THE DAILY CLIPS

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Robert Alexander camped out on Fourth of July weekend, but he wasn't on vacation with his family.

The 26-year-old spent the holiday where he has spent most every weekend this summer — the Brody of School of Medicine. Like most medical school students, Alexander is putting in some 80-hour weeks attending lectures and labs, observing physicians and studying for the next exam.

But Alexander isn't a medical student. He just really wants to be one.

He is among some two dozen medical school hopefuls attending the Summer Program for Future Doctors at East Carolina University. While a handful of students attending the eight-week program have been invited to attend Brody this fall, the vast majority have no guarantees, only the hope that a year or two from now, they will finally have a turn. For the first time in the program's more than 20-year history, three of this year's summer students actually are dental school hopefuls.

“They are at various stages of getting ready for medical school,” said Dr. Richard Ray, a professor of physiology at Brody and director of the summer program. “Some have never applied before; some have applied several times.”

Bradley Propst of Concord, who graduated with a degree in biology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, applied to and was rejected by medical schools three
times. After attending ECU's summer program in 2009, he gained admission to Brody, where he is now a second-year student and a teaching assistant in the summer program.

“‘You need something that will draw you out of the pack,’ Propst said, ‘and grab their attention in a good way.’”

Jon Winter of Rocky Mount, who graduated from North Carolina State University with a degree in biology, had a similar experience. With more than 800 applicants a year vying for about 80 seats at Brody, Winter couldn't get past the interviews — until he attended the summer program.

Nearly half the students admitted to Brody last year were not first-time applicants. The average GPA was 3.6 for undergraduate students and 3.9 for graduate-degree students. The average Medical College Admission Test score was 9.9 per section (on a 1-15 scale, with an average score being 8).

Holly Dieu didn't have numbers like that. The 22-year-old Charlotte native wasn't surprised when she didn't receive any acceptance letters from medical schools this year.

“I rushed my application the first time around,” said Dieu, a UNC graduate who is among the first generation in her family to attend college. “I knew I was a weak applicant.”

But Dieu had a plan B. She got her certified nursing assistant license in April, finished college in early May and started the Summer Program for Future Doctors about a week later.

Dieu moved out of her apartment in Chapel Hill and into a dorm in Greenville. She hasn't seen her family since. She missed her mom's birthday and her family vacation, instead spending more than 220 hours in the classroom learning anatomy, biochemistry, neuroscience and physiology.

“It's really, really intense,” Dieu said. “I've probably never worked this hard in my life. It's nothing like undergrad.”

In addition to their science coursework, students spend nearly 100 hours enhancing their reading skills, preparing for the MCAT, learning about health care and observing medical procedures.

“You see how hard they're working,” Marsha Hall, business service coordinator at Brody, said. “They leave their families and jobs behind to come and stay in a town they don't know. That's pretty admirable.”

Summer program students receive grades but no course credit for their work. There is no transcript to show to a prospective medical school, but students who complete the program can walk away with positive evaluations and even letters of recommendation to enhance their applications.
There is no charge to attend the summer program. In fact, participating students receive a $2,200 stipend to help cover their housing and living expenses. Medical school faculty essentially volunteer their time to the program; they receive no additional pay for the courses they teach.

Due to state budget shortfalls, the summer program, which last year did not operate for the first time since the 1980s, may have to seek grants and private donations to continue.

“As one of the two state medical schools, we are facing the budgetary issues and trying to be responsible about it,” Ray said. “But we're working very hard to make sure that we can keep the programs going that we view as core programs. This is one that we think is very important.”

One reason for that is that the summer program helps Brody recruit minority, disadvantaged and nontraditional students. Giving minority and disadvantaged students access to medical education has been part of the mission since ECU's medical school opened in 1977.

“All this goes right back to our mission to try to recruit what we call nontraditional medical students,” David Musick, associate dean for medical education, said. “For some of the nontraditional students, it's really one of the first chances they've ever had to demonstrate that, if they work hard at something, they can be successful.”

Rocky Mount native Brittany Means has wanted to be a pediatrician since she was young enough to go to one. But after graduating with a biology and pre-med degree from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, she didn't even apply to medical school. She didn't believe she had the grades to get accepted.

“I had a 3.1, which isn't competitive at all,” said Means, 23, who worked her way through college. “So it kind of made me nervous when I did think about applying to medical school.”

When Means got accepted into the summer program, she took a leave of absence from her job as a donor and client support specialist with the American Red Cross in Charlotte and headed to Greenville for a chance to prove herself.

“By the grace of God, I got in, and I've been trying my very hardest to do well,” Means said. “It's been overwhelming, but I definitely think it will be worthwhile. I strongly believe that this was meant for me, so I can't give up that easily.”

Robert Alexander was nearly ready to call it quits after taking the MCAT the first time. He felt so terrible about his performance that he elected to void the score.

But the Salisbury native, who attended Cape Fear Community College and graduated from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, still wasn't ready to give up on
medical school. He applied to Brody's summer program, moved in with his wife's aunt and uncle near Greenville and started to work.

Students with less than perfect grades and MCAT scores, Ray said, are ideal candidates for the summer program.

“This gives us a chance if someone has a problem with standardized tests, if their scores aren't up to the national average,” he said. “If they've got a 3.1 (GPA), they probably aren't going to get in (to medical school), so a program like this can show that they can handle the work.

“If they get the foot in the door, it's their job to keep pushing it,” Ray said. “But if they do, it really does help them get in.”

Steven Nunns already was in the door at Brody. At 24, the UNC Wilmington graduate had a job in the physiology lab as a research technician, but he had to leave it to enter Brody's summer program. After two unsuccessful attempts to get into medical school, Nunns hopes the summer program will be the golden ticket.

It has been for a large percentage of summer program participants. More than half of summer program participants eventually are admitted to Brody or to another medical school. This year, 15 of Brody's 70 medical school graduates had attended the Summer Program for Future Doctors, as have 15 to 25 percent of Brody graduates since 2007. Nunns, one of 28 students to complete the summer program this week, hopes to someday join the ranks.

“This is a last-ditch effort for a lot of people,” he said. “It's a ton of work; you're exhausted. But the end goal is so appealing.

“This is my way into medical school,” Nunns said, “so I wouldn't want to be doing anything else right now for the summer.”

Contact Kim Grizzard at kgrizzard@reflector.com or 252-329-9578.
Chris Murphy, assistant director of undergraduate admissions at East Carolina University, has died, the university's alumni association is reporting through social networking site Facebook.

Friends said Murphy was struck by a taxi in Nags Head on Saturday. He was taken to Sentara Hospital in Norfolk, Va. A hospital spokeswoman would not confirm or deny any information late Sunday.

The alumni association describes Murphy as a graduate in 1996 and 2010.
Editorial: Budget cuts ECU mission
Monday, July 11, 2011

Long before North Carolina lawmakers began work on the 2011-13 budget, East Carolina University Chancellor Steve Ballard warned that deep spending cuts would hurt the school. He voiced fears that a loss in funding would harm its core academic mission, disrupting students' education and creating ripples through the region's economy.

Though similar worries emanated from throughout the University of North Carolina system, lawmakers continued undaunted, passing a budget that will impose a 16 percent spending cut on East Carolina. Though Ballard faced the news with requisite optimism, there is little question that the coming years will be difficult for the university community and all of eastern North Carolina as a result.

As details of the new state budget emerge, it becomes increasingly clear that there were no winners, only different grades of losers, in the appropriation wars. Education, in particular, took a hit, with public schools, community colleges and state universities all asked to prepare students for the challenges of a transitional economy, but without the requisite funding needed to do so. This despite the certain knowledge that education spending represents the best investment in a recession.

East Carolina's situation demonstrates the Legislature's deeply flawed thinking. The university is more than an institution of higher learning, though it is certainly that for nearly 28,000 students. It is also an economic engine for a region, a center of employment and a leader in innovation that stretches across the counties in the East. Reduced funding shortens its reach and will have lasting effect throughout the university community.

The $414 million reduction imposed by the General Assembly on the UNC system forced the Board of Governors budget and finance committee to ask for sacrifices from all member institutions, with cuts ranging from 10-18 percent. As one of the largest state schools, East Carolina swallowed a larger pill, totalling $49 million. In outlining the cuts,
Ballard said they would be spread across the campus and that no aspect of the university would be untouched.

That may have been what state voters desired from last year's election. Perhaps they sought less spending on education, a smaller university system with a diminished capacity for instruction and less ability to drive the economic engine of this region. It could be they wanted the ripple effect promised by the budget, now witnessed at East Carolina.

Regardless, that election had consequences. They're being felt at East Carolina.
ECU announces distribution of budget cuts
By Jackie Drake
The Daily Reflector
Saturday, July 9, 2011

About half of the $49 million budget cut to East Carolina University will come from colleges and departments, officials announced Friday.

The 16 percent cut to ECU was one of 17 cuts to all University of North Carolina institutions, ranging from 8 to 18 percent, set by the Board of Governors finance committee on Thursday to meet the $414 million reduction to the UNC system by the state budget.

With some variation, each college or department will have to cut about seven percent of its budget, Chancellor Steve Ballard announced at a news conference Friday morning.

“There is no question that we'll have larger classes with fewer teachers,” Ballard said. “It may take students longer to get a degree. None of that is good.”

One quarter of the remaining half of the overall cut to ECU will be made up by an already-approved tuition increase. The final quarter will come from “all other sources” including savings and not filling positions, according to Ballard.

“The cuts will hit every aspect of the university,” he said.

While it's too early to know which specific programs or positions will be cut, administrators will be looking at all options through the summer. Administrative and service budgets already have been cut about as much as they can be, Ballard said.

No new tuition increases are called for, though updated rates approved in February for this coming year will increase tuition and fees by more than $500 per year.

Funding for the new dental school set to begin classes in August still is intact, Ballard said.

“There is still a great education to be had at ECU,” Ballard said. “This is not permanent. We will maintain the quality of our university.”

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Now, the cost

Republicans in the General Assembly know there will be some life-changing, lousy consequences for people in North Carolina thanks to their misguided strategy in closing a $2.5 billion budget gap.

But they don't want to take responsibility for those consequences. Having done their work and sliced public education to a point where North Carolina is near the bottom in per pupil spending and the public university and community college systems will be hurt badly, along with cutting health care help for the poor, the GOP majority is out of town.

And House Speaker Thom Tillis, meeting last week with editors and reporters of The News & Observer, blithely predicted that he and his colleagues, along with the Senate's GOP majority, would be working up overrides of vetoes meted out by Gov. Beverly Perdue that have tried, among other things, to protect environmental resources against the Republicans' anti-regulation onslaught.

Tillis seems to avoid facing the realities of the GOP budget, believing what he wishes to believe: that there won't be the magnitude of job losses Democrats predict and that somehow a puny reduction in the sales tax will create thousands of jobs.

Sure, it was tough

Was doing the budget a yeoman's task, a challenge with few happy solutions? You bet it was, and there was going to be pain across the board in state government no matter what.

But Republicans said before the budgeting session even opened that they would not compromise on allowing a 2009 sales tax increase of 1 cent on the dollar to expire, thus giving up over $1 billion in revenue. It was revenue that could have saved thousands of jobs and worthwhile programs.

Now the rubber has met the road, with perhaps the most stark example of what the cuts mean seen in the University of North Carolina system, where $414 million will be lost. At UNC-Chapel Hill, about $100 million will be gone. That will have potentially dire consequences in the undergraduate classroom, where most of the state money goes. (The university gets much
money from grants and the federal government, as well as from priorities-challenged athletics boosters pushing an $80 million renovation to the football stadium.)

Classes will be larger and some will simply be eliminated. This will be felt at other campuses as well. System President Tom Ross is keeping a stiff upper lip, to his credit, but the truth is that the university will be hard pressed to make a quick comeback from cuts of this size.

But by golly, people won't pay that extra percentage point on the sales tax.

**School damage**

Some $900,000 or so out of that tax revenue, for example, could have saved the Governor's School, where gifted young people attend a sort of summer camp for a week to hone their skills in the arts and other subjects with direction from the best public and private school faculty members.

Some 31,000 young North Carolinians, from all types of backgrounds, have attended the Governor's School. The school, free to those chosen until a $500 fee recently was imposed to counter previous budget cuts, was the first of its kind in the United States.

Thanks to GOP-led budgeting, it appears likely that, barring substantial private donations, the program will be gone, and with it will be gone opportunity for young people, many of modest means, to be inspired and encouraged.

Of course, Republicans also cut some funding for Smart Start and More at Four, two early education programs that have helped disadvantaged youngsters get off to a positive beginning in their school years, and thus have a much better chance of success later on.

All that chest-puffing Republicans did as they took long knives to state programs may have brought them some political exhilaration. But for many North Carolinians, the most likely feeling that results from their actions will be a punch in the gut.
Young musicians came to the A. J. Fletcher Music Building on the ECU campus this week for the annual North Carolina Suzuki Institute camp. Stephen Kinnear plays the cello during a fiddle class Thursday morning with instructor Pattie Hopkins, who graduated from ECU in 2006. She was teaching the students Irish, bluegrass and folk fiddling. (Cliff Hollis/ECU News Photos)

North Carolina Literary Review hits milestone
ECU News Service
Sunday, July 10, 2011

The North Carolina Literary Review celebrates a significant milestone — its 20th issue — this summer when the literary magazine makes its way to subscribers and independent bookstores across the state.

The 2011 special feature section focuses on environmental writing in North Carolina and features essays by award-winning writers such as David Cecelski, Jan DeBlieu, and Bland Simpson and poetry by James Applewhite, Gerald Barrax and Allison Hedge Coke, among others. It also features interviews with environmental writers David Gessner and George Ellison. Each piece is complemented — in color for this special issue — with art and photography from North Carolina artists.

“The environment is something that pulls all the diverse regions of our state together,” NCLR Art Editor Diane Rodman said. “Each region has its own challenges and threats, but also its own beauty — beauty that needs to be protected.”

In her introduction, NCLR Editor Margaret Bauer states that the Gulf oil spill convinced her that featuring writing about the environment is crucial and timely. Contributors focus on the changing environment of North Carolina and the effect of these changes on the lives and livelihoods of residents. Complex issues such as industrial and residential
development, population growth and forces of nature are covered. Bauer also is a professor of English at East Carolina University.

Following the special feature section of the issue, the Flashbacks section includes several book reviews, including one of new collections of A.R. Ammons, whose poetry appeared regularly in the early issues of NCLR. A review of three new anthologies of North Carolina writing and reviews of novels by Charles Dodd White and Warren Rochelle also are included.


Published by ECU and the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association, NCLR has won numerous awards in its 20 years — most recently from the Council of Editors of Learned Journals in 2010 for Best Journal Design.

The cover art for the 2011 issue is by Joan Mansfield, a professor in the ECU School of Art and Design. More of Mansfield's art appears within the issue. NCLR's Art Director Dana Ezzell Gay, professor of art at Meredith College, designed the cover. Gay, along with Pamela Cox and Stephanie Whitlock Dicken, designed the content of the issue.

For a complete table of contents for the milestone issue, subscription and purchase information, or to find out about upcoming publication events including the 2011 Eastern North Carolina Literary Homecoming, which will feature several of the writers whose work appears in this issue, go to www.nclr.ecu.edu.

**History chairman to lead Civil War series**
ECU history department chair Dr. Gerald Prokopowicz will serve as project scholar for the “Let's Talk About it: Making Sense of the American Civil War” series at the New Bern-Craven County Public Library.

The series will consist of five public conversations centered on the Civil War, thanks to a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Library Association. The New Bern Craven County Public Library is one of 65 libraries nationwide to receive the competitive grant.

Prokopowicz will facilitate the public discussions, which will take place every two to four weeks February through April 2012. Each session will focus on a different facet of the Civil War experience, including such topics as imagining war, choosing sides,
making sense of Shiloh, the shape of war, and war and freedom. Three books will provide material for the discussions: “March” by Geraldine Brooks; “Crossroads to Freedom: Antietam” by James McPherson; and the anthology “America's War: Talking About the Civil War” edited by Edward L. Ayers.

Prokopowicz said the series gives the community a chance to talk about the war and its effect on the world today.

“The war took place 150 years ago, but the underlying issues are still active in American culture and politics,” he said. “Too often those issues are oversimplified for TV cameras or debated in classrooms where only scholars and students can participate.”

“This project creates an opportunity for people to have a meaningful, in-depth conversation and to share the many meanings that the war still holds for people in eastern North Carolina,” Prokopowicz said.

As part of the grant, the library will receive 25 copies each of “March” and “Crossroads to Freedom” and 50 copies of “America's War.” A monetary award of $3,000 will be provided to cover project-related programming expenses and for travel for Prokopowicz and Joanne Straight, head librarian and the library's project director on the grant, to attend an orientation workshop on Oct. 13-14 in Chicago.

For additional information, contact Straight at 638-7800 or by email at jstraight@nbccpl.org.

**Together on Diabetes grant received**

A project at ECU has received $300,000 to help African-American women fight Type 2 diabetes.

The two-year grant from the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation will help fund efforts by ECU faculty members to begin a “small changes” approach to help women with diabetes improve their health and better manage their disease. The project will be led by ECU faculty members and the educational work in the field will be done by lay health worker teams in four rural communities in eastern North Carolina.

With the small changes approach, patients, rather than health care providers, identify one lifestyle change, such as a better diet or walking for exercise, they are confident they can successfully implement.

ECU researchers involved in the project are Dr. Doyle Cummings, a pharmacist and professor of family medicine, and Dr. Lesley Lutes, an assistant professor of psychology.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that one in 10 African-American women age 20 and older has diabetes. After age 55, the rate more than doubles to one in four. African-Americans also suffer high rates of diabetes' most serious complications, such as blindness, kidney failure and amputation.
ECU was one of five recipients nationwide of a total of $1.5 million in grants from Bristol-Myers. The grants are part of Bristol-Myers' five-year, $100 million “Together on Diabetes” project to improve health outcomes of people living with Type 2 diabetes in the United States by strengthening patient self-management education, community-based supportive services and broad-based community mobilization.

The University of Virginia, Whittier Street Health Center in Boston, the Black Women's Health Imperative in Washington, D.C., and United Neighborhood Health Services in Nashville, Tenn., also received grants. More information is available at http://TogetherOnDiabetes.com.

**Summer Guitar Festival begins today**

The 2011 East Carolina University Summer Guitar Festival and Workshop will take place through Wednesday in the A.J. Fletcher Music Building on the ECU campus. This is the 16th year of the ECU festival for the classical guitar.

Two concerts are scheduled for Monday. At 4 p.m., the young artist concert will feature ECU alumnus Christopher Adkins, and at 7:30 p.m. You Wang, the 2010 ECU Solo Competition winner, will perform along with Chilean virtuoso Carlos Pérez.

The ECU Summer Guitar Workshop is open to students ages 12-and-up who wish to acquire or improve skills on the classical guitar. The workshop draws talented students from across the United States and abroad.

Tickets for evening concerts are $15 for adult and $10 for youth. Afternoon concerts are $5. A four-concert evening concert pass is $30; a ticket for all afternoon and evening concerts is $40.

For further information regarding the workshop or concert series, contact Dr. Elliot Frank at 328-6245, or by email at franke@ecu.edu, or visit www.ecu.edu/music/guitar/workshop.
Supporters of the North Carolina Governor's School are working in overdrive to make sure the longtime program doesn't become another victim of the state budget's cuts to education.

All state funding for the summer academic enrichment program for high school upperclassmen was removed in the state budget approved June 15. But the legislature left the line item in place, meaning the program could continue if it finds alternate funding, according to Director Dr. Michael McElreath.

“As I've been told, it's like a bucket that can be refilled,” McElreath said. The “bucket” amounts to about $1 million, though the program operated this past year on $850,000 from the state. The six-week residential program hosted by Meredith and Salem colleges has historically been free to all students selected to attend, though a $500 tuition was implemented with last year's cuts. The program, which has a dozen from Pitt County among its 600 students this year, provides gifted students the chance to go in-depth in their subjects of strength with expanded curriculum opportunities.

The North Carolina Board of Education will decide the fate of the nation's oldest and one of the most prestigious governor's schools next month.

That's where the program's 30,000 alumni come in. Since the program was started in 1963 by then-governor Terry Sanford, thousands of alumni are active in eastern North Carolina and around the world, according to Alumni Association President Jim Hart.

“The alumni are going to be the backbone of this effort,” Hart said. “What we're trying to do is reach all our alumni and get updated contact information to our foundation so they can coordinate the fundraising.”

The Governor's School Foundation, formed about 20 years ago, has one job — to support and sustain Governor's School, according to President Joe Milner. The foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that will be receiving all tax-deductible donations.

“Alumni have been wonderful, and parents have been very giving,” Milner said. So far about $10,000 has been raised, according to McElreath. “The Foundation has swung into high gear, that's the best logical place for trying to collect as much as possible,” McElreath said.
The program needs to convince the state that its viability remains — and fast, according to McElreath, since preparation needs to begin for next year. “Our hope is in some way to keep the essence of Governor's School alive, even if it is on a smaller scale,” Milner said. “We're anxious to stay on the books. It would be very difficult to get it going again once it stopped.”

Governor's School does not involve tests, grades, or credits — students are immersed in their Area I fields, ranging from the sciences to the arts, where discussions with other high-achieving peers are led by college professors. Other subjects are linked in areas II and III.

Classes are augmented by a rich array of visiting speakers, performances, field trips, demonstrations, seminars and films.

“Governor's School has been a big feather in North Carolina's cap for a long time,” McElreath said. “More than 30 other states have copied our model. North Carolina is the sort of standard others are measured against.”

Increasing tuition for students is an option but not a popular one. The cost per student is about $2,000.

“I don't like the idea of a private program where you have to pay to get in, we'd lose some people,” Milner said. Raising awareness is more important.

“Governor's School is a great secret that's too well-kept,” Milner said. “Many principals and teachers still don't know what it is. It's not a special school for bright wealthy kids, it's about diversity and having an open opportunity for kids to get engaged and excited about learning.”

Governor's School alumni are shaping the world, according to Hart. Alumni ranks include Oscar-winning screenwriter Ted Talley, who wrote “The Silence of the Lambs,” as well as Insurance Commissioner Wayne Goodman and N.C. Museum of Art curator John Coffey.

“They've gone everywhere,” Hart said.

Some alumni are making an impact closer to home, like Philip Adams, director of the ECU Writing Center, who attended Governor's School for instrumental music in 1994 from his hometown of Fayetteville.

“I don't play much music anymore, but the broader questions and critical thinking are where the residual effects endured for me,” Adams said. “It was a model of authentic learning, not just studying for a test. I try to foster that in my students now,” he said.
Going to Governor's School in 2006 definitely changed the way ECU senior theatre major Jim Dadosky of Raleigh thinks about college, life and beyond. “The premise is accept nothing, question everything. You can accept an opinion, but you make sure you know why,” Dadosky said. “That's the way the world is going these days, you need smart people to fix it. I hate that the budget cuts have put us in this position.” Students almost always have a positive experience, according to Milner.

“You meet people from all over the state from so many different backgrounds,” said dance student Elizabeth Romary, a rising junior at J.H. Rose High School. “It's so much different from regular school where it's a simple question with a simple answer. Here there's 10 million answers, all different to each person. It's really interesting to be exposed to that and think about things in different ways. We're figuring out who we are and what our interests are.”

Instead of just memorizing major works, art students were asked “what is art?” and debated the implications in real life, Romary said.

“The teachers really understand you and the people here are really unique, everyone is open to learning, it's a really good environment,” J.H. Rose student Allie Davenport said.

“It's really interesting to be in an environment where people are open-minded but still firm in their opinions and that doesn't take away from them listening,” J.H. Rose rising junior Tara McKinnon said. “In choral music we're looking at a lot of technical aspects with the notes but we definitely delve to a deeper level here.”

Though current students will be finished after one summer, most still hope the program continues for their younger classmates.

“I was really sad that I might be one of the last people to be able to say I went to Governor's School,” Romary said. “It's in its 49th year; it needs to make it to 50. I feel it needs to continue for a really long time.”

For more information, visit www.ncgovschool.org.

Alumni should contact Jim Hart at president@ncgsalumni.org.

Others wishing to make a donation can do so directly through PayPal at www.ncgsfoundation.org or mail a check to the foundation addressed to Joe Milner, Wake Forest University, Box 7266, Winston-Salem NC 27109.

Contact Jackie Drake at jdrake@reflector.com or 252-329-9567.
Classical guitarist Carlos Pérez just released his 11th CD last week. But this new work includes contemporary music.

"‘Musica Nueva' contains pieces that I have been playing in concerts during the last couple of years," Pérez said via email. “Works by six composers, all from different countries and whose music exhibits widely varied influences. So it was an invitation to explore this kind of expression. Three of the works in this CD were dedicated to me.”

He said the guitar and its repertoire is a universe with many transformations and different perspectives throughout history.

“And believe it or not, admit it or not, there is a continuous path and tradition that bring us to the current contemporary guitar scene, so it is this living tradition that makes it so beautiful,” Pérez said.

Pérez will be in Greenville today through Wednesday for the 2011 East Carolina University Summer Guitar Festival and Workshop. He will perform at 7:30 p.m. Monday. Pérez's concert is just one of several offered by the festival, which is now in its 16th year.

“The concert series features the artist-faculty, nationally and internationally known concert artists and teachers,” said festival director Elliot Frank. “Students have lessons with these gifted artists and area music aficionados can hear these musicians perform in recital during the workshop.”

Some of the country's finest young guitarists will compete in the finals of the ECU Solo Guitar Competition on Wednesday. Students will compete for cash awards, a hand-made classical guitar by luthier Travis Snyder and a performance at next year's festival.
In addition to Chilean-born Pérez, performers include solo competition winner You Wang, Andrew Zohn, Mary Akerman and Dutch guitarist Jan Bartlema and workshop director Elliot Frank. The Young Artist afternoon concerts will feature ECU alumni Adam Kossler and Chris Adkins.

Pérez was born in Santiago in 1976. With an early interest fostered by his father, he went on to study with Ernesto Quezada at the Arts Faculty of the University of Chile where he graduated with top honors.

He has given recitals in more than 30 countries in North, Central and South America as well as Europe, and has played with orchestras from England, Belgium, the United States, Germany, Lithuania, Spain, Russia, Portugal, Poland and Chile. His international activity has taken him to play at Berlin Philharmonie (Germany), Auditorio Nacional (Spain), Royal Festival Hall (England), Teatro Monumental (Spain) and other prestigious concert halls.

Regardless of his busy travel schedule, however, he practices everyday.

“Regularly around three hours daily. Sometimes more or less than that. But I try to be as constant as possible,” he said. “Most of my travel is because of concerts or something related to music. So I have my guitar with me, and try to dedicate enough time to it in order for everything to be prepared for performances.”

With all his experience practicing and performing, it's no wonder that Pérez has achieved a number of awards and prizes in major international competitions in Europe and America. He's won first prize in “Alirio Díaz,” Venezuela; “René Bartoli,” France; “Printemps de La Guitare,” Belgium; “Forum Gitarre,” Austria; “Fundacion Guerrero” and “Joaquín Rodrigo Competition,” Spain.

Pérez has participated in many guitar and chamber music festivals around the world and is constantly invited to give master classes and lectures at universities and schools of music in Latin America, Europe and the United States. He joined the arts faculty of the University of Chile as professor in 2008.

When he's not performing he likes to read, visit restaurants and new places.

“Recently I have been doing also some gardening which I ended up liking a lot. I used to practice more sports in the past, too. I like all those things, but unfortunately this life is too short to do everything you like,” he said.

Contact Kelley Kirk at kkirk@reflector.com or 252-329-9596.
BOONE, N.C.—A cyclist killed Friday during Grandfather Mountain's Highland Games was an experienced rider and bike-racing enthusiast, a colleague at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center said.

Erik Lie-Nielson, 35, was riding in the challenging 65-mile Grizzly Bike Race through hills and valleys of northwestern North Carolina when he apparently lost control of his bike on a downhill portion of the route and crashed into an oncoming car, Highway Patrol officials said.

"Erik was very energetic, and biking was his hobby," said Michael Coates, head professor and chairman of the family and community medicine department at Wake Forest Baptist. "He trained at an elite level."

State Highway Patrol Trooper Ben Young said the fatal accident happened at about 7:40 a.m. when Lie-Nielsen steered his bike into an opposing lane of traffic near Crossnore and was struck by a car. No charges are expected against the driver of the oncoming vehicle.

Lie-Nielsen, a New Bern, N.C., native was taken to Watauga Medical Center, where he was pronounced dead of severe head trauma, Young said.

Coates said Lie-Nielsen was the father of twins. He attended North Carolina State University, East Carolina University and Wake Forest, where he also worked as a specialist in the treatment of geriatric patients.

"He taught, he did scholarly research and saw patients here and at a nursing center in the community," Coates said.

Landis Wofford, a spokeswoman for Grandfather Mountain, said about 130 cyclists were signed up for the Grizzly Bike Race this year. The race started at 7 a.m.
McAdoo's contested term paper made public

By Dan Kane and Edward G. Robinson III - Staff Writers

As former North Carolina football player Michael McAdoo was fighting to stay on the team at an NCAA infractions hearing late last year, school officials repeatedly said he had not committed academic fraud in letting a former tutor help him produce a term paper for an African studies class.

"We are arguing that this was Michael McAdoo's work, even the citations were his work," UNC athletic director Dick Baddour told the NCAA, according to a Dec. 14 NCAA hearing transcript released in a court filing last week. "... To not reinstate Michael McAdoo is unduly harsh and is not warranted in this situation."

But when McAdoo's paper in question was made public in the court filings related to McAdoo's lawsuit against the NCAA and the university, commenters on the Pack Pride website - a site popular among fans of rival N.C. State - fired up their Internet search engines. They found numerous passages that appeared to largely lift word for word from other sources, including a 100-year old text. Thursday night, the sports blog SportsbyBrooks.com reported on the alleged examples of plagiarism in McAdoo's paper.

"Africa of today presents a complex picture," begins one of the passages in McAdoo's paper. "... Its population of about one hundred and sixty million seems enormous, yet, in comparison to the area, it is small. It is computed at fifteen to the square feet. Its races are innumerable; its dialect a vast confusion."

The cited population was dated - today, Africa has roughly one billion people.

The text was traced to Donald Fraser's book "The Future of Africa," : "Africa of to-day presents a complex picture. ...Its population of about one hundred and sixty million seems enormous. Yet, in comparison to the area, it is small and computed at fifteen to the square mile. Its races are innumerable; its dialect a vast confusion."

The paper does include footnotes and lists Fraser's work - which was published in 1911, according to archive.org - as a source. Another passage
appears to have been lifted without any attribution from a Tanzania journalist's blog.

McAdoo's paper, "The Evolution of Swahili Culture on the East Coast of Africa," is likely to be the focus of a court hearing Wednesday as a judge hears the rising senior's request for reinstatement to the Tar Heels football team.

On July 1, McAdoo filed suit against the NCAA and UNC in Durham Superior Court, seeking unspecified damages and accusing the NCAA of "gross negligence" in ruling McAdoo ineligible on what the suit argues was inaccurate information.

The university's Honor Court had ruled in October that McAdoo was guilty of receiving improper assistance from tutor Jennifer Wiley - the same university tutor named in three of the nine major alleged UNC violations cited last month by the NCAA - with citations and a "works cited" list. The ruling was accompanied by the McAdoo's placement on probation for the fall of 2010, according to his suit, and a suspension for the spring of 2011.

UNC spokeswoman Nancy Davis said Friday that university officials declined to comment on the Swahili paper because Honor Court cases are closed to the public.

McAdoo is one of seven UNC football players who missed the entire 2010 season as a result of an NCAA investigation into academic misconduct and improper benefits among players.

In November, the NCAA ruled McAdoo, a defensive end from Antioch, Tenn., permanently ineligible and denied the university's appeal on his behalf in February after it was determined that he had received improper help with his class work.

UNC had submitted a report to the NCAA stating that the university was "confident that Mr. McAdoo was not aware that the assistance provided to him by [Wiley] was improper. The NCAA, however, determined that McAdoo had received "impermissible assistance on multiple assignments across several academic terms," according to the suit. It also determined that he had received $110 in improper benefits, most of which was related to a trip to the Washington, D.C. area with teammates Marvin Austin and Greg Little.

The information presented in McAdoo's lawsuit for reinstatement does not indicate that the NCAA, UNC athletic officials or the school's student-led Honor Court were aware of the liberal use of other works in the term paper.
in question. According to hearing transcripts and other documents in the lawsuit, the dispute concerns whether the tutor (Wiley) provided too much help in footnoting and sourcing the paper.

McAdoo's lawyer, Noah H. Huffstetler III, said Friday that his client received a failing grade for the paper. He said he has no dispute with the way the Honor Court handled it.

"That's not the subject of our lawsuit," he said. "That's the paper the Honor Court found had problems. They imposed a penalty on him. He got an 'F' in that course and was held out of football for one year. And we are not challenging or trying to re-litigate that Honor Court determination. He would have had to appeal that, if he was going to challenge that at the time, and he did not do that."

Huffstetler said the issue is the NCAA's combining that case with two other instances in which McAdoo was accused of receiving improper help but was not found guilty by the Honor Court.

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Colleges replacing loans with no-pay grants for neediest students
By Daniel de Vise

Megan Tuck is living that pleasant lull between college and career, traveling from her Suitland home to a different Starbucks each day with her laptop to look for a job.

Tuck has no urgent need for a paycheck because she attended Duke University on a full ride. She is among the first beneficiaries of “no-loan” financial aid, a movement to eliminate the student loan as a fact of life at dozens of the most expensive U.S. colleges.

More than 70 colleges have replaced loans with grants in financial aid awards, at least for their neediest students, a wave of largess that spread nationwide in 2007 and 2008. Now, some of the first students to benefit are graduating, often debt-free.

“For me to be able to look for a job and an apartment and not have to worry about $25,000 in loans is amazing,” Tuck said. “I don’t have the monetary resources that a lot of other students at Duke have.”

No-loan pledges effectively reduce the price of college to zero for a select group of disadvantaged students at elite national universities and liberal arts schools.

Students from low-income families are enjoying a buyer’s market in higher education. Prestigious colleges are falling over one another to offer aid on favorable terms to these promising students from disadvantaged homes. The aid pledges are part of a broader movement among top universities toward admitting students without regard to need and meeting all of that need with financial aid.

“They’re essentially chasing after the same group of low-income students who are academically talented,” said Mark Kantrowitz, an industry expert who is tracking 73 colleges that have eliminated or capped student loans. “If you get in, these schools are a great deal.”

At the most generous (and wealthiest) institutions, Harvard and Yale, even comparatively wealthy families now pay no more than 10 percent of household earnings toward college — perhaps the first time in academia that families earning up to $180,000 have been regarded as needy.

Elsewhere, student loan policies vary widely. Pomona College in California eliminated loans from aid awards in 2008. Colby College in Maine made the same pledge, but only for Maine residents. Emory University in Atlanta eliminated...
loans in 2007 for students in financial need and capped four-year loan debt at $15,000 for families earning up to $100,000.

“The objective,” said Emory President James Wagner, “is to be able to recruit students who are appropriate for our institution, without barriers.”

The movement has spread to several public flagships, including the universities of Virginia and Maryland and the College of William and Mary. But experts who track the movement say that only one top private college in the region, Washington and Lee University in Virginia, has eliminated loans. Others, including Georgetown, Johns Hopkins and George Washington universities, typically pledge to meet student need with a package that can include loans.

Eliminating student loans is a costly initiative that “no more than a couple hundred colleges” with the largest endowments could afford, Kantrowitz said.

No college has managed to eliminate loan debt completely. Students still borrow money to bridge the gap between financial aid awards and the full price of attendance. Colleges award aid based on an expected family contribution. For a household making $160,000, that figure can hit $50,000 a year, nearly half of the family’s take-home pay.

“They’re putting real money on the table,” said Lauren Asher, president of the Institute for College Access & Success, a nonprofit organization that monitors aid pledges. “But no-loan is not the same as no-cost.”


An aid pledge can give a university a competitive advantage over its peers in recruiting needy students. Colleges court them because disadvantaged students with Advanced Placement credits and high SAT scores are comparatively few.

“We want to be out in the lead in terms of accessibility and affordability,” said David Oxtoby, president of Pomona.

Tuck, 21, a graduate of T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, was living with her mother, who is on disability, at the time she got the aid package. Tuck applied to Duke even though the North Carolina institution charged about $50,000 a year for tuition and living expenses and their household income was essentially zero. She had heard that top universities were growing increasingly generous.

Duke delivered, and Tuck graduated this spring without debt.
New federal data show the movement from loans to grants has made a dent in student borrowing, at least among schools with the aid pledges.

Student debt fell sharply in 2008-09 among a core group of 22 colleges Asher’s group identified for their strong aid policies. The share of freshmen with loans at those schools declined from 31 percent in 2007-08 to 19 percent in 2008-09.

Grant aid at the same schools rose from $12,902 per freshman to $15,295 in that span, illustrating the shift to grants.

The move away from loans at elite colleges may be feeding a broader trend. Student loan debt at private nonprofit colleges nationwide peaked at $17,900 per graduate in the 2006-07 academic year, then eased to $16,900 in 2008-09 in inflation-adjusted dollars, according to the nonprofit College Board.

The campaign against student loans arose from complex motives: equal parts social justice, market competition and institutional ambition.

It took seed among the 31 members of the Consortium on Financing Higher Education, the elite of private higher education. School leaders sought to raise minority enrollment. They feared that mounting debt might deter students from doctoral study or public service.

After easing off student loans for several years, Wellesley College eliminated them completely in 2008 for families earning $60,000 or less and set caps for other students. The pledge costs the school about $10 million a year. For that investment, Wellesley’s share of low-income students has risen from about 15 percent before the pledge to 21 percent today.

Consuelo Valdes, 22, is spending her first summer out of Wellesley researching “smart furniture”: to wit, a device resembling an iPad the size of a coffee table. A Miami native with two parents on disability, Valdes is studying the interplay between humans and computers at Wellesley through a low-paying summer internship and preparing for graduate school.

“If I had loans I had to pay off, I wouldn’t do this,” she said. “I’d become a software engineer, immediately.”

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New for Aspiring Doctors, the People Skills Test

By GARDINER HARRIS

ROANOKE, Va. — Doctors save lives, but they can sometimes be insufferable know-it-alls who bully nurses and do not listen to patients. Medical schools have traditionally done little to screen out such flawed applicants or to train them to behave better, but that is changing.

At Virginia Tech Carilion, the nation’s newest medical school, administrators decided against relying solely on grades, test scores and hourlong interviews to determine who got in. Instead, the school invited candidates to the admissions equivalent of speed-dating: nine brief interviews that forced candidates to show they had the social skills to navigate a health care system in which good communication has become critical.

The new process has enormous consequences not only for the lives of the applicants but, its backers hope, also for the entire health care system. It is called the multiple mini interview, or M.M.I., and its use is spreading. At least eight medical schools in the United States — including those at Stanford, the University of California, Los Angeles, and the University of Cincinnati — and 13 in Canada are using it.

At Virginia Tech Carilion, 26 candidates showed up on a Saturday in March and stood with their backs to the doors of 26 small rooms. When a bell sounded, the applicants spun around and read a sheet of paper taped to the door that described an ethical conundrum. Two minutes later, the bell sounded again and the applicants charged into the small rooms and found an interviewer waiting. A chorus of cheerful greetings rang out, and the doors shut. The candidates had eight minutes to discuss that room’s situation. Then they moved to the next room, the next surprise conundrum and the next interviewer, who scored each applicant with a number and sometimes a brief note.

The school asked that the actual questions be kept secret, but some sample questions include whether giving patients unproven alternative remedies is ethical, whether pediatricians should support parents who want to circumcise their baby boys and whether insurance co-pays for medical visits are appropriate.

Virginia Tech Carilion administrators said they created questions that assessed how well candidates think on their feet and how willing they are to work in teams. The most important part of the interviews are often not candidates’ initial responses — there are no right or wrong answers — but how well they respond...
when someone disagrees with them, something that happens when working in teams.

Candidates who jump to improper conclusions, fail to listen or are overly opinionated fare poorly because such behavior undermines teams. Those who respond appropriately to the emotional tenor of the interviewer or ask for more information do well in the new admissions process because such tendencies are helpful not only with colleagues but also with patients.

“We are trying to weed out the students who look great on paper but haven’t developed the people or communication skills we think are important,” said Dr. Stephen Workman, associate dean for admissions and administration at Virginia Tech Carilion.

Dr. Charles Prober, senior associate dean at the Stanford University School of Medicine, said Stanford always valued social skills in students — particularly the ability to work collaboratively with colleagues and establish trust with patients — but did not have a reliable way of ferreting these skills out until adopting mini interviews.

The system grew out of research that found that interviewers rarely change their scores after the first five minutes, that using multiple interviewers removes random bias and that situational interviews rather than personal ones are more likely to reveal character flaws, said Dr. Harold Reiter, a professor at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, who developed the system.

In fact, candidate scores on multiple mini interviews have proved highly predictive of scores on medical licensing exams three to five years later that test doctors’ decision-making, patient interactions and cultural competency, Dr. Reiter said.

A pleasant bedside manner and an attentive ear have always been desirable traits in doctors, of course, but two trends have led school administrators to make the hunt for these qualities a priority. The first is a growing catalog of studies that pin the blame for an appalling share of preventable deaths on poor communication among doctors, patients and nurses that often results because some doctors, while technically competent, are socially inept.

The second and related trend is that medicine is evolving from an individual to a team sport. Solo medical practices are disappearing. In their place, large health systems — encouraged by new government policies — are creating teams to provide care coordinated across disciplines. The strength of such teams often has more to do with communication than the technical competence of any one member.

“When I entered medical school, it was all about being an individual expert,” said Dr. Darrell G. Kirch, the president and chief executive of the Association of American Medical Colleges. “Now it’s all about applying that expertise to team-based patient care.”
The nation’s 134 medical schools have long relied almost entirely on college grades and a standardized test, the Medical College Admission Test, to sort through more than 42,000 applicants for nearly 19,000 slots.

One-on-one interviews are offered but provide poor assessments of a candidate’s social skills because they reflect only one person’s view, often focus on academic issues and elicit practiced responses to canned questions like “Why do you want to become a doctor?”

Administrators at Virginia Tech Carilion say teamwork has become so essential to medicine that the school not only chooses its students based on their willingness and ability to collaborate effectively, but also requires students to take teamwork classes.

The school invests more effort in honing students’ social skills than almost any other and requires that students undertake community projects with nurses and other health professionals, who are even invited to school dances.

“Our school intends to graduate physicians who can communicate with patients and work in a team,” said Dr. Cynda Ann Johnson, the dean of the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, which opened in August 2010. “So if people do poorly on the M.M.I., they will not be offered positions in our class.”

The problems these efforts address are profound. Dr. Leora Horwitz, an assistant professor of medicine at Yale, recalled an incident in her residency at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York when a medical student marched into the hospital room of an elderly minister surrounded by his wife and several parishioners.

“And he announces in front of everyone: ‘We found the reason for your problem. The syphilis test is positive,’ ” Dr. Horwitz said. “It was a devastating event for the family and the whole church, and this student had no sense for that.”

Even more dangerous is when poor communication becomes so endemic that the wrong operations are performed. A 2002 study published in The Annals of Internal Medicine of one such incident found that the patient, doctors and nurses went along with the mistaken treatment because they were used to being kept in the dark about medical procedures. A survey by the Joint Commission, a hospital accreditation group, found communication woes to be among the leading causes of medical errors, which cause as many as 98,000 deaths each year.

Using mini interviews to help address these problems, though, left applicants at Virginia Tech Carilion wide-eyed. One said one of her interviewers hated her, so she was thrilled to talk to others. Another said the system was unfair because some of the situations were drawn from news events she had not followed.

Of the 2,700 applications received by the school over the past year, admissions officers selected 239 to participate in mini interviews conducted over six weekends from August through March. The school has 42 positions in each class.
Virginia Tech Carilion trained 80 people to be interviewers, including doctors and businesspeople from the community.

Andrew Snyder, 25, was clearly nervous when the bell rang the first time, but he seemed to relax as the process continued and was smiling by the end. Mr. Snyder said he loved moving from room to room and being asked to discuss some of medicine’s thorny problems. He was accepted and plans to attend Virginia Tech Carilion in August.

“I thought the whole process was more geared toward problem-solving than to me talking about who I was as an applicant,” he said. “And I liked that.”