really aware of the policy" requiring him to notify the safety team, university spokesman Norm Arkans said. Police are trying to figure out why the team wasn't alerted, even after Griego gave university police a copy of a court protection order.

"We try to do the best we can," university police Chief Vicky Stormo said, "and sometimes things just don't go right."

"People let their guard down" on campus, Stormo added. "People tend to look at the good and don't think that when they see something, maybe there are evil intentions. There's a tendency to deny or ignore."

That's happened numerous times, according to court records.

► In January 2002, Peter Odighizuwa shot and killed an administrator, a professor and a fellow student at Appalachian School of Law a day after being asked to withdraw for academic failure. Odighizuwa had threatened students and staff for months, according to former financial-aid officer Chris Clifton. Administrators "just brushed it off," Clifton said.

► In October 2002, Robert Flores, a failing University of Arizona nursing student, fatally shot three of his instructors, including one who had recently sent administrators a "heads up" e-mail warning that Flores "has significant behavioral problems," according to public records. An instructor who was not killed had reported Flores' threats against the school to police, but police never contacted Flores. A dean in charge of discipline never got the report.

► In March 2004, Shuvender Sem, who has a history of mental illness, stabbed to death a fellow student at Maharishi University of Management in Iowa just hours after attacking another student in a classroom.

Joel Wysong, the university's dean of men, had taken Sem to his apartment after the first attack "to keep an eye on him," Wysong said in a police statement.

When Wysong left Sem alone in his kitchen, Sem took a paring knife, went to the dining hall and stabbed Levi Butler four times with no provocation.

Some campus officials, particularly professors, are
ill-equipped to handle troubled students, experts say.

"The people who might see those behaviors first have the least background in how to deal with it," said University of South Florida criminologist Max Bromley.

The number of potentially troubled students is growing as colleges enroll more people with mental disorders, said Russ Federman, head of University of Virginia psychological services. Those students can function in academia using psychotropic drugs that are increasingly effective.

Seriously disturbed students often "discontinue their medication, and that's the point at which they unravel in violent ways," Federman said.

Trouble predicting violence

Wendell Williamson, a University of North Carolina law student had been hearing voices for two years until a university psychiatrist gave him anti-psychotic medicine. Within six weeks, Williamson was "doing remarkably better," psychiatrist Myron Liptzin wrote in a 1994 report.

Liptzin retired a month later without arranging for Williamson to see another psychiatrist, according to a court deposition. "It was his choice" whether to get treatment, Liptzin said in the deposition.

Williamson stopped taking medication, returned to hearing voices and "decided I'd have to get violent," he later told a psychiatrist. In January 1995, Williamson strode through downtown Chapel Hill near the UNC campus and killed two people at random with a rifle.

Colleges say they cannot predict when a troubled student will turn violent. In a one-month span in 2004, two University of North Carolina Wilmington students were murdered by other students who hid their criminal backgrounds on admissions applications. A report by the University of North Carolina found a pattern of applicants with criminal backgrounds lying on applications and suggested better scrutiny of applications.

Colleges have faced the most serious legal consequences when they know about safety problems.

Students at Knox College in Illinois repeatedly complained in the 1990s that campus lighting was inadequate, according to court testimony. Freshman Andrea Raciborsky was beaten to death in 1998 by a classmate in a glass-encased stairwell that was supposed to be lit to let passersby see inside.

"That's what can go wrong," said Ed Manzek, the attorney who sued, "if security is not a priority."
More grads opt to serve the poor

But a proliferation of programs also increases competition

By C. Jeffrey MacDonald
Special for USA TODAY

PROVIDENCE — Standing in a squishy salt marsh beside the Providence River, with a soft breeze in her face and an antsy crab in her hand, 25-year-old Emily Winser has reason to smile.

After all, payments aren't due yet on the $51,000 she and her parents borrowed for tuition and expenses at the University of Rhode Island.

“I’m young. I don’t feel like I particularly need to jump into the real world right now by getting a real job.”

— Greg Arte, volunteer with Jesuit Volunteer Corps

But as interest in service grows, some organizations are getting more selective; others are feeling the squeeze of a competitive market for idealistic young adults.

> **AmeriCorps**, a federal program that offers stipends of about $10,000 a year and a $4,725 education award in exchange for a 10-month term of service, has seen enrollments among college gradu-

ates climb to 13,447 this year from 7,608 in 1999. Numbers are based on a one-day snapshot taken in February each year.

> **Teach for America**, which places recent graduates in public-school teaching jobs in low-income areas, accepted about 2,400 of its 19,000 applicants in 2006. That’s up from 13,500 applicants in 2004.

> **The Peace Corps**, which sends volunteers overseas, has seen applications rise to 12,242 in 2006 from 8,917 in 2001.

But Eckerd Youth Alternatives, whose programs include a wilderness program for troubled youth, has seen applications for counselors slip to fewer than 8,000 this year from about 11,000 in 2002. Because the position requires a special person, Eckerd no longer advertises in mass media but instead recruits at targeted events such as “Life After AmeriCorps.”

“What we have to do to become attractive (to recent graduates) takes more work” than it did two years ago, says Robyn Roett, director of recruiting.

The Jesuit Volunteer Corps, meanwhile, touts an expedited timetable for acting on applications as a drawing card for college seniors eager to firm up their post-commencement plans, says Maggie Conley, project manager for national activities. Offering a decision in just two or three months helps the group attract a few hundred applicants to a program year filled with steep demands, such as communal living with other volunteers and...
poverty-level stipends while working among the poor.

"There is an increase in interest (in community service), but there's also an increase in the number of places where they can go to do this kind of work," Conley says. "As the competition has increased, we've asked, 'How can we be as responsive and attentive to our applicants as possible?'"

In this competitive atmosphere, career-minded graduates are finding they can sometimes gain practical skills without surrendering to "regular" jobs in their 20s.

Greg Arte of Spokane, Wash., plans to be a high school teacher, yet he opted to spend the coming year teaching and tutoring in a Jesuit Volunteer Corps middle school, in part because he says it will help him learn to work with a wide range of immigrant populations.

He's also eager for the spiritual challenge of living "in community" — housemates cook, do chores and pray together — and surviving on $80 a month in New York City.

"I'm young, I don't feel like I particularly need to jump into the real world right now by getting a real job," says Arte, who graduated in May from the University of Portland in Oregon. "I see my friends trying to get jobs, and it's very stressful. People can have no money and still be happy just by surrounding themselves with a community."

Community service workers also may enjoy a level of responsibility that prepares them for positions of authority down the line. Teach for America members, for instance, oversee a classroom after just five weeks of intensive training.

"It's not going into a regular office environment and trying to work your way up a corporate ladder," says Elissa Clapp, senior vice president of recruitment.

Here on the riverbank, AmeriCorps members share a common mission to educate kids about ecology. But the 10 months in this picturesque spot serves very different purposes in each of their lives.

Maureen O'Keefe of Biddeford, Maine, has discovered she likes working with students far better than doing environmental consulting, which was lucrative but "way too dry and not engaging." She lights up as kids who have found algae-covered mussels pepper her with questions: "Are they alive? How do they breathe? How do they eat? Could we eat them?"

"It means a lot to me that we have been a catalyst," she says during a quiet moment. "It sort of plants a seed of hopefulness."

For Krista Cole, a 2006 graduate of Prescott College in Arizona, the work helps focus her plans for graduate school. "Perhaps at the end of the year, I won't want to work with kids that much anymore. I don't see that happening, but I need to find out now.

"I wanted to make sure I would find something that would make me really, really happy," she says. "My parents always told me it doesn't matter how much money you're making. What matters is how happy you are with your job, so it doesn't feel like a job."

AmeriCorps volunteer numbers up
The number of college graduates serving in AmeriCorps has increased by 77% since 1999.

Source: Corporation for National and Community Service (Note: Numbers are based on an annual snapshot survey taken in February; about 94% of all AmeriCorps members are age 24 or younger.)

By Marcy K. McGee, USA TODAY
Virginia Tech Report Cites Privacy Law Problems

By IAN URBINA

WASHINGTON June 13 — Complicated privacy laws have left education, health care, and law enforcement officials confused about what they can legally tell one another concerning dangerous and mentally ill people, and that confusion has limited the ability of these officials to prevent the kind of violence that occurred at Virginia Tech, according to a federal report released today.

The federal report also says that many states and communities have done too little to prepare for emergencies and violent incidents in schools. And it says that state laws do not uniformly ensure that the federal firearms database is kept current regarding people who should be restricted from possessing firearms.

As a result of these problems, the federal report says, mentally ill people do not get the counseling and monitoring they need, and weapons are not kept from those who should be not have them.

The report was prepared jointly by the departments of Health and Human Services, Justice, and Education at the request of President George W. Bush.

It calls for new federal guidelines to clarify how information can be shared legally under federal privacy laws, and for the Department of Homeland Security to finance joint training exercises among state, local, and campus law enforcement agencies.

The federal report comes two days after the Virginia state office charged with scrutinizing mental health agencies highlighted other problems in the tracking and treatment of potentially dangerous mental health patients. That report described mental health services in Virginia as being underfinanced and ill equipped to evaluate whether people are a danger to themselves or others.

Both reports came partly in response to questions raised about the handling of Seung Hui Cho by state, local and university authorities. Mr. Cho shot 30 students and 2 faculty members to death at Virginia Tech’s Blacksburg campus on April 16; his mental health problems were clearly indicated long before his rampage.

After having made suicidal comments in December 2005, Mr. Cho was ordered by a judge to receive outpatient treatment on campus. But his condition does not seem to have been tracked afterward, and he does not seem to have received any treatment when he returned to campus.
The state’s mental health report found that because of budget constraints, it often takes more than a month for someone in Virginia to receive court-ordered or voluntary counseling for a declared mental illness. More than half of the state’s community mental health providers said that they cannot handle as many patients now as they did a decade ago, according to the report, which recommended that Virginia officials consider giving health-care professionals more time and resources for initial screenings of the mentally ill.

The state report also suggested that local mental health agencies monitor patients who receive counseling in the community and follow up with them more often.

That report was presented to an eight-member panel responsible for investigating the circumstances that led to the shooting at Virginia Tech, as well as Mr. Cho’s mental condition, the university’s response and the state’s gun laws.

That panel, which was convened by Governor Timothy M. Kaine of Virginia and was led by a retired state police superintendent, W. Gerald Massengill, is scheduled to release its report later this summer.

Its work has been hampered, however, because Mr. Cho’s medical and academic records are protected under state and federal privacy laws and because relatives of the victims have threatened legal action against the panel for not permitting them to participate in its investigation.

Mr. Massengill defended the policy, saying he wanted the work of the panel to “be objective and not driven by emotions.”

The federal report comes just after the House of Representatives passed what could become the first major gun control law in more than a decade. The bill aims to strengthen the national system for checking the backgrounds of prospective gun buyers.

One of its provisions is meant to close a gap that allowed Mr. Cho to buy a gun even though he had been judicially ordered to submit to a psychiatric evaluation. That information should have disqualified him from buying handguns, but Virginia never forwarded it to the federal National Instant Check System.

Under the House bill, states would be given monetary enticements for the first time to keep the federal background database up to date, and would be penalized for failing to comply.