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East Carolina University Chancellor Steve Ballard confirmed today he is being considered for the presidency of the University at Albany in New York state.

Ballard’s statement comes after the Albany Times-Union reported the names of nine finalists. Since then four of them have said they were withdrawing their names or denied they were in the running.

Ballard said while he has talked with Albany officials, he remains focused on moving ECU forward, according to a news release.

“It is a very early stage of the search process,” Ballard stated in the release. “I am honored to be considered but remain focused on my important work as chancellor of East Carolina University.”

Ballard joined the Pirate nation in 2004. Prior to joining ECU he was provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of Missouri at Kansas City.

Ballard’s ECU salary is $315,000 as of March.

This isn’t the first time Ballard has looked beyond the Pirate nation’s borders. Ballard was one of three finalists for the presidency of the Kansas
State University in early 2009. He withdrew his name, saying “... Kansas State just didn’t feel as good to me as ECU does.”
NCCU trustees meet on personnel matter with UNC president

By Jane Stancill - jstancill@newsobserver.com

DURHAM–Days after the surprise retirement announcement by N.C. Central University Chancellor Charlie Nelms, campus trustees met behind closed doors with UNC President Tom Ross Tuesday to discuss a personnel matter.

Media were notified about four hours prior to the meeting at NCCU. The closed-door portion lasted roughly 45 minutes, before reporters were allowed inside.

Ross then introduced his pick for interim chancellor, Charles Becton, a lawyer, law professor and former N.C. Court of Appeals judge. The UNC president also discussed the process for identifying the university’s next permanent leader.

After the meeting, Ross said he could not discuss the personnel matter publicly. When asked whether it had anything to do with Nelms, he said, “in part, yes,” but would not elaborate.

Nelms was not at the meeting. His retirement is effective Aug. 6, but Ross said Nelms would be around until the end of the month to help with the leadership transition. On Monday, Nelms cancelled a planned conversation with the media, issuing a statement instead that he wanted to shift the discussion away from his retirement to the arrival of Becton and moving NCCU forward.

Nelms shocked NCCU Thursday with the news that he would step down almost immediately, weeks before the start of a new academic year. The abrupt announcement was unusual; typically, university leaders will announce their departure with several months’ notice.

But Ross said Nelms, 65, had always planned to serve five years. The president complimented Nelms, who raised academic standards during his time. “He added greatly to the university,” Ross said. “This institution is headed in the right direction and doing a lot of things right, and we owe Charlie Nelms a great deal for steering it for the last five years.”

Top leaders on campus said Nelms met with them the morning of his announcement and told them he was ready for a break.
“The timing of the decision is within the mind and heart of the individual making the decision,” Ross said Tuesday. “And I think, you never know what goes into it. I think he felt like it was a good time, and I have to trust his judgment about that.”

When asked whether there was any kind of investigation or scandal looming on the campus, Ross said, simply, “I’m not in a position to talk about personnel issues.”

Trustee chairman Dr. Dwight Perry said he hoped to have a search committee named in the next two or three weeks. The process of finding the next chancellor could take five to six months, he said.

Ross said it could take longer, perhaps the end of the academic year or next summer, before a new leader is place. He said he had great confidence in Becton, the interim chancellor, who he said had “great leadership skills.”

Becton spent part of Tuesday with Nelms. He said he felt great about his new role and called NCCU “a gem” of a university. He said he would meet with the media in the near future for a more in-depth discussion.

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**Ballard looks at SUNY post**

Is another UNC system chancellor about to step down?

Steve Ballard, the East Carolina University chancellor, confirmed Tuesday that he has talked with the University at Albany, State University of New York, about the president’s job there.

The Albany Times-Union published the names of nine candidates, citing a source close to the search committee. The University at Albany has not confirmed the status of those candidates.

In a news release, Ballard confirmed that he had been contacted by officials in Albany, but emphasized that he remains focused on moving ECU forward.

“It is a very early stage of the search process,” Ballard said in the release. “I am honored to be considered but remain focused on my important work as chancellor of East Carolina University.”

Ballard has led ECU since 2004.
Editorial: Project distinguishes Greenville  
Wednesday, August 1, 2012

The area along Elm Street near the intersection with 10th Street in Greenville welcomes another addition to its stable of recreation options today with the official opening of the Drew Steele Center. Built to replace the old and crumbing Elm Street Gym in that location, the updated facility will serve all children but includes features geared toward the city’s special needs population.

Few cities of Greenville’s size take so seriously a mission to provide parks and recreation options that serve so wide a range of talents, skills, interests and abilities, and it is a credit to this city’s population that it supports projects like this. The result — a new facility this is the product of collaboration and that serves those too often left on the sidelines — is the sort of thing that distinguishes this community.

About seven years ago, the future of the Elm Street Gym was very much in doubt. Purchased by the city from the Greenville school system in 1966, the building looked every year of its age, inside and outside. Repairs were desperately needed so that the facility could continue to be a useful recreation center, leading some to propose that the renovation go beyond the bare minimum.

The city’s continued push toward inclusion and accessibility helped fuel the idea for the Drew Steele Center, a newly designed center to replace the Elm Street Gym. It would be fully compliant with the Americans With Disabilities Act to better accommodate the special needs population of the community while still serving the existing demands incumbent on the Elm Street facility. It would take its place beside several other existing facilities already used by the city’s youth.

Funding the construction became a collaborative effort as well as a source of pride in Greenville. The Drew Steele Foundation raised more than $400,000 through private donations thanks to the partnership between the foundation’s enthusiastic and inspiring namesake — the son of former East Carolina University basketball coach Mike Steele — and former East Carolina football head coach Skip Holtz.
Significant funding from a state grant and city coffers covered the full $1.3 million price tag and helped turn dream into reality. Today the city will formally open the center, the latest addition to its recreation roster, which should be cause for a citywide celebration. Projects like this — serving a group in need and doing so through partnerships — are what makes Greenville a special place to call home.
Mr. Jonathan Lilwall, 39, passed away on Monday, July 30, 2012 at his home. A memorial service will be held at Vidant Medical Center at a later date.

Jonathan, a native of the United Kingdom, came to the United States in 2002. He was a Surgical Resident Coordinator for ECU. A loving husband, son, brother, uncle and beloved papa, Jonathan will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

He is survived by his wife, Melanie L. Lilwall; daughters, Rebekah Smith, of Florida, and Christy Cosby and husband, Samuel, of Alabama; parents, Brian and Heather Lilwall, of South Wales, UK; grandchildren, Jordyn Melanie Cosby, Alysha Lee Smith, Addyson Eileen Cosby, and Lyllian Grace Cosby; sister, Julie Anne Ricketts and husband, Mark, of South Wales; niece, Ffion Ricketts, of South Wales; mother in-law, Betty Bishop, of Greenville; father in-law, John R. Floyd Sr., of Georgia; brothers-in-law, John R. Floyd Jr., of Georgia, and Glenn P. Floyd, of Alabama; and many dear friends.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Leo Jenkins Cancer Center, Brody School of Medicine at ECU, 525 Moye Blvd., Greenville, NC 27834.


Published in The Daily Reflector on August 1, 2012
Alarms sound

A report by three faculty members from a committee looking into the academic fraud scandal at UNC-Chapel Hill won’t surprise current faculty and staff familiar with the power and influence of “big-time” athletics. They’ve long known that Chapel Hill’s traditionally sound academic world has sometimes been at odds with athletics and all the pressures it brings to bear on professors, students and “the system.” In fact, this report calls the marriage of academics and athletics one of “two cultures.”

The academic culture plays it straight. Advisers are trained to help keep students on track toward a timely degree. The athletics culture won’t easily acknowledge it, but one of the aims of a special academic support system is to keep star athletes who may not be star students eligible for sports.

That apparently meant, in the case of the current scandal, sending them to Professor Julius Nyang’oro and his African and Afro-American Studies department, where some athletes, most of them football players, took courses without instruction, requiring only a paper turned in at the end.

The players apparently were guided toward such courses by their academic support office, with 115 full- and part-time people housed in the new $70 million athletics center at Kenan Stadium.

That operation is funded by the athletics department. But while one official who oversees it works in the College of Arts and Sciences, the system also reports ultimately to a senior athletics department official. The faculty report called that arrangement “ambiguous.”

Why separate?

The report also asked, “Why is there a separate center of support for athletes?” It’s a valid question. If these really are “student athletes,” why shouldn’t they use the considerable counseling services available to all? Why should their support center be housed in a palace at Kenan Stadium?

And was Nyang’oro, now retired, known to be friendly to athletes, maybe too friendly when it came to helping them out with courses? Investigations in progress will give some final answers to that question, but Nyang’oro did retire under pressure after it was revealed that 54 courses within that
department had little or no instruction attached to them and many if not all of them were largely filled with athletes. A summer school course that appears to have been set up expressly for members of the football team has drawn particular attention.

At some schools, where academic reputations are not comparable to UNC-Chapel Hill’s, that might draw a shrug. But UNC-CH’s faculty is not happy about what this story of apparent academic fraud is doing to the university’s reputation. Hence multiple investigations. Hence, this committee.

One professor even ventured: “The athletics enterprise has grown so large and remunerative that it may not be appropriate at universities anymore.”

**Eyes on Thorp**

The report also is pointed about the administration, currently meaning Chancellor Holden Thorp. Thorp, a noted scholar at Chapel Hill and a dean before his elevation to chancellor, approved a multimillion-dollar buyout of football coach Butch Davis’ contract despite the fact that the university ultimately suffered sanctions from the NCAA because of problems during Davis’ tenure.

The faculty report says that there should be not just an external review of athletic advising and of the athletics department, but “more forthright statements from the administration about the compromises made to host Division I athletics at UNC.” That’s pretty strong stuff.

But it’s right. And the external review of what was going on in the African and Afro-American Studies department, of how things were handled by the administration, should go back at least a decade, as opposed to stopping at 2007. The university has never given a satisfactory explanation of why it wants the time frame limited.

Only by having a thorough external investigation can university leaders regain the confidence of the faculty, the alumni and the taxpayers who have invested billions of dollars in UNC-Chapel Hill. They all have a right to the whole story.
Clayton News-Star

Published Tue, Jul 31, 2012 08:00 PM

Notables

**Clayton resident wins ECU scholarship**

Jenna Eno of Clayton has been accepted into the Honors College at East Carolina University. Eno, who attended Johnston County Middle College High School, also won a renewable scholarship covering the cost of in-state tuition for up to four years.

She is the daughter of Joe and Christie Eno of Clayton.

**Golden LEAF Scholarships**

Seven students from Johnston County have received Golden LEAF Foundation Scholarships. The N.C Education Assistance Authority awarded scholarships to Clayton High School graduates Shemika Alfred and Katherine Teator; Princeton High School graduate Gary Allen; Victoria Dunsmore of West Johnston High School; Nathan Raynor, South Johnston High School; and Marcella Crider and Justin Rinehart, who attend Johnston Community College.

Alfred will attend East Carolina University. Teator, Crider and Rinehart will attend N.C. State University. Allen and Raynor are headed to UNC-Chapel Hill, and Dunsmore will attend UNC-Wilmington.

**Norris to attend medical school**

Andrew Michael Norris, a 2007 Clayton High School graduate, has received a full scholarship to Brody Medical School at East Carolina University. Norris graduated from ECU in May with bachelor degrees in biology and chemistry. His parents are Bobby and Sarah Norris of Selma.

**Appalachian State honors**

Several local students were among the 2,000 graduates who earned degrees this spring from Appalachian State University.

Earning bachelor degrees were Clayton residents Matthew Preston Caulder, Brittni Elizabeth Delmaine, Michael Gonzalez, Devon Howell Karst, Caitlin Suzanne Rogers and Zachariah Van Allen.
Also, several local students were honored for their academic achievements. Students with grade-point averages of 3.85 or better made the chancellor’s list. Among them was Simona Veselinova Gizdarska of Clayton.

A number of Clayton residents made the dean’s list. They were Meredith Grey Ballard, William Kenneth Crabtree Jr., Kennedy M. Fitzsimmons, Virginia Brieanne Harter, Jordan Mckenzie Hughes, Devon Howell Karst, Jonathan Nicholas Keller, Daniel Craig Loeven, Lauren Annelise Prigge, Megan Elizabeth Rembert, Zachariah Van Allen and Brianna Noelle White.

**Game reappointed to JCC Board**

Ann Game of Clayton has been reappointed to the Johnston Community College Board of Trustees.

A college trustee for eight years, Game was reappointed to a third term by the Johnston County Board of Commissioners. She is the customer-service director for the Town of Clayton.

Johnston County Clerk of Court Will R. Crocker administered the oath of office to Game at the board’s regular meeting July 12.
McDonnell puts more educators on university boards after U-Va. crisis

By Anita Kumar

RICHMOND — For decades, Virginia governors filled the boards that oversee the state universities with supporters, donors and friends.

But in July, after a leadership crisis at the University of Virginia that drew rare attention to that school’s Board of Visitors, Gov. Robert F. McDonnell (R) boosted the ranks of educators on governing boards at universities across the state.

Among McDonnell’s appointees to these boards are a teacher, a school librarian, retired university and community college presidents, and a half-dozen members of the faculty and staff at various schools.

“It makes sense to appoint people who have experience with the industry,’’ said Bob Holsworth, who was named to the Virginia Commonwealth University board after serving as a dean and professor at VCU.

McDonnell, more than halfway through a four-year term, still appointed plenty of prominent names from political and business circles to the boards of visitors.

Carly Fiorina, a former Hewlett-Packard chief executive and an unsuccessful Republican candidate for U.S. Senate in California in 2010, was appointed to the James Madison University board. Jennifer Hunter, a senior vice president for Altria, the parent company of tobacco giant Philip Morris, was named to the Virginia State University board. John Luke, chief executive of the MeadWestvaco packaging company, who has donated $70,000 to McDonnell and his political action committee, Opportunity Virginia, will serve on the VCU board.

Boards of visitors have been under intense scrutiny since U-Va. President Teresa Sullivan was ousted and reinstated after 18 days of upheaval in June. The key players on the U-Va. board in the attempt to remove Sullivan were Rector Helen Dragas, a Virginia Beach developer, and Vice Rector Mark Kington, an Alexandria businessman. Kington has resigned.
About 200 people sit on the boards overseeing state universities, considered among the most coveted appointments a governor can offer. While the jobs do not come with money, they do come with prestige — and oftentimes football tickets and invitations to social gatherings.

Boards wield enormous power in hiring and firing the president, setting tuition rates, managing finances and approving faculty tenure. Members can serve two four-year terms.

McDonnell said that he looks for those who share his goals of reducing college costs, increasing slots for in-state students and making schools more efficient.

“I try to appoint people of immense ability that are team players . . . people who know how to run things and get results,” the governor said in an interview last week. “And I try to appoint people that fill certain niches.”

Some critics of the U-Va. board contended that it lacked the perspective of educators, which they said contributed to the crisis.

After threatening to fire the entire board if it did not resolve the turmoil in Charlottesville, McDonnell surprised many when he reappointed Dragas. He acknowledged that she had made mistakes but said she deserved to serve to help the school heal from the leadership crisis. Dragas was first appointed to the board in 2008 by McDonnell’s Democratic predecessor, Timothy M. Kaine, now a candidate for U.S. Senate.

Out of 87 university board members statewide appointed by Kaine who were eligible for reappointment, McDonnell has reappointed 27, according to the secretary of the commonwealth’s office.

Former governor James S. Gilmore III (R), who served from 1998 to 2002, said he tried to implement a new system for board appointments after he became frustrated with members who were political appointees with little desire to work. Gilmore said he met with each applicant to explain that he wanted members who would not be partisan, adversarial or controlling. “If they didn’t agree, then I didn’t reappoint them,’’ he said.

But after complaints that Gilmore’s picks also were partisan, his successor, Mark R. Warner (D), created an advisory board to help select members. McDonnell receives recommendations from that group, now headed by former state attorney general Jerry Kilgore (R), as well as from university presidents, board members and alumni.
McDonnell asked Linwood Rose, the outgoing president of JMU, to serve on the U-Va. board. “There obviously was concern,” Rose said, that there needed to be more higher-education expertise on the boards.

Fiorina, who recently moved to Virginia, said she was approached by the governor’s staff about serving on the JMU board, although she has no connection to the Harrisonburg school. Fiorina and McDonnell met in 2010 when he held a fundraiser for her campaign.

“I have long been interested in education. I believe public universities play a vital role in ensuring a competitive workforce for the 21st century,” she said in a statement. “I am old-fashioned enough to think that if a governor asks you to engage in public service, you should try and oblige.”

While some were tapped by McDonnell or his staff to serve, others applied to be on the boards.

Mark Ingrao, president of the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce, said the University of Mary Washington submitted his name after he had been involved in his alma mater for years. “It was the next step,” Ingrao said.

Other appointees included: unsuccessful Republican congressional candidate Keith Fimian (College of William and Mary); Dennis Treacy, executive vice president of Smithfield Foods (Virginia Tech); Teresa Carlson, vice president of Amazon Web Services, an affiliate of the online retailer that just announced it would expand in Virginia (VCU); and Frank B. Atkinson, longtime Republican activist and chairman of the lobbying powerhouse McGuireWoods (U-Va.).

McDonnell also named Dave Rexrode, a former campaign staff member who heads the Republican Party of Virginia, to the JMU board. “I’m there to help JMU,” Rexrode said. “It’s not a political job.”

Some criticized McDonnell for not reappointing Colin Campbell, the president of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, to the William and Mary board.

State Senate Majority Leader Thomas K. Norment Jr. (R-James City), who has close ties to the school, said he was disappointed about the Campbell decision but did not call the governor to complain. “It’s not the first time I disagreed with an appointment of a governor,” he said.

Campbell said in an interview that he did not ask the governor’s staff why he was not reappointed and that he would not speculate. “It’s really his prerogative,” he said.
E-mails show U-Va. board pondering attempt to oust President Sullivan

By Daniel de Vise and Donna St. George

Newly released e-mails show that the leader of the University of Virginia governing board, Helen E. Dragas, was bracing for difficulties in early June when she prepared to ask President Teresa Sullivan to resign.

“I expect to be bullet-ridden by Sunday,” Dragas wrote in a June 5 exchange with a fellow board member. The Sunday in question, June 10, was the date Sullivan’s departure would be announced to the university community.

The note suggests that Dragas had an inkling of the tumult that would erupt at the public flagship school upon the forced resignation of Sullivan, a popular president who had served less than two years at U-Va. After more than two weeks of protest, Sullivan was reinstated and calm was restored to the Charlottesville campus.

The e-mails, released Tuesday through a public records request from the Charlottesville Daily Progress newspaper, show several members of the U-Va. board of visitors discussing the move against Sullivan and the rationale behind it in the week before her resignation.

In one note, board member Randal Kirk — a U-Va. alumnus and self-made billionaire — reflected on the board’s role and critiqued the Sullivan administration.

“[E]ven though we are perhaps not blessed with the best people we possibly could have on the board, I am fairly certain that most of them know that the time in which we could be deferential toward an administration that is mostly bent on the preservation of the status quo is at an end,” Kirk wrote.

Another exchange began with Dragas forwarding a New Yorker article about failure as a gateway to success to a group of fellow board members.

She sent it June 5, three days before the meeting in which Dragas asked for Sullivan’s resignation.

Board member Hunter Craig replied: “Thank you for your leadership: stopping, pivoting, and coming up with a rescue plan. Job well done.”
Board member A. MacDonald Caputo replied: “Terrific article. How appropriate. Love the line ‘only failure is the failure to risk something.’”

Dragas declined to comment, and Caputo, Kirk and Craig could not be reached for comment.
College admissions season begins with launch of 2012-13 Common Application

By Valerie Strauss

Rising high school seniors who want to get a jump on their college applications should know that the Common Application used by more than 450 colleges and universities has just gone live for the 2012-13 admissions season.

That means students can start to officially fill out their applications, getting the tedious work of filling out names and dates and other details done so they can work on their essays.

For the record, the Common App was launched on Tuesday night, four hours ahead of schedule, and within 30 minutes, 300 individuals had registered an account, the Web site reported. “The first registration came from Plano, TX, less than one minute after the site went live,” it said.

The Common Application is a not-for-profit organization that provides an admission application — online and in print — that students may submit to any of the member schools that accept it.

The Common Application was developed in 1975 as a way to cut down on the number of separate applications and essays a student applying to numerous colleges and universities would have to complete. As it turns out, even with the Common App, many schools ask for additional information, including extra essays.

These are the Common App essay instructions and prompts for freshman applicants:

*Please write an essay of 250-500 words on a topic of your choice or on one of the options listed below, and attach it to your application before submission. Please indicate your topic by checking the appropriate box. This personal essay helps us become acquainted with you as a person and student, apart from courses, grades, test scores, and other objective data. It*
will also demonstrate your ability to organize your thoughts and express yourself. NOTE: Your Common Application essay should be the same for all colleges. Do not customize it in any way for individual colleges. Colleges that want customized essay responses will ask for them on a supplement form.

* Evaluate a significant experience, achievement, risk you have taken, or ethical dilemma you have faced and its impact on you.

* Discuss some issue of personal, local, national, or international concern and its importance to you.

* Indicate a person who has had a significant influence on you, and describe that influence.

* Describe a character in fiction, a historical figure, or a creative work (as in art, music or science, etc.) that has had an influence on you, and explain that influence.

* A range of academic interests, personal perspectives, and life experiences adds much to the educational mix. Given your personal background, describe an experience that illustrates what you would bring to the diversity in a college community or an encounter that demonstrated the importance of diversity to you.

* Topic of your choice.