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252-328-6481
Bill would help ECU with energy efficiency projects
By JOSH HUMPHRIES
The Daily Reflector
Sunday, July 18, 2010

A bill awaiting Gov. Beverly Perdue’s signature could help East Carolina University invest in more energy efficient projects.
The bill, ratified last week by the General Assembly, allows schools in the University of North Carolina system to keep 60 percent of funds saved by energy efficient measures to reinvest in energy efficient projects.
“We are always looking at energy saving projects on campus,” said Bill Bagnell, associate vice chancellor for campus operations at ECU.
Previously, money saved on energy would revert back to the state.
The university’s energy budgets would be reduced if a project saved money. If a project saved ECU $100,000 in a $2 million budget, the next biennium budget would be for $1.9 million, Bagnell said. This bill would allow universities to keep the savings.
It would be an incentive to UNC schools to work for more energy efficiency, Bagnell said.
East Carolina has four energy saving projects in the works. Three projects focus on lighting and one is a water chiller.
Bagnell said the four projects will costs about $600,000 and save the university about $390,000 per year.
The university will be able to reinvest 60 percent of the savings into other projects.
ECU focuses on energy efficient projects every year, Bagnell said. The university is eliminating all incandescent lights on campus and installing more efficient bulbs, installing occupancy sensors in classrooms that will automatically turn the lights off when the room is empty and tightly controlling temperatures in its buildings with new technology.

Contact Josh Humphries at jhumphries@reflector.com or (252) 329-9565.
Andrea Monterossa, 11, uses a hammer to build a telescope in the Flanagan Building on the East Carolina University campus.
Rhett Butler/The Daily Reflector

Grant helps gives students, teachers a new view

By Jackie Drake
The Daily Reflector
Saturday, July 17, 2010
A telescope can provide stunning views of the universe, but it also can provide a new perspective on teaching and learning here on Earth.
A telescope-building workshop Thursday morning at the Flanagan Building at East Carolina University gave teachers a chance to put science in action with local students before taking their experience back to their respective classrooms next school year.
The workshop was part of a three-year, $51,000 grant from the Burroughs Wellcome Fund that covers the construction of 10 telescopes a year with 10 teachers and 20 students. The fund is an independent, private foundation dedicated to advancing the biomedical sciences by supporting research and other scientific and educational activities.
“This is a unique workshop. I don’t think there’s been one done like this in North Carolina,” said Sharon Schleigh, an assistant professor in the math, science and technology department of the ECU College of Education who helped write the grant.
The program is built on the “see one, do one, teach one” model, Schleigh said. First, teachers attended a workshop to learn how to build the telescopes themselves. Then they had a chance to practice teaching what they learned by helping a small group of Boys and Girls Club students build telescopes at Thursday’s workshop.
“By the end of the program, the teachers will have a complete skill set to take back to their classrooms,” Schleigh said. “The focus is on teachers as a force multiplier. This is an effective way to apply and disseminate knowledge.”
While the grant only covers the telescopes in the workshops, teachers who want to build telescopes in their classrooms will receive guidance finding other grants and funding, Schleigh said.
The program could reach as many as 300 students a year for the next three years as the 30 teachers complete the workshops. Teachers apply and are selected based on their willingness and ability to incorporate the project into their curriculum.
“This effort brings together four institutions: Burroughs Wellcome, the Boys and Girls Club, East Carolina University and GO-Science,” John Meredith, chairman of the board of directors for GO-Science, said. “This is truly a collaborative effort.”
GO-Science is a nonprofit based in Greenville that allows children and adults of all abilities to develop their full potential through interactive and informal science activities. Meredith, whose undergraduate degree is in physics, led the teachers’ telescope workshop.
The grant’s first 10 teachers are from schools across the region including Elizabeth City, Chapel Hill and Pitt County. The students were from the Boys and Girls Clubs of Pitt County and the GO-Science summer camp. Blair Driver, a teacher at Pactolus School, is helping to write a manual on telescope building for other teachers to use.
The grant also provided laptops, and students were able to remotely control educational telescopes in Hawaii via the Internet to view and capture images of different aspects of the universe. Building the basic telescopes in the workshop helped students understand how powerful research telescopes work, Schleigh explained.
“We’re having a wonderful time,” Vicky Newberry, an Earth science teacher at North Lenoir High School, said. “It’s a great opportunity for these kids to get to build a telescope and get them excited about exploring astronomy.”
South Central High School science teacher Ann McClung said the workshop was going great and her kids were enjoying it.
“I like astronomy sometimes, but I like it better today,” Jordan Blake, 12, a rising seventh-grader at Ayden Middle School, said.
Anthony Reeves, 12, of A.G. Cox Middle School, said, “My favorite part is everything. This is awesome!”
“This is more than a telescope, this is a tool for changing a child’s perspective on the universe,” Schleigh said. “We want to help teachers show students that science is not just facts and formulas, it’s about questioning and exploring the world around us.”

Contact Jackie Drake at jdrake@reflector.com or (252) 329-9567.
Reide Corbett, associate professor in the ECU Department of Geological Sciences, directs coring operations from the R/V Revelle in January during a research trip to New Zealand.
Contributed photo

J.P. Walsh, professor in the ECU Department of Geological Sciences, foreground, and crew examine instruments recovered from the seafloor aboard R/V Kaharoa in May during a research trip to New Zealand.
Contributed photo

Brody School of Medicine diabetes educator Savanna Martin checks blood-sugar level data with patient Joseph White. White is a member of a research trial that looked at the effectiveness of a new type of insulin pump with a sensor that can help adults and children with diabetes better manage their blood-sugar levels.
ECU scientists part of international New Zealand ocean research expedition
Saturday, July 17, 2010
ECU News Services
Two East Carolina University professors are among an international team of scientists working to understand sedimentation patterns and their effects on oceans. The research focuses on how materials from land are moved through and accumulated in the ocean and, in particular, how floods carry sediments along the coast.
“This knowledge may be valuable to understanding how pollutants like oil are dispersed or buried in the seafloor,” J.P. Walsh, professor in the ECU Department of Geological Sciences, said.
“Also because our historical records of storms are limited, sedimentary strata created in the ocean can provide key insights into how such events have varied over time, perhaps in response to climate change,” he said.
Walsh, also of ECU’s Institute of Coastal Science and Policy, was the chief scientist on a late-May expedition to New Zealand’s Waipaoa River to gather study data. Collaborating on the expedition was Reide Corbett, associate professor of geological sciences and also with the Institute of Coastal Science and Policy.
“This research gives us an opportunity to evaluate how the geologic record is emplaced in near real-time,” Corbett said.
“This work will ultimately provide scientists a better foundation to interpret environmental and climatic changes that have occurred over a range of timescales.”
Researchers from ECU, the University of Washington and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science are working with Alan Orpin of New Zealand’s National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research in the study.
The study is examining how eroded materials, caused by high rainfall, are transported and deposited in the adjacent energetic sea.
The Waipaoa River, which drains the East Cape region of the New Zealand’s North Island, is the focus because it is small yet discharges a large amount of sediment, which enables scientists to more easily access and measure the system.
Scientists took samples of the seafloor and deployed sensors in January. Soon after, rain pounded steep hills and valleys of New Zealand’s east coast, causing washed-out roads, high river levels, flooding and evacuations.
Such flooding can occur about every eight years, according to statistical estimates. Infrequent, but large, flooding is important because it can cause significant erosion.
Offshore sediment layers resulting from these events may give clues about the frequency and magnitude of such extreme climatic conditions, which may have been less common in the past. To find such clues, scientists must determine how layers are emplaced as well as how such layers may be modified by subsequent ocean events such as storm waves.
After the flooding in January, a small team led by Tara Kniskern of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science extracted seabed samples and identified flood deposits. In May, scientists got more samples and retrieved and redeployed ocean sensors. Two more sampling trips are planned during the next year.
The scientific team has already collected a lot of informative data. X-Ray images reveal ocean sediments in some places are composed of numerous layers, suggesting floods and storm waves and have produced a complex record of sedimentation.
These data and other information gathered will be used to decipher the character is the recent flood layers, as well as historical events.
“Ultimately, this work will give valuable insight into the many storms that have impacted this region and also will provide a model for understanding other areas around the world,” Walsh said.

The research is supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation and with personnel and logistical assistance from New Zealand’s National Institute.

Members of the research team are pursuing grant support to help understand oil dispersal by sediments of the Gulf of Mexico.

**ECU to host guitar festival, workshop**

The 2010 East Carolina University Summer Guitar Festival and Workshop will begin Friday at A.J. Fletcher Music Building and continue through July 26.

The concert series features the artist-faculty, nationally- and internationally-known concert artists and teachers.

Students will have lessons with these artists, and the public is welcome to attend recitals by the musicians during the workshop.

Concerts will feature 2009 solo competition winner Chad Ibison, workshop director Elliot Frank, Duo Spiritoso (Andrew Zohn and Jeffrey McFadden), The Isaac Bustos/Mitch Weverka Duo, American virtuoso Jason Vieaux, Stephen Aron and the Italian guitarists Solo Duo (Lorenzo Micheli and Matteo Mela).

The ECU Summer Guitar Workshop is open to students ages 12 and older who wish to improve their skill on the classical guitar.

Applications for the workshop are being accepted.

On July 26, some of the country’s finest young guitarists will compete in the finals of the ECU Solo Guitar Competition. Students will compete for cash awards, a handmade classical guitar by luthier Travis Snyder, and an invitation to perform at next year’s festival.

This year’s event is sponsored in part by the D’Addario Foundation for the Performing Arts.

For further information regarding the workshop or concert series, contact Dr. Elliot Frank at 252-328-6245 or franke@ecu.edu, or visit [http://www.ecu.edu/cm-cfac/music/guitar/workshop/index.cfm](http://www.ecu.edu/cm-cfac/music/guitar/workshop/index.cfm).

**Jean Chatzky to headline roundtable**

The third event in the ECU Incredible Women Series will focus on financial issues facing women and will feature Jean Chatzky, best-selling author and financial editor of NBC’s “Today” show, as keynote speaker.


The event will address issues such as investment options, reasons to be engaged in financial decisions, philanthropic giving, and creating financially grounded female leaders of tomorrow.

Nationally known humorist Jeanne Robertson will be the luncheon speaker.

Breakout sessions on financial management strategies for women also will be available. The day will conclude with remarks from Kelly King, BB&T CEO and chairman, and the recognition of six women as Incredible ECU Women.

The daylong event is open everyone. Registration begins at 8 a.m., with the keynote address schedule for 9:30 a.m. Persons interested in attending should e-mail olsonj@ecu.edu or call 252-328-9550. The cost is $100 per person. Registration closes Oct. 7.

Created in 2003, the Women’s Roundtable at East Carolina University seeks to elevate and encourage leadership and philanthropy by women.

For more information about joining the Women’s Roundtable, visit [www.ecu.edu/womensroundtable](http://www.ecu.edu/womensroundtable), call 328-9550 or e-mail Marcy Romary, director of women’s philanthropy, at romarym@ecu.edu.

**Study: Sensor helps with glucose control**
A new type of insulin pump with a sensor can help adults and children with diabetes better manage their blood-sugar levels, according to research conducted at 30 trial sites, including ECU. The significant decrease in A1C levels observed in the study, called STAR 3, for Sensor-Augmented Pump Therapy for A1C Reduction, occurred without an increase in the rate of hypoglycemia, or low glucose.

A1C testing is a way to measure blood-glucose levels. In people with poorly controlled diabetes, A1C levels are much higher than in healthy people. The study compared use of the sensor-augmented pump to the traditional method of multiple daily insulin injections.

Dr. Robert Tanenberg, a professor and diabetes specialist at the Brody School of Medicine at ECU and a principal investigator of the trial, said the sensor measures tissue glucose levels every five minutes and protects patients from having their blood-sugar levels dropping without them knowing it. That compares to patients who must prick their fingers to measure blood-sugar levels several times a day.

“If you had a sensor, you could probably carry on your life pretty easily,” Tanenberg said. “The beauty of the sensor is it monitors blood sugar and shows a trend.” Eleven ECU diabetes patients were enrolled in the 18-month study.

Joe White, a probation officer from Pinetops, was one patient. He enrolled in the study after a camping trip in which he woke in a sweat then passed out from low blood sugar. Fortunately, his 8-year-old son was heard him rummaging for clothes before passing out. White was taken to a hospital.

“I wasn’t a big fan of the pump,” he said. “I was just used to taking injections and felt I was doing OK with that.”

Adult participants saw a 1 percent point reduction in their A1C levels. Every percentage-point drop in A1C blood test results can reduce the risk of complications by 40 percent. Uncontrolled glucose levels in patients with diabetes can lead to short- and long-term complications, including shakiness, confusion, fainting, blindness, kidney failure, limb amputation and, in rare cases, death.

Among children, nearly 44 percent of patients using sensor-augmented insulin pump therapy achieved age-specific glucose control targets, compared to only 20 percent of patients in the multiple daily injection group.

The study also showed patients on sensor-augmented insulin pump therapy demonstrated a reduction in mean A1C levels that was four times greater than the multiple daily injection group. The mean A1C decrease was to 7.5 percent in the sensor-augmented pump therapy group, compared to only 8.1 percent in the daily injection group.

Pumps have been used for years by some diabetes patients, but until recently they did not have sensors and required finger-sticks to measure glucose levels. Tanenberg hopes the study results will help convince insurance companies to fund these devices for patients with type 1 diabetes. Study results were presented June 29 at the American Diabetes Association meeting in Orlando, Fla. The study was sponsored by the medical device maker Medtronic and conducted at sites in the United States and Canada with participation from 485 patients ranging in age from 7 to 70.
Our Views

Realistic view necessary as Bowles, panel set to work

If his recent address to the National Governors Association is any indication, the optimism that once distinguished Erskine Bowles as president of the University of North Carolina system has been replaced by a hardened realism in his new role as a chairman of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, which is examining federal spending.

While there are doubts that the panel will reach consensus on a final package of recommendations, Bowles argues that success is crucial to eradicating the dangerous and growing gap between financial obligations and economic resources.

His is a harsh outlook, but one that is necessary to bringing the panel, and the Congress, toward a common-sense blueprint for the future.

According to Washington Post columnist David Broder, there are two views of the panel Bowles leads with former U.S. Sen. Alan Simpson, from Wyoming. Inside the Beltway, few believe that the 18-member group can win 14 votes on a final package of recommendations for Congress to consider.

At the NGA meeting, however, the grim economic outlook resonated with those well versed in harsh decisions being made across the landscape.

What becomes clear is that the experience that Bowles brings to this panel will be valuable to finding common ground for agreement.

What becomes clear is that the experience that Bowles brings to this panel will be valuable to finding common ground for agreement. His crowning achievement as chief of staff under President Bill Clinton was the bipartisan budget deal that pushed the federal government into the black.

Repeating such a feat is unlikely, but his keen ability to build consensus in an unsettled environment inspires some measure of hope.

As President Barack Obama has said, all options are on the table and all should be held up and examined as the panel proceeds. That includes the notion of reduced spending on defense — which is being pushed by

U.S. Rep. Walter Jones, among others — or the likelihood of allowing the 2001 $1.35 trillion tax cut passed under President George W. Bush to expire in the near future. But it should also include spending reductions in other areas and a thorough review of Social Security to determine how it ensure its solvency.

The nation did not land in this hole overnight and, contrary to what cable talk shows might say, both parties share responsibility for it. The appropriate path forward is one that accepts the problem’s monumental nature and takes a realistic view to solve it.

As such, while his optimism served the state and its university system well, Bowles’ new outlook more adeptly reflects the task ahead.
Choral society elects new officers
The Daily Reflector
Saturday, July 17, 2010

Stephen Gray, director of parent and student services in the East Carolina University Dean of Students’ office, has been re-elected president of the Greenville Choral Society for the 2010-11 season.
Other choral society officers elected are B.J. Lawrence, payroll specialist at Physicians East, president-elect; Bill Hodges, chief of perfusion services at the East Carolina Heart Institute, treasurer; and Amber Honeycutt, social worker in the Pitt County Health Department, secretary.
New members of the board of directors are Tracey Tuten, Ramona Warren, Susan Holmes and Andriana Sacchini.
For more information on the choral society, call 353-5495 or visit www.greenvillechoralsociety.com.
ECU Mail Services staff presents Legend Award to Clinton Elbert

The East Carolina University Mail Services staff honored Clinton Elbert of Winterville with a retirement reception in celebration of his seven years of service as a mail clerk. He retired on June 30.

On behalf of the staff, Iris Harper, East Campus Mail Services supervisor, presented Elbert a framed collage of autographed photographs of the Mail Services staff and the Legend Award “in recognition of the many years of quality service you have provided as an indispensable member of the East Carolina University Mail Services family.”

“We desire that this token of our appreciation perpetually commemorate the high regard we have for you as a university mail clerk, a community leader, and as a truly exceptional man,” the award reads.

Elbert started at ECU in 2003 following a career in the U.S. Army. He is a Vietnam and Desert Storm veteran.

As a mail clerk, he was responsible for metering, sorting and delivering mail on campus. He also served as backup for any colleagues out on leave.

In 2005, he received the ECU Business Services First Mate Award for outstanding dedication and service.

“There is one thing I can say with absolute certainty,” Mail Services manager Thomas Hardy said. “Clint Elbert will always be remembered for his unshakable work ethic. He has not only rivaled my work as a meter clerk and a route carrier, he has forever raised the bar for that position.”

Elbert lives in Winterville with his wife, Juanita.
Your Health: In school sports, make safety part of the game

Updated 13h 53m ago

By Kim Painter, USA TODAY

If this year is like most, the stories will soon start trickling in — tales of heat illnesses, concussions, nasty skin infections and broken bones.

Are we talking NFL?

Nope, we’re talking high school sports — and not just football. As practices begin, millions of teens will participate safely, of course, in sports ranging from volleyball to wrestling to cheerleading (now a sport in everything but name).

But some will get hurt. In the 2008-09 school year, high school athletes in nine sports sustained 1.2 million injuries that required medical attention and at least a day’s rest, according to the Center for

Injury Research and Policy in Columbus, Ohio. Data from the past school year will be released shortly, and for the first time, it will include cheerleading injuries — a growing concern amid other studies suggesting today’s highfliers may be at high risk.

So, should you insist that your kid stick to chess club?

"We don’t want parents to be afraid to let their kids participate in athletics," says researcher Dawn Comstock, who has collected high school injury data for the center since 2005. "The long-term negative impact of an inactive lifestyle far outweighs any risk. In fact, we’d like to see more kids play more sports more often."

Coaches, athletic directors and athletic trainers are working to make sports safer, she says. But parents and teens play vital roles. So I asked Comstock and several members of the National Association of Athletic Trainers what parents should know and do. Here are some of their tips:

• Get your future all-star off the couch today. "A kid who sits in an air-conditioned house all summer playing video games is going to have trouble if he suddenly decides to go out for football on Aug. 3," says Brian Robinson, head athletic trainer at Glenbrook High School in Glenbrook, Ill.

• Check out the coach. "Parents are often a little too trusting," Comstock says. "They assume whoever is in charge knows what they are doing." But you have a right to know what training, experience and
certifications a coach has. Ask the school's athletic director for the information.

• **See the emergency plan.** Every team should have a written plan detailing what happens when someone gets hurt.

• **Inspect practice and game facilities.** Are they well-kept, clean and stocked with appropriate safety gear? "Some cheerleading teams practice in the parking lots of their high schools," without mats, says Katie Walsh, an athletic trainer at East Carolina University in Greenville, N.C. That is unacceptable, she says.

• **Keep it clean.** Doing laundry may not seem like an athletic event, but clean clothes and gear are less likely to spread potentially serious skin infections, says Steven Zinder, assistant professor of exercise and sports science at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Consider it a perfect chance to teach your teen to use the washer. While you're at it, insist they shower after practices, too.

• **Feed and water your athlete.** He and she should have breakfast and something to drink, no matter how early practice is, Robinson says.

• **Do your part to change the culture.** No teen should play through pain, Comstock says. "Parents need to talk to kids and tell them it's OK to admit when they are injured," she says. "It's more important for them to be able to remember their name and phone number 40 years from now than for them to play that second half of the football game."
Seriously ill children take a break at camp

Kenneth Donnell, 13, swings from the ceiling beams of a cabin at Camp Kaleidoscope. The camp gives children with chronic or terminal illnesses a typical sleepaway camp experience, right down to the sparsely furnished cabins.

KERR LAKE -- When the handler pulled the first snake out of its bag, there was a chorus of gasps and murmurs from the Camp Kaleidoscope kids sitting around her.

“Oh my gosh, it's tying itself into a knot!” one camper called out. Some jumped off their logs to get a closer look.

A show-and-tell with snakes is a time-honored feature of the sleepaway summer camp experience. At Camp Kaleidoscope, kids also swim, sail, play sports, and do arts and crafts.

But the place affectionately known as "Camp K" isn't an everyday summer camp. Hosted by Duke Children's Hospital, the camp is for children with chronic and terminal illnesses, including cancer, HIV, sickle cell disease, heart disease and asthma.

Now in its 31st year, Camp K aims to provide as full a camp experience as possible for kids who otherwise wouldn't be able to go. It's also designed to instill confidence in campers - the belief they can handle activities from which they might previously have been sheltered.

Campers want to come back
Because of his severe asthma - so grave that it caused his lungs to collapse when he was born - Jonathan Van Hoose became a camper in 1990, back when the program allowed 6-year-olds. He ended up going back every summer until he was 16.

But he didn't want to leave after that.

Van Hoose, who recently received his nursing degree, has been a counselor since 2006. He is co-director of the camp’s third week, which started Sunday and caters to teens ages 14 to 16.

"I see these kids, and I know how they're feeling and what they're going through," he said. "I remember how much I learned those years to start coping with my disease. I want them to grow the way I did."

Instead of being divided by medical condition, Camp K kids are grouped by age. The first week is for 7- to 10-year-olds, and the second for 11- to 13-year-olds. Each week, about 35 campers attend.

Camp K counselors are doctors, nurses, physical therapists, medical students and other caregivers affiliated with Duke University Medical Center. They say they don't coddle their charges.

"This isn't Make-A-Wish," said Ken Baroff, counselor and deputy director for development at Duke Children's Hospital, referring to the foundation that makes dreams come true for children with life-threatening conditions. "We show kids - and their parents - just what they are capable of."

At camp, the counselors do double duty - performing health-related tasks such as passing out medications at night, and scheduling and leading regular camp activities during the day.

Funded by donations, the program is held on Kerr Lake in Henderson, on the grounds of Camp Graham, owned by the Girl Scouts of North Carolina Coastal Pines.

What makes Camp K unique is the way it brings together kids with very different conditions to live, learn and have fun together.

"It's fun to be away from home for a week," said Jordan Bermudez, a bubbly 13-year-old from Durham who has gone to Camp K since age 7. "And my parents like that I'm here. They know I'm safe."

North Carolina has other camps for sick children, but they tend to group kids by illness. East Carolina University hosts Camp Hope for children with sickle cell disease, Camp Rainbow for those with cancer or hemophilia, and Camp Needles in the Pines for those with diabetes. The North Carolina Jaycee Burn Center funds Camp Celebrate for children with burn injuries.

Important experiences

Camp K Director Arthur Taub points out that the quality of modern medicine makes it especially important for sick children to have these kinds of social experiences early on.

"Most of these kids are going to live to be adults," he said. "Camp provides them with a normal growth and developmental experience."

If there is a medical emergency, counselors are trained to notify parents. Other than that, Taub says, parents will have to wait until the end of the week to hear from their kids, just as with any other sleepaway camp.
"I tell parents that no news is good news," he said. "For minor problems - like scrapes or homesickness - we take care of that at camp."

Yet for most kids, the bustle of activities leaves little time for homesickness.

"The snakes were cool," said Joseph Watkins, an 11-year-old from Cary now in his third year at camp. "But my favorite part of camp is making friends."

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Duke scientist placed on leave over Rhodes Scholar claim

BY ERIC FERRERI - STAFF WRITER

DURHAM -- A well-regarded Duke cancer researcher has been placed on leave and at least temporarily denied access to a research grant while the university looks into whether he falsely claimed to be a Rhodes Scholar on applications for federal funding.

A report in The Cancer Letter, a newsletter that covers cancer research issues, says Duke cancer genomics researcher Anil Potti claimed to have won the prestigious scholarship but did not.

"Duke is aware of the allegations raised in the article regarding Dr. Potti and has instituted a formal internal investigation," Duke spokesman Douglas Stokke said Friday afternoon. "Dr. Potti has been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation."

Potti is an associate professor in Duke's medicine department. He and his research colleagues have done work on the genetic patterns of lung cancer tumors and have brought in more than $1 million in federal money for Duke.

He is receiving more than $600,000 through two federal cancer research grants from the National Institutes of Health. He is also in the middle of a five-year lung cancer study for which he is receiving $729,000 from the American Cancer Society, according to that organization's database.

On Friday, the American Cancer Society suspended payments to Potti's grant pending its own investigation.

"We are profoundly concerned to learn that a Duke University researcher made claims about his credentials in applications to the American Cancer Society and others that may not be true," said Ots W. Brawley, the American Cancer Society's chief medical officer.

It isn't clear whether a false biographical claim would put a federal research grant in jeopardy. NIH spokesman Don Raibovsky would say only that "it is NIH policy to neither confirm nor deny that a review has been initiated or is under way."

Potti could not be reached Friday.

According to the Cancer Letter report, Potti claimed on various applications to the National Institutes of Health and the American Cancer Society to have won a Rhodes scholarship in Australia. On one application, he claimed to have won the Rhodes in 1995. On another, it was 1996, according to the report.

On other, later bills, he drops the Rhodes claim, it stated.

The Rhodes Trust does fund 11 scholarships each year for Australian students to study at Oxford University in England. But Potti's name is not on the list of Rhodes winners on the scholarship trust's website.

According to the published Cancer Letter report, Potti responded to that newsletter's questions with an e-mail in which he said he was a Rhodes nominee. He did not respond to subsequent questions, according to the report.

If he did falsify his biography, Potti may have committed a crime. The federal False Claims Act prohibits, among other things, falsifying applications in order to receive grant funding.

"It is most certainly unethical," said Peg Vigiloto, UNC-Chapel Hill's associate vice chancellor for research, speaking generally and not about Potti specifically. "And it would most certainly initiate all sorts of scientific integrity questions."

The Rhodes is among the world's most prestigious awards. Each year, 82 college students from around the world are selected for postgraduate study at Oxford University in England.

Some at Duke apparently thought Potti had, in fact, won a Rhodes scholarship. A 2007 "New Faculty Profile" in a Duke publication refers to Potti as a Rhodes Scholar.
Dakota School of Medicine and came to Duke in 2003 for a hematology-oncology fellowship.

Potti has been a visible presence at Duke. His work has been featured in university press releases, and he has provided cancer expertise to the V Foundation for Cancer Research.

eric.ferreter@newsobserver.com or 919-929-4563

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Kit helps mothers tap valuable cord blood

The umbilical cord blood collection kit is reusable.

BY ERIC FERRERI - STAFF WRITER

Tags: local | national | news | science

DURHAM -- To donate the stem cell-rich umbilical cord blood produced during the birth of her daughter, Jaime Feaster of Lake Charles, La., would have had to drive more than two hours to the nearest hospital equipped to collect it.

That's a long way to go when you're in labor.

Instead, Feaster turned to a fledgling Duke University Medical Center program that provides collection kits to mothers and their doctors. When Feaster's daughter, Kadiee, arrived last month, the cord blood was collected, packaged and quickly shipped to a blood bank at no cost to Feaster and with minimal commitment of time and expertise from her doctor.

Duke doctor Joanne Kurtzberg wants to replicate Feaster's experience on a larger scale.

Kurtzberg hopes that an easier donation process will trigger a surge in donations of blood cells so valuable they've been used to reverse and even cure otherwise fatal disorders. The current cord blood supply can't keep up with the demand for its use in treating leukemia, sickle cell disease and other blood disorders, and the nation's hospital infrastructure isn't set up to tap even a fraction of the potential donors.

It's cheaper this way

Kurtzberg, a pediatrics professor who has pioneered the use of umbilical cord stem cells to treat cancer and genetic disorders in children, believes the kit can spur donations. She's part of a one-year test program financed by the National Marrow Donor Program to develop, distribute and track their effectiveness. Duke is one of three participating blood bank sites, along with the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston and the Texas Cord Blood Bank in San Antonio.

Kurtzberg directs the Carolinas Cord Blood Bank, a Duke initiative that trains medical personnel and provides resources to collect the valuable blood at seven hospitals across the state, including Rex Healthcare, Durham Regional Hospital and UNC Hospitals. Those are North Carolina's only sites. Fewer than 200 hospitals nationwide do it.

It's costly. Duke pays $750,000 a year to equip each of those sites to collect the blood. But if you don't live near one of those sites, it's tough to donate.
The kits cost $350 to $400 to make and are reusable.

By putting the kits into the hands of expectant mothers, Kurtzberg hopes to spur women to harvest their blood for science. The woman must persuade her doctor to take part; the doctor then takes a 10-minute online training course and agrees to collect the blood during the birth and ship it to a blood bank. The process adds about five minutes to the delivery, Kurtzberg said.

This gift can save lives

Feaster, the mother from Louisiana, learned about donation when her step-sister's two children received cord blood treatments at Duke for neurological disorders.

"Everyone tells you when you have a child that you should bank your cord blood, but it's not always financially possible," she said. "You don't realize how important it is until you know someone who goes through it. I really hope the cord blood from my daughter may help save someone's life. If I had another child I'd do it again."

This blood changes lives. It is rich in stem cells, prized because they can build healthy cells and tissue and repair or replace dead or damaged cells.

Kurtzberg has used cord blood to treat leukemia, metabolic disorders and sickle cell disease, and the parents of sick children flock to her Duke clinic for cord blood transplants.

Some cord blood isn't viable because of infection or other reasons. When collected properly at a medical center, the blood is viable once out of every two to 2 1/2 times, Kurtzberg said. That level of viability may drop with samples collected with the new kits; that's one factor Kurtzberg hopes to study. The program's goal is to collect 500 good samples.

"There's no ethical dilemma because it's otherwise discarded material," Kurtzberg said. "It is literally thrown in the trash, which frustrates a lot of people because it's good stuff."

eric.ferrern@newsobserver.com or 919-829-4563

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