THE DAILY CLIPS

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Three Greenville freshmen will enter East Carolina University in the fall as EC Scholars — the most prestigious academic scholarship program the university offers.

Joshua Griffin, Shayna Mooney and Brenna Owens are among 15 incoming freshmen who will receive $40,000 in scholarship funding and a $5,000 stipend for travel abroad. In addition, they will have opportunities to contribute to faculty-led research studies and participate in community and service activities.

A D.H. Conley graduate, Griffin is the son of Richard and Regina Griffin. He plans to study biology in hopes of becoming an interventional radiologist. He was chosen as one of 15 Pitt County high school seniors who participated in a yearlong Honors Medicine course that included attending weekly seminars and conducting research with the assistance of a faculty mentor during this past academic year at ECU's Brody School of Medicine.

A participant in the Hugh O'Brian Leadership program, Griffin was a member of the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, National Math Honor Society, Career and Technical Honor Society, National Society of High School Scholars and Health Occupational Students of America, and was named an AP Scholar with
Distinction. He raised money for the Ronald McDonald House and was honored with the Presidential Volunteer Service award.

A South Central graduate, Mooney is the daughter of Dr. Nick and Duhita Mooney. She plans to study neuroscience and biology in hopes of becoming a primary care physician. Mooney is one of four incoming freshmen accepted into the early assurance program at the Brody School of Medicine, which waives medical school application requirements and the Medical College Admission Test for students who maintain the required grade point average in their undergraduate years.

Mooney, who was named N.C. Board of Education Outstanding State Leader, had the highest overall grade-point average in the Pitt County Health Sciences Academy. A Science Olympiad winner, she was elected to the eight-member National Executive Council of Health Occupations Students of America. She spent her last year of high school working in the laboratory of Dr. David Tulis, an associate professor of physiology at the Brody School of Medicine.

A J.H. Rose graduate, Owens is daughter of Chuck and Lisa Owens. She plans to major in biochemistry in hopes of becoming a biomedical researcher. Named a North Carolina Scholar Athlete, she was a member of National Honor Society, Science Honor Society, National English Honor Society and was recognized as an AP Scholar with Honors. Owens served as president of Alpha Beta, a math honor society that enabled her to participate in Math Across Greenville, a project in which she and fellow classmates led elementary school students in math reviews and activities. She attended Governor's School and was a volunteer for Wilson Medical Center and the Wilson County Association of Retarded Citizens.

Scholarship awards are selected based on academic performance, leadership potential, faculty review and an interview. The incoming EC Scholar recipients have an average math/verbal SAT score of 1307 and an average unweighted GPA of 3.89.
Editorial: Redistricting needs public input
Tuesday, June 21, 2011

Pitt County has witnessed sweeping changes to this community since 2004, the last time a resident served in the N.C. Senate. Population growth and new development have forever altered the landscape, confirming Pitt's status as one of the most dynamic and vibrant places in the state and the hub of eastern North Carolina.

Now Pitt County should see its emergence as a regional capital translate into political power through district maps that increase the possibility of electing a resident to the Senate. Maps released last week offer some hope for that result, but success depends on legislative leaders hearing the voice of this community over the next several weeks.

Last week, the Joint House and Senate Redistricting Committee released its initial maps in accordance with the Voting Rights Act, one of its first acts in establishing boundaries for representation in the state General Assembly. The districts revealed in this offering are for majority-minority districts, those intended to provide representation for minority residents of the state, some of which affect Pitt County.

In the maps for state House, District 8, served by Democrat Edith Warren since 1999, would be changed significantly. The Senate district served by Clark Jenkins since 2003 would also be affected under the proposal, perhaps forcing him into an election battle with another Senate Democrat. That would be little surprise since Republicans control the Legislature for the first time in a century and have expressed hopes for tightening their grasp on the Assembly through the redistricting process.

Of considerable interest to county residents is the possibility that a Senate district favorable to Pitt residents might be established, thereby providing this community its first resident senator since 2004. While those advocating on behalf of institutions like East Carolina University have served admirably, there is added benefit to having a Pitt County resident in the Senate.

On Thursday, when the Joint Redistricting Committee holds a public hearing to solicit citizen input about process, lawmakers should hear from area residents calling for such a district to be a priority. A local video conference will take place at the Brody Medical Science Building, a location that projects the type of growth witnessed in this community in recent years. Interested members of the public can sign up to speak online in advance of the 3 p.m. hearing or on site.

Pitt County should have a senator, but citizens must demand one if they hope to see it happen.
Amateur championship 'a good experience' for pioneer Varner

By Richard Walker

GASTONIA – When Harold Varner played for championship teams at Cramerton Middle School in 2002 and 2003, Eagles coach A.J. Simmons called him “Little Tiger” after renowned PGA golfer Tiger Woods. Simmons obviously had an idea of the history that was about to come Varner’s way.

A championship golfer at Cramerton Middle, Forestview High and East Carolina University, Varner won his biggest individual tournament on Sunday when rallied in the final round to win the North Carolina Amateur Championship.

Varner, 20, became the first African-American to win the men’s title in the event’s 102-year history. A 2008 Forestview High graduate, Varner shot a 14-under-par 274 (71-67-70-66) at the Greensboro Country Club’s Farm Course to finish three shots ahead of three second-place finishers.

“It’s been a great experience,” Varner said of his championship on Monday. “You’re obviously going to lose more than you win in this sport. So I have to appreciate winning when I’m fortunate enough to win.”

Varner’s victory qualifies him for the upcoming United States Amateur Public Links at Bandon Dunes in Brandon, Ore., June 27 through July 2. Varner is leaving Thursday.

As for the history he set, Varner admits he was aware of it simply because it had been set recently by a women’s golfer.
In April, Greenville’s Angela Stewart won the North Carolina Women’s Senior Amateur in Asheboro to become the first African-American to win a Carolinas Golf Association event of any kind.

“That’s the only reason I knew that,” Varner said. “It’s pretty cool to be the first (African-American to win a men’s event). But it’s not something I’m thinking about when I play.”

If anything, Varner said he was more motivated by a disappointing finish in last year’s North Carolina Amateur at the Wilson Country Club. In Varner’s debut in the event, the rising senior at East Carolina was in second place after three days before fading to a 13th overall finish.

“That failure helped me a lot and told me how much harder I had to work to get to where I wanted to be,” Varner said. “Over the past year, I’ve grown a lot as a player and feel like I have a chance to win every time I play.”

Varner gives much of the credit for his game’s improvement to former Gaston Country Club pro Bruce Sudderth, who has given Varner lessons the past four seasons.

Varner was a two-time N.C. 3A runner-up at Forestview, where he was the Big South 3A Conference player of the year in his senior year of 2008.

At East Carolina, Varner has been in the playing rotation all three years, earning second-team All-Conference USA honors in 2010 and first-team All-Conference USA honors this past spring. Varner also has played in NCAA regionals the past two seasons.

Now that he has a North Carolina Amateur title in his background, it would seem certain Varner would pursue a professional career in the future.

“That’s definitely a future goal,” said Varner, a business administration major at ECU. “Hopefully, I’ll have a good senior year and get the chance to play on the (PGA) tour.”

… Three other local residents competed in the North Carolina Amateur with Varner. Denver’s Miller Capps shot a two-under-par 286 (71-70-71-74) to finish tied for 27th while Cherryville’s Greg Bunner and Stanley’s Brayden Hawkins missed the cut. Bunner tied for 64th with a three-over-par 147 (75-72) and Hawkins was tied for 123rd with an 11-over-par 155 (78-77).
Wright mulling his baseball future
By Nathan Summers
The Daily Reflector
Tuesday, June 21, 2011

Zach Wright's future rests in the hands of the Philadelphia Phillies, and that's not such a bad place to be.

The East Carolina catcher might know by today whether or not he'll become the former ECU catcher now or after next season. Wright was drafted in the sixth round by the Phillies, and has since been waiting to hear an offer from the 2008 World Series champions.

He knows the offer is coming.

“I should hear back from them either later (Monday) or (today),” said Wright, a junior who led the Pirates in home runs this season with 13 and started every game behind the plate. “I'm just waiting for the call, really, and working out and trying to stay in shape so I'll be ready for either possibility.”

Wright saw his former teammate, pitcher Mike Wright (unrelated), taken by Baltimore in the third round of the draft, and that Wright knew the second his name was called by the Orioles that his college career was over.

Zach Wright's decision is a bit tougher.
“It's been nerve-racking, but I'm trying to keep my mind off it,” said Wright, who has been stationed at home in Goldsboro with his family since ECU finished its season at the Charlottesville Regional and Wright was drafted three days later. “I've been playing golf and hanging out with my family. I've been taking it easy because I don't really know what to do until they call me.”

The backstop said he's been working out at the YMCA near his home while he waits for that call.

He said his wishes are not that complicated when it comes to the compensation he wants from the Phillies.

“I don't really know about the dollar signs and everything. We just told them that we want a fair price for the round that I went in, and that if it was fair I would go,” Wright said. “If me and my family think it's the right number, then I'll go and if not, I'll stay.”

In three seasons, Wright hit 30 homers, drove in 94 runs and had 114 total hits.

Contact Nathan Summers at nsummers@reflector.com or 252-329-9595.
The University of North Carolina did not fulfill requests on Monday for information on its internal investigation into parking tickets for a dozen football players or for football coach Butch Davis' cellphone records.

In accordance with a Wake County Superior Court ruling, UNC released parking records of 12 players and phone records for Davis, former assistant coach John Blake and athletic director Dick Baddour on Thursday.

The parking records showed the players had accumulated 395 tickets from March 2007 to August 2010. When the records were released, Nancy Davis, the Associate Vice Chancellor for University Relations, said the school had conducted an "internal investigation" into the ownership and registration of the cars for the players involved.

The 12 players were Greg Little, Bruce Carter, Charles Brown, Kendric Burney, Ryan Houston, Dwight Jones, Donte Paige-Moss, Robert Quinn, Kevin Reddick, Johnny White, Deunta Williams and Marvin Austin.

"As part of its internal investigation, the University reviewed the parking tickets reflected in this report," Davis wrote in an email Thursday. "That review showed that each car receiving a ticket was registered either to the student, a parent or grandparent, or a fellow student."
Davis responded via email Monday that the request for more information on the internal investigation was still being processed.

The school released the full cellphone records for Blake - who resigned on Sept. 5 amid the NCAA investigation into whether players accepted improper benefits - including every call and text from 2009 and 2010.

Seven UNC players missed the entire season, and 14 missed at least one game as a result of the NCAA investigation into improper benefits and academic misconduct.

UNC released records from three landline numbers for Butch Davis' office and a monthly summary of a cellphone issued to Davis, with a 919 area code, from December 2008 to November 2010. There were no calls on the logs released by the school.

A different cellphone used by Davis, with a 216 area code, showed up on Blake's call logs, but the records for that number were not released by the school.

UNC had sought to protect the parking and phone records as a matter of student privacy. Wake County Superior Court Judge Howard Manning ruled in April that the school had to release the records. A Court of Appeals denied UNC's request to delay the release of the documents on June 15. UNC released the documents the next day.

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Room at the Inn Executive Director Jeannie Wray looks over the 4-acre site at Belmont Abbey College where the Charlotte-based nonprofit plans a safe haven for single pregnant mothers in need. The first-of-its-kind facility's groundbreaking is today. JEFF WILLHELM - jwillhelm@charlotteobserver.com

**College maternity center is a first**

By Joe DePriest

It was a summer of romance and fear.

A bittersweet mix that cast a long shadow through the years. One that Debbie Capen, 37, of Charlotte will remember today at the groundbreaking for what is believed the nation's first college-based maternity and after-care residential facility for single pregnant women.

The home is being built on the campus of Belmont Abbey College and will be run by the Charlotte-based Catholic nonprofit Room at the Inn, a safe haven for single pregnant women. The organization's outreach programs and offices will remain in Charlotte.

During today's ceremony, Capen will recall the summer she was a rising sophomore at Winthrop University and waiting tables at North Myrtle Beach restaurants.

A fling with a handsome beach service worker stirred images of sailing off together on his catamaran. But the dream faded when she became pregnant. Afraid to tell her mother and worried about the possibility of having to drop out of college, she couldn't find an adult who understood.
"I felt utterly alone," said Capen. "I felt I had no other choice but abortion."

The experience of having an abortion was negative - something Capen wanted to forget but couldn't. Since then, Capen has tried to help other women going through the same thing.

The 10,000-square-foot home going up in eastern Gaston County at Belmont Abbey on four acres of land donated by the Benedictine monks is the kind of haven Capen didn't have when she found herself in trouble as a teen. The Belmont Abbey project was spurred by a national survey that found facilities and services for pregnant women were needed on college campuses. The home will allow women to continue their educations and have babies.

"I'm really joyful to be part of a project that's taking concrete action to help other women just like me," said Capen, now assistant director of Room at the Inn. "It will help people to see that a pregnancy is not an end - it's a beginning."

**Long time coming**

Putting the new maternity home on the campus of a Catholic school is a "bold move," said Belmont Abbey College President Bill Thierfelder.

He described the project as "a natural extension of pro-life philosophy."

"It's putting your money where your mouth is," Thierfelder said. "You're not just talking philosophy anymore. This is something real. You need to meet people where they are and help them to take the next good step."

Women who stay at the home up to two years for free don't have to be Catholic or students at Belmont Abbey. They can commute to colleges or universities in the greater Charlotte area or take transferable credits at the Abbey. As they complete their educations, they'll also learn to be good parents. Room, board and meals will be provided at the home.

Abbot Placid Solari of Belmont Abbey, a Room at the Inn board member, said land is being taken off Belmont's development plan to accommodate the maternity home. The residents - often driven by fear and anxiety - will have a place to stay and get help.

"This is a way we can make a positive contribution," Solari said.

Founded in 1994, Room at the Inn opened in a home on Weona Avenue in Charlotte to provide free residential services to pregnant women and their children. More than 400 mothers and children have lived there since.
Over the years, the program expanded into prenatal counseling, extended after-care and outreach, helping mothers live independently.

More than 4,500 pregnant women and children have been served by these programs.

As the nonprofit evolved, a long-range plan charted a new direction: a college outreach program. A feasibility study showed pregnant college women made up a significant underserved population.

Room at the Inn planned a residence that could accommodate up to 15 pregnant college women.

In 2006, the nonprofit launched a $3 million capital campaign. In tough economic times, it's been a slow process, but $2.2 million has been raised in private donations from individuals and organizations including the Knights of Columbus of North Carolina.

"It's been a long time coming, but we've taken a conservative approach," said Chuck Curtis, Room at the Inn's board chairman. "We've been overwhelmed by the support and enthusiasm and affirmation of this project."

Curtis says he talks about the project with women who dropped out of college years ago when they became pregnant, and their response is: "I wish I'd had something like this."

'A plan for their future'

Jeannie Wray, executive director of Room at the Inn, sees the new maternity home as a chance for young pregnant women to "develop a plan for their future."

"They feel confused, afraid and lost," she said. "Here they can find people who understand and care."

Charlotte resident Capen remembers what that was like - and more. After her abortion, she wanted to move on. She graduated from college, got married and had five children.

But a time came when Capen concluded her abortion had been "a huge mistake."

"I had a great sense of grief and remorse," she said. "I felt my own personal calling to help other women who were unexpectedly pregnant, especially those in college."

She feels the maternity home at Belmont Abbey could open a door to the possibility "everybody can have a happy ending."
Minority men falling behind academically, study finds

The College Board report says they also are more likely to face unemployment or incarceration, and it says fixing the problem should be a national priority.

By Carla Rivera, Los Angeles Times

Young black and Latino men lag behind their contemporaries in nearly every measure of educational attainment, with many failing to attend college or earn degrees and large numbers facing the prospect of unemployment or incarceration.

The findings are included in two reports released at a briefing Monday by the College Board Advocacy & Policy Center. It was hosted by Harvard University's W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research in Cambridge, Mass.

The reports cull census data, academic research and in-depth interviews to paint a bleak picture of the educational experiences of young men across four racial and ethnic groups: African Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Latinos and Native Americans.

Among the findings:

• 28% of African American men and 16% of Latino men aged 25 to 34 had obtained an associate's degree or higher, compared with 70% of Asian American men and 44% of white men.

• Large proportions of minority men aged 15 to 24 with high school diplomas were unemployed — 34% of black men, 47% of Latinos, 39% of Native Americans and 30% of Asian Americans.

• Incarceration rates are increasing — 10% of black men aged 15-24 were incarcerated, as were 5% of Latinos and 3% of Asian Americans and Native Americans.

The report also found a creeping gender gap, with men in each race and ethnicity, including whites, less likely to attend and complete college and more likely to drop out than their female counterparts.
"This is not what we want for our young children, this is not what we want for our country," College Board President Gaston Caperton said at the Cambridge briefing, which was also attended by Harvard scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr., actor Hill Harper and others. "This is a black mark and a tragedy of America today."

The reports suggests that improving outcomes for young men of color must become a national priority and calls for community, business and school partnerships to provide mentoring and support.

"As our nation becomes more diverse, it's going to become very important that these young men reach the same success that everyone else does," said the report's author, John Michael Lee Jr., policy director of the Advocacy & Policy Center.

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Lake Forest College in Illinois responded to the recession by rolling out a three-year bachelor’s degree, offering students a chance to finish school sooner and join the workforce. There were no takers.

Reformers have hailed the three-year degree as the potential salvation of higher education: a rewrite of the academic calendar that lowers the price of college by compressing it into 36 months. Several institutions have launched three-year degrees in a flurry of activity triggered by the economic downturn that began in 2008. Political leaders in at least two states, Ohio and Rhode Island, have instructed public colleges to offer accelerated degrees.

But students have not responded, and most three-year degree programs have flopped — a reminder, college leaders say, that students still regard college as an experience to be savored. Why rush the best four years of your life?

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, a campus of 17,500 students, enrolled five students last year in its inaugural three-year degree program. The Fast Forward program at Manchester College in Indiana enrolled 20. The Degree in 3 program at nearby Ball State University served 29.

There are exceptions. A new three-year Global Scholars degree at American University in Washington has been somewhat more popular, with 58 students expected to enroll this fall. A three-year program at Hartwick College in Upstate New York served 47 students last year and expects about twice as many this fall. But even those programs serve a tiny percentage of overall students.

Katie Miller enrolled in the three-year degree program at Manchester, a liberal arts college southeast of Chicago. But once she arrived on campus in fall 2009, the rich palette of collegiate life beckoned. She studied in Spain, London and Paris and signed up for obscure courses outside her education major. She soon realized she would need more than three years to experience it all. She opted out of accelerated study.
“I decided that you only have a certain amount of time to enjoy the college experience,” said Miller, 20, from Winchester, Ind. “And I wasn’t in as much of a hurry as I thought.”

**Pluses, though few takers**

Some scholars see the three-year degree as the next logical step in the evolution of American higher education. More students arrive at college with a stack of credits from Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate exams, allowing them to graduate sooner, even if the college has no accelerated program. College leaders are looking to reverse the upward trend in sticker price, which at top private institutions tops $50,000 a year for tuition and living expenses.

Most colleges hew to the agrarian calendar and an arbitrary four-year pace for the bachelor’s degree, a schedule adopted by Harvard College in 1652 in accordance with British custom. (England long ago switched to a three-year degree.)

Compressing the bachelor’s degree into three years could be healthy for American colleges, advocates say, encouraging them to use buildings that would otherwise be empty during winter and summer breaks and to expand online study.

Three-year degrees have come and gone over the years, but the idea has never taken hold because “not enough schools are doing it,” said Stephen Trachtenberg, president emeritus of George Washington University.

Bates College in Maine and Judson College in Alabama have offered three-year degrees since the 1960s. Bates has graduated 36 accelerated students in the past 12 years. Judson has had about 100 three-year graduates since 1998. Neither school has seen participation rise of late.

The recent proliferation of three-year degrees has heightened interest in accelerated study among college freshmen. But enthusiasm tends to peter out.

“A lot of students are interested in it,” said Dave McFadden, executive vice president of Manchester College. “A smaller number of students sign up for it, and an even smaller number finish it.”

Lake Forest, in the Chicago suburbs, promoted its program as a money-saver for students and parents. “We just really didn’t have any takers,” said Janet McCracken, dean of the faculty.
The three-year degree may not gain traction until it becomes standard in a large state university system, said Robert Zemsky, a higher education scholar at the University of Pennsylvania. Initiatives in Ohio and Rhode Island have not borne fruit.

Or, the accelerated BA may be subsumed within a more ambitious goal: accelerated graduate study. Several universities in the Washington region have introduced accelerated master’s and doctoral degrees. Some schools combine those degrees with undergraduate study to deliver, say, a bachelor and master’s degree in four or five years, rather than the customary six.

**Compressed schedules**

Completing a bachelor’s degree in three years typically means amassing 120 credit hours in three-quarters of the time. Accelerated programs often require students to take brief but intense winter terms or to complete coursework in summer online. Some accept only students who completed college credits in high school.

There’s little wiggle room for students to change majors or load up on electives. Accelerated programs leave less time for athletics, clubs and social life. They also leave little time for employment, and that could be a problem for some of the students who would benefit most from a discounted education.

“If you try to do it in three years, your options are limited,” said Candace Evilsizor, 17, a rising freshman from Phoenix who plans to enroll in the three-year program at American University.

Evilsizor likes the idea of accelerated study. But, as a Global Scholar, she also wants to see the globe. In a three-year program, she might not have time.

“They say you can study abroad for a summer. But I want to study abroad for a full year. So I’m not sure how that will work out,” she said.

The payoff from a three-year degree comes in year four, when, instead of paying for college, a student is free to draw income.

Mercedes Plummer, 21, graduated this spring from Manchester College with a three-year degree in physical education. She cobbled together credits from summer classes and internships, took a heavy course load and transferred six credits from high school.
“I kind of sacrificed free time to hang out with friends,” she said. But she saved about $25,000 in college expenses, and now she’s free to hunt for a job as a school gym teacher.

At the flagship University of Massachusetts Amherst, 35 to 40 students a year finish degrees in three years. Provost James Staros expects that number to rise to more than 100 under a new three-year degree option.

“It’s still a very small number,” he said.
In one of the first concrete steps to remake the way medical care is delivered, hospitals are competing to hire primary-care physicians, trying to lure them from their private practices to work as salaried employees alongside specialists.

The push is forcing doctors to make decisions about how to deliver care to patients, many of whom have relied on long-standing relationships with trusted independent neighborhood physicians and wonder what lies ahead.

It also spotlights benefits and drawbacks for patients and doctors alike in one of the health-care overhaul’s much-touted initiatives, set to begin next year. The law will reward teams of doctors, nurses and others if they coordinate to provide better care at lower costs. As front-line doctors, primary-care physicians are key to this effort.

In some cases, hospitals are seeking to take over existing practices; in others, they are hiring new graduates or relocating doctors from outside the region to prepare for accountable-care organizations. Some physicians want to work for hospitals and are seeking to play one option against the other, doctors said. But many others remain wary.
Primary-care physicians wrestling with the implications of becoming hospital employees or trying to go it alone say it’s ultimately about changing the way they have practiced medicine for decades.

“All the rules are changing,” said Jonathan Plotsky, 56, a longtime Rockville internist who has talked to Shady Grove Adventist Hospital about joining the staff.

Plotsky’s father is a psychiatrist who has been practicing medicine the same way for decades. But Plotsky worries about joining a hospital and turning over care of his patients to others.

“All I have is my patients,” he said.

For many doctors, the salaried jobs may come with greater security, but the trade-off is less individual freedom over how many patients they see and how they care for them, they said.

“It’s like the local coffee shop versus Starbucks,” said one family-medicine doctor whose Montgomery County group practice rejected a hospital system’s offer. The doctor, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, did not want to name the group or system because the doctors work closely with one of the system’s hospitals.

But hospitals are moving quickly to add to their primary-care staffs.

In 2008, about half of physician practices were hospital-owned, according to an industry group. A survey last fall by another industry group found that 74 percent of hospital leaders planned to hire more doctors in the next 12 to 36 months. Most want primary-care doctors.

Locally, all the major hospital systems have ramped up efforts. In Northern Virginia, Inova Health plans to hire 200 primary-care doctors over the next five to eight years. In suburban Maryland and Washington, MedStar Health, which operates Montgomery General Hospital, Georgetown University Hospital and Washington Hospital Center, has increased its primary-care doctors system-wide to 180, jumping more than 20 percent in the past 18 months, after being static for more than a decade.

Baltimore-based Johns Hopkins Medicine, which owns Suburban and Sibley hospitals, is also hiring more primary-care doctors.

What this means for patients is unclear.

Even though they may continue to see their doctors in the same building as before, patients will benefit from one-stop medical shopping, proponents say. Internists and specialists working under the same corporate roof will, in
theory, be better able to care for them than a disjointed fee-for-service approach where a family doctor may not know what treatment a patient received during a previous emergency-room visit.

Patients will also have greater access because, unlike private practices that can reject insurance, hospitals don’t have that luxury.

But other experts say economic factors could hurt patients.

Hospital-employed primary-care doctors are a way for hospitals to direct referrals to their own specialists. If health-care rules change to pay hospitals one lump sum for taking care of someone the entire year, instead of payment for each service or procedure, a huge incentive exists for hospitals to own as many pieces of health care as possible.

That is likely to put more pressure on salaried doctors to meet a bottom line, experts and doctors say. And that could change the intimacy of long-standing doctor-patient relationships.

Experts are concerned, too, that if one hospital system becomes too large, it will result in less competition and higher prices, a charge that hospital executives deny.

No matter what happens in the larger political health-care battle, hospitals and doctors say they are preparing for a fundamental shift in the way they organize, practice and deliver care.

“Health systems such as ours have all of a sudden realized that we want to get involved with primary-care physicians, which is new,” said Gaurov Dayal, chief medical officer for Adventist HealthCare, which operates Shady Grove Adventist Hospital and Washington Adventist Hospital.

Some primary-care doctors hope that becoming employed by hospitals will allow them to have better work-life balances. Older doctors say the costs of running a business are increasing — such as expensive electronic medical record systems — and that it may help to be part of a bigger organization.

Internist Laura Brown likes being part of the team at Hopkins.

Brown, 46, left a group private practice last fall. She was frustrated by battles with insurance companies that often resulted in dropped coverage for her patients. When patients went elsewhere, her part-time pay took a hit.

She now works part time with seven other primary-care Hopkins doctors in the same North Bethesda office building. About half of her private practice patients followed her. Many of her new patients see her because Hopkins accepts virtually all types of insurance, including Medicare.
She said she earns about the same as before. But she benefits from an electronic medical record system that will tell her, for example, how many of her patients might be affected by new restrictions on a cholesterol-lowering drug. An electronic system also looks over her shoulder to make sure she asks diabetic patients whether they have had eye exams.

“Am I going to resent getting graded to do that?” she said. “I don’t think that’s oppressive.”

In Northern Virginia, Inova Health’s interest in primary-care physicians is prompting some doctors to join forces rather than work for Inova. Several practices are forming a group of 150 doctors that will work as one entity when treating patients but remain independent financially, said Sandy Chung, president of Fairfax Pediatric Associates, one of the groups involved. The combined group would be one of the largest primary-care practices in the region.

“Everyone realizes they have to be big to play in the game. What we’re looking for is different ways to become big without necessarily becoming employed” by a hospital, Chung said.

**New pressures**

It is not the first time that hospitals have acquired physician practices. In the 1990s, the move toward managed care prompted a similar surge, but that effort resulted in huge financial losses for hospitals, and they subsequently divested themselves. This time around, economic and political pressures are such that hospital executives say they have no choice.

Hospitals with primary-care doctors on their team have the resources to “figure out which patients are at risk, which ones need to be monitored more closely depending on their fragility,” said Bob Kocher, lead author of a New England Journal of Medicine report in March about hospital hiring of physicians.

By contrast, individual doctors, who lack those resources, “almost never do this today,” said Kocher, director of the McKinsey Center on U.S. Health Reform.

Locally, Inova Health’s plan to hire 200 primary-care doctors over five to eight years has brought them about 20 such physicians, virtually all of them recent graduates, according to Wayne Diewald, an executive vice president.

Many Northern Virginia doctors aren’t interested because of mistrust dating to the 1990s, when Inova bought practices but then shed them, doctors said.
Hopkins, the newest player, has the longest history with employed physicians. The Baltimore-based powerhouse is making Montgomery County and Northwest Washington “a major focus” for primary-care hires in the next two years, said Steven Kravet, president of Hopkins’s community physician group.

Hopkins has hired 10 primary-care doctors since acquiring Suburban Hospital in 2009 and will open practices at Sibley and downtown Bethesda this summer, he said. Hopkins wants to hire another 10 doctors over the next year and a half, he said.

Doctors from one local practice, Foxhall Internists, declined to become Hopkins employees because they want to keep their independence, said Alexander Chester, Foxhall’s president. The practice, which does not accept insurance, schedules 30 minutes for established patient visits and an hour for physicals; a Hopkins representative told them they would have to see patients every 15 minutes for regular visits, Chester said.

Brown, the Hopkins physician, confirmed that she was allotted 15 minutes for established patient visits and 30 minutes for physicals. But if she is running over, she can ask for help from colleagues and keep working through her lunch or stay later.

Her performance is not based solely on patient volume. “It is about how many and how sick they are,” she said. Hopkins sets a monthly goal for Brown based on “relative value units” that take both factors into account.

Hopkins officials say part of her salary is also linked to quality metrics, such as patients receiving mammograms, colonoscopies and vaccines. She gets a bonus for meeting the goal. “I’m not finding it at all difficult to reach my goal,” she said.
Can substance-abuse recovery take place on a college campus?

By Shari Roan, Los Angeles Times/For the Booster Shots blog
June 20, 2011
Reporting from Hollywood, Fla.

College students who are lucky enough to realize they need treatment for substance-use disorders are faced not only with the daunting task of recovery but also with reintegration into college life -- otherwise known as the land of pills and booze.

A new program, however, may begin cropping up on U.S. campuses to assist young people who are trying to recover and aid those who wish to achieve sobriety.

The Collegiate Recovery Communities emerged from a program at Texas Tech University and now has spin-offs at several U.S. universities. The program is a peer-based, on-campus model that aims to promote a culture of recovery. Little is known about how these programs can help students, but data so far suggest students benefit from the support. After six months, students reported feeling strong levels of support for their recovery and satisfaction with their lives, according to the first study to assess collegiate recovery programs.

There is growing interest in how to help both high school and college students resume their education after substance-abuse treatment, said Alexandre B. Laudet, director of the National Development and Research Institutes in New York, who is conducting the research on collegiate recovery.

"It's believed that a lot of young people may be forgoing their education because they are afraid it will jeopardize their sobriety," Laudet said. "There is a shocking lack of recovery support. And, in the absence of symptom management, the problem is going to start again."
"If we can show" collegiate recovery programs "work to keep kids in college and sober, everybody wins," she added. "They are going to be role models in society, and they are going to give back to their colleges."

It's too soon to assess whether the programs can curb relapse rates, which are typically high in college-age students. Laudet's study showed many of the students in the programs had a history of serious substance abuse and emotional problems. But more than half of the students said they would not have enrolled in their particular college if it had not had a recovery program.

The study was presented Tuesday at a meeting of the College on Problems of Drug Dependence.
Gibbons Hall at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., will be switching from co-ed dorms to single-sex dorms in the fall.

**Catholic University To Phase Out Co-Ed Dorms**
by Jacob Fenston
June 21, 2011

At colleges across the country, some 90 percent of student housing is co-ed. Now, Catholic University in Washington, D.C., wants to turn back the clock.

The college is returning to single-sex dorms. The university hopes to fight back against a culture of binge drinking and casual sex.

Universities started letting young men and women live in the same buildings in the late 1960s. In 1970, a Life magazine cover story called co-ed dorms an "intimate revolution." Now, it's become too intimate for some. Catholic University President John Garvey says co-ed housing fosters a culture of "hooking up" and binge drinking.

In making his decision, he looked to a time before the revolutions of the '60s.

"Aristotle suggests, in the Nichomachean Ethics, that you need to live a virtuous life to point you in the right direction," Garvey says.

Garvey announced the move in a Wall Street Journal op-ed, where he acknowledged it was "slightly old-fashioned."
"I think it's countercultural for a university to say that it's part of our business to concern ourselves with the development of our students in the practice of virtue, as well as in their intellectual faculties," he says.

Garvey also cites a 2009 study that found students in co-ed dorms are twice as likely to binge drink and have multiple sexual partners.

Brian Willoughby, a professor at Brigham Young University, authored the study. "A lot of people will ask me, 'So, is your research saying we should just get rid of co-ed dorms?' And I don't think that's what the research is saying," he says.

Willoughby says his work suggests universities should be making policies based on research and evaluation, not just student preference. But, so far, the research in this field is not conclusive.

David Anderson, a professor at George Mason University, says co-ed dorms can improve student behavior. He's been studying drugs and alcohol on college campuses since 1979. And, he says, co-ed dorm mates look out for each other, like brothers and sisters.

"Co-ed residence halls have a moderating effect on — particularly the males' — drinking behavior," Anderson says.

He says administrators often attack the symptoms of campus alcohol problems, not the root causes. "To look at single-sex residence halls as halting behavior, it may just be halting the location of the behavior rather than halting the behavior," he says.

Megan Dever, a graduate student at Catholic, has lived in both types of dorms. "I lived in a single-sex dorm my freshman year, and you have just as much exposure to the situations he's trying to prevent," she says.

But freshman Germanil Van thinks living with the opposite sex can be a distraction.

"When we mix the students, they don't really focus on their work. Girls prefer to hang out with their boyfriends, and vice versa," Van says.
Bridget Walsh, who just graduated, says restrictions like this are par for the course at a Catholic institution. "Being a student here for the past four years, you get used to that really quickly. Sometimes it works out for the better, and sometimes you have to grin and bear it," she says.

Next year, only freshmen will have to live in single-sex dorms. The new policy will be phased in one year at a time.