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252-328-6481
Bracing for a major overhaul to the city’s zoning laws, one university neighborhood has hired a lawyer in what may be the first of many obstacles local leaders could face in opening up certain areas of Greenville to more renters.

The Tar River University Neighborhood Association (TRUNA) has hired John M. Martin of Ward and Smith to fight efforts by the City Council to reform a three-decade-old ordinance that caps at three the number of unrelated people who can share a home in Greenville.

The possibility for a lawsuit is high, Martin said, if the Greenville Planning and Zoning Commission accepts a proposal by the council to allow for four unrelated people to live together in all properties between Elm, Fifth and Greene streets to the Tar River.

“It’s premature at this point in time to make any legal conclusions,” Martin said. “But I can say with a high degree of confidence that if the (Planning and Zoning Commission) approves what was done last week ... and the council follows suit, there will be litigation.”

The Planning and Zoning Commission will take up the issue on Sept. 18, putting a final vote before the council in October to make the amendment law, City Planner Chantae Gooby said. But the process is not that simple.
A high level of backlash, as well as a number of new players in the heated housing debate, present some challenges to the council imposing a change in policy as far-reaching and controversial as the one proposed in Councilman Max Joyner’s “Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative” last Thursday.

While the Planning and Zoning Commission has in the past opposed a change to the “three-unrelated” rule, it welcomed two new members in June: Kevin Burton and Torico Griffin.

Although Chairman Godfrey Bell does not know where Burton and Griffon stand on the issue, he said he would vote to keep the law unchanged. It is not known if Joyner’s proposal meets the quality-of-life standards set in the city’s comprehensive community plan, known as Horizons.

The people of TRUNA — a 2,600-home community north of East Carolina University singled out in Joyner’s proposal — overwhelmingly agreed the initiative falls short of both its plan and the Horizons plan’s main objective to “improve and revitalize” city neighborhoods.

They believe lifting the cap in a neighborhood where 87 percent of the homes are rented would adversely affect the distribution of wealth among landlords.

Owners of four-bedroom homes with at least 1,500 square feet — the minimum requirement in Joyner’s plan for landlords to rent to a fourth person — would gain a controlling stake in the area’s rental market, TRUNA President Andrew Morehead contends.

As a result, Morehead said, TRUNA’s 14 percent home-vacancy rate and, consequently, its already high crime rate would quickly climb.

“The clear issue is that there has been no real consideration of the impact this will have on our neighborhood,” Morehead said.

In the planning stages of Joyner’s initiative, TRUNA residents and their council representative, Marion Blackburn, were not included. While Blackburn called the move an “affront” to her district, Martin and his staff continue to study Joyner’s initiative and evaluate the “legality” of how it was proposed and possibly how it would be executed.

TRUNA residents said parts of Joyner’s initiative are needed, such as those requiring a crime-free program in all rental agreements and the establishment of a civil work group to revitalize TRUNA. But they said the additions were included to pacify TRUNA.
“It was a cover,” Morehead said. “It was a cover for something that will move us in the opposite direction.”

Contact Wesley Brown at 252-329-9579 or wbrown@reflector.com. Follow him on Twitter @CityWatchdog.
East Carolina football’s slot machines are back, and after an offseason of mending, training and fine-tuning, they could be the engine of the ECU offense.

Tenacious inside receiver Justin Hardy has been burning through August camp as expected, getting right back to business after leading the Pirates as a redshirt freshman last season with 64 receptions for 658 yards to go along with six touchdowns, two fewer than team-leader Lance Lewis.

“I think I caught the ball well, but in looking at film from last year I saw a lot of mental stuff, mistakes that I shouldn’t make now,” Hardy said.

His position mate at the Y slot, 6-foot-8 junior Justin Jones, hopes things are much different this season after an injury-filled sophomore campaign in which he made just six game appearances.

Although it’s been a grind, Jones is already reemerging as the playmaker who has nine career touchdown catches.

“I feel good, my body feels good and I’m pretty happy with what we’ve gotten done so far,” said Jones, who marked his return from knee and wrist injuries with a TD catch in Saturday’s opening scrimmage of August camp.

Conversely, it’s been a remarkably smooth ride for Hardy, a player who had initially signed at Elizabeth City State because he hadn’t been recruited by any top-division schools until being unearthed by ECU head coach Ruffin McNeill.
“This year we’re trying to outdo everything we did last year,” said the Vanceboro native and C-USA All-Freshman Team selection, who made TD grabs against South Carolina, UAB and Memphis, and in successive games against Southern Miss, UTEP and UCF.

When Jones was on the field, he was plenty effective as well. In fact, as the Pirates’ season came to a frustrating end in an overtime loss at Marshall, Jones delivered his biggest performance of the season with a pair of TD receptions.

But it was and continues to be a year of playing through pain.

“You kind of have to block it out, “ said Jones, a player who has already been noticed by NFL scouts for his uncanny speed, agility and leaping ability, of the pain. “It’s day 16 or something like that and everyone’s hurting, and I just look at it like that. I know there are guys next to me who are banged up too.”

As if they weren’t loaded enough at the position, freshman Donte Sumpter has already proven himself a playmaker as well.

**The H slot**

At the other inside position, sophomore Danny Webster is returning to full speed after his promising freshman season (43 catches, 418 yards, TD) ended with a torn ACL at Marshall.

He’s been given the green light to return after offseason surgery, but is still feeling some of the effects.

“I’ve tried to keep my intensity up as high as I could this entire time,” Webster said after Monday morning’s practice. “I’ve been getting after it a little bit here recently so hopefully I’ll be back and ready to go.”

Behind Webster is senior Derek Harris, and one of the names on the lips of coaches and players throughout camp has been freshman Quataye Smyre, who could also find an early inside role.

**Practice report**

The Pirates concentrated on third-and-short situations and turnover drills on Monday morning, and McNeill said he was happy with both.

“I thought we had some crisp execution early,” the third-year coach said after the first of two practices. “Today was a situational day, what we call a football IQ day.”
The team has a rare day off today after having practiced every day since the open of camp Aug. 3.

“We grinded them, and I think (the day off) will be a welcome relief,” McNeill said, noting that the players will move out of their team dorm in preparation for the start of classes. “We’ve had them all in one building, under one roof and now they’ll move out. But that day of rest will do all of us good.”

The last roster addition for the Pirates, outside receiver Lance Ray, is expected to join the Pirates by Friday.

Contact Nathan Summers at nsummers@reflector.com or 252-329-9595.
Peppers' transcript might point to broader academic issues at UNC

By Dan Kane - dkane@newsobserver.com

On the football field, Julius Peppers was one of the most dominating players to ever wear a UNC uniform, an athlete dubbed a “freak of nature” so skilled that he helped take the university’s men’s basketball team to the Final Four in 2000.

But in the classroom, Peppers was a marginal student with a grade point average so low he was continually at risk of losing the opportunity to play, according to an academic transcript bearing his name. What kept bailing him out were several classes in the Department of African and Afro-American Studies, a relatively young academic unit led by department chair Julius Nyang’oro.

A transcript bearing Peppers’ name, found over the weekend in an odd portal on a UNC website, shows a subpar academic record: a 1.82 grade point average and 11 grades of D or F. It also suggests that the academic fraud already confirmed by the university in the African studies department goes much further back than it had previously been able to confirm.

Peppers’ transcript, and a second one that practically mirrors it, show he received grades of B or better in seven classes within the department, offerings found in later years to be academically suspect. Without those grades, it’s unlikely Peppers would have kept his GPA high enough to play sports. UNC records show Nyang’oro taught or supervised at least three of those classes.

Willis Brooks, a professor emeritus of history at UNC who once sat on its faculty athletics committee, called the transcript evidence of an academic path with the sole intent of keeping an athlete eligible to compete. But he pointed the finger at those in the university who helped make it happen.

“I feel willing to criticize a university that allows a student to get away without an education, or a very narrow one,” he said. “And that’s what this one is, a very narrow education. In no sense is this a liberal arts education.”

University officials had little to say Monday about the transcript, which was first identified by rival N.C. State University fans on the PackPride bulletin
board. The university said in a brief statement that the transcript appears to be genuine, and declined all requests for interviews.

“Student academic records should never be accessible to the public, and the university is investigating reports of what appears to be a former student transcript on the University’s website,” the statement said. “The university has removed that link from the website. University officials are prohibited from discussing confidential student information.”

Peppers has gone on to a sterling career as one of the NFL’s most feared pass rushers. Nyang’oro continued to run his department as a respected chairman until last year, when another football player’s academic difficulties began a flurry of revelations that continue to haunt the university.

Today, UNC is grappling with what may be the worst case of academic fraud in its history, as Nyang’oro and his former department manager have been linked to at least 54 classes and dozens of independent studies over the past four years that offered little or no instruction and were sometimes packed with athletes.

Peppers, now a defensive end for the Chicago Bears, could not be reached. His agent, Carl Carey Jr., is a former academic counselor at UNC who helped Peppers manage his schoolwork. He said Monday that Peppers did his work.

“To suggest a connection between a decade-old transcript and the current academic issues at the university is extremely irresponsible,” Carey said.

**Wolfpack fans dig**

Peppers arrived at UNC in the summer of 1998, just after the departure of football coach Mack Brown, who left for Texas. Brown improved the program’s performance on the field, but his tenure also saw a rise in the number of academic exceptions admitted to play football.

Peppers’ transcript is the second of a prominent UNC football player to become public in the past year. The News & Observer last year obtained a partial transcript of former defensive standout Marvin Austin. It also had signs of a plan to keep Austin eligible to play without necessarily providing him a well-rounded education.

Austin was kicked off the team for receiving improper financial benefits from agents and others, part of an NCAA investigation that started in 2010 and ended earlier this year with a one-year bowl ban for the team and the loss of 15 athletic scholarships. Austin’s transcript helped kick off a second
investigation that culminated three months ago in the university’s announcement of the academic fraud in Nyang’oro’s department.

University officials said then that it was possible the fraud went back beyond 2007, where their work stopped. But in recent weeks, they declined to answer questions about two developments that suggested the fraud went several years beyond that period.

Several weeks ago, The News & Observer found a 2001 test transcript on the university’s website that bore several similarities with the current scandal. The N&O showed it to university officials while preparing a story; the university dismissed the transcript as a fake used in testing a computer program.

The officials declined to check the transcript against academic records.

After The N&O published a story Saturday and posted the test transcript on newsobserver.com, Wolfpack fans started scrutinizing the classes and the web address. Late Sunday night, they discovered a related web address that housed what is described as Peppers’ transcript. It is a near match to the test transcript.

Why both were apparently lingering on the university’s web site for more than a decade remains unclear. If they are indeed Peppers’ records, the university could find itself in trouble with federal education officials. A 37-year-old law known as the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act prohibits the unauthorized release of most student academic records, and universities can lose federal funding for blatant violations of the law.

**Who’s ‘minding the store’?**

But the larger question for the university is the possibility that the academic fraud had gone undetected for more than a dozen years, and may have stayed that way without public knowledge of the transcripts of Austin and Peppers.

Burley Mitchell, a former chief justice of the state Supreme Court and a member of the UNC system Board of Governors, said “the whole thing disturbs” him.

“The entire program over there has been an unguided situation,” Mitchell, a graduate of N.C. State, said Monday. “It doesn’t seem like anybody’s in charge.”

Further troubling Mitchell is that it seems that all the revelations are being uncovered and exposed by the N&O and Pack fans, not the UNC-CH administration and trustees.
“It just seems to keep coming and coming,” Mitchell said. “I wonder who is minding the store.”

The fraud is now the subject of an SBI investigation and a special review by the Board of Governors. The NCAA continues to offer no clues as to whether it will investigate. The university’s internal investigation is also continuing, and a special faculty committee, concerned that athletics have gotten out of control at the university, has called for an independent review.

Louis Bissette, chairman of the special Board of Governors panel, said Monday the panel will delve into the latest revelations and any that follow. “All I can say to you is we really mean to do this right,” he said, “and we mean to do it thoroughly and we mean to look at all relevant material.”

Andrew Carter and Anne Blythe contributed to this report.

Kane: 919-829-4520

**Just getting by**

A transcript that appears to belong to former UNC football and basketball player Julius Peppers was found on the Internet this weekend by an N.C. State fan. UNC has since blocked access to it, saying only that it appears to have been the transcript of a former student.

*(Transcript follows on next pages)*
## Grade Summary for Peppers, Julius Frazier
### Undergraduate Career
#### Chronological by Term

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Alpha by Course

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Peppers' agent: Many UNC athletes unprepared for academics

By Andrew Carter - acarter@newsobserver.com

CHAPEL HILL—During his years as an academic counselor in the athletic department at the University of North Carolina, Carl Carey Jr. worked with some of the most physically imposing members of the student body. Yet some of them, Carey says now, were “scared to death” of walking into a college classroom.

Now a professional sports agent and a teacher at a college in Texas, Carey worked from 1998 through 2002 as an academic counselor in the athletic department at UNC. He was one of two counselors who worked with the Tar Heels’ football team, and one of the players Carey counseled was former Tar Heels’ All-American Julius Peppers, whose UNC transcript was inexplicably available over the weekend on a UNC website.

“He played two sports, so that was atypical,” Carey said on Monday during a phone interview about Peppers, who also played basketball at UNC. “So it was really double duty, you know. But certainly, in my time at the university, I counseled many overwhelmed student-athletes. Overwhelmed.”

Peppers was among those overwhelmed, according to the transcript. A link to an academic record with Peppers’ name circulated on Internet message boards and Twitter late Sunday night and early Monday morning, before UNC blocked access.
Officials wouldn’t confirm that the transcript belonged to Peppers, but they acknowledged that it belonged to a former student. Carey, who now represents Peppers, an all-pro defensive end with the Chicago Bears, would neither confirm nor deny that the transcript belonged to Peppers.

According to the transcript, Peppers had a 1.82 grade point average after his junior year, majoring in African and Afro-American Studies. He received D’s or F’s in 11 of the 27 classes that clearly listed a letter grade. He did not graduate, according to the university.

A Bears spokesman said Monday that Peppers wouldn’t comment on his transcript, and a member of the NCAA media relations staff said minimum eligibility requirements during Peppers’ playing years weren’t immediately available.

**Unprepared for college**

To Carey, though, Peppers didn’t represent an athlete who didn’t try or didn’t care about academics. Instead, Carey said, Peppers’ academic struggles were typical of a system that routinely fails athletes who arrive in college unprepared for academic life.

Carey compared the difficulties some athletes encounter while attempting to fit into the world of academia to the struggles an ordinary student would face if he was asked to play football.

“A typical student would fear for their life if they were sent out on a football field with the football team,” Carey said. “They would feel unprepared, they would feel scared. They would feel inadequate.

“And so you could assume an athlete whose academic records suggest that they’re likely going to struggle, and you put them in a classroom with [high] SAT [scores], guess how they’re feeling?”

Carey taught in the Department of African and Afro-American Studies during his time as an academic counselor, he said, and he also returned to UNC to teach a course – “Foundations of Black Education” – in the summer of 2011. Julius Nyang’oro, former chairman of the AFAM department, was criticized for inviting an agent to teach at a time when the UNC program was under NCAA investigation. Nyang’oro was allowed to retire earlier this year when a scandal surfaced involving athletes in no-show classes.

**Feeling small in class**

The transcript with Peppers’ name, meanwhile, is filled with AFAM courses – not surprising, Carey said, given that Peppers majored in African and
Afro-American Studies. A recent UNC internal investigation found 54 aberrant AFAM courses over a span of four years that showed little evidence of any instruction and evidence of unauthorized grade changes.

Still, Carey said it would be “extremely irresponsible” to connect Peppers’ AFAM experience to the current scandal.

After sitting out his first football and basketball season at UNC – known as redshirting – Peppers played football at UNC during the 1999, 2000 and 2001 seasons, and he played basketball during the 1999-2000 and 2000-01 seasons. He was one of many big men on campus who Carey indicated felt small in a classroom.

“There is a thirst for negativity out there,” Carey said. “And rather than the focus being on trying to find a scandal, my hope is that there is an intelligent, serious discussion about athletes and academics that takes place as a result of these reports. And this is a nationwide issue. Not a UNC issue.”

Carter: 919-829-8944
UNC system wants more emphasis on China

By Jane Stancill - jstancill@newsobserver.com

The UNC system wants to recruit more Chinese students here and offer Chinese language courses to students of all UNC campuses.

System leaders are developing goals for growing interest and instruction about China, the world’s second largest economy. A contingent of UNC leaders traveled to China and Taiwan in March to get a first-hand look at the higher education system there.

U.S. universities are rushing to engage with China, while China hopes to infuse its education system with American-style innovation and entrepreneurship. Duke University is establishing an entire campus near Shanghai, where it plans to initially offer master’s degrees in management studies and global health. Duke Kunshan University was supposed to open this fall, but Duke’s application is still awaiting approval by the Chinese government’s Ministry of Education.

The UNC Board of Governors is expected to consider a set of proposals in the coming months. If UNC students engage more with China and the Chinese language, UNC officials say, they will graduate better prepared to work in the global economy.

One idea on the table for increasing Chinese ties is to stop counting international students in the pool of out-of-state students in the UNC system. The system now limits out-of-state freshmen to 18 percent on each campus. Loosening the cap has been a controversial idea in the past because state taxpayers want to protect university seats for North Carolinians.

Nearly a decade ago, some UNC chancellors pushed for raising the cap on out-of-staters, but the proposal died under heated opposition.

“The last time we had this discussion, the world was very different,” said Hannah Gage, a UNC board member from Wilmington.

UNC President Tom Ross said removing international students from the out-of-state designation would only slightly increase seats for non-North Carolinians.

“A little more flexibility, particularly around international students, I think, would be a smart idea,” Ross said.
UNC campuses already have 87 official partnerships and links to Chinese universities, some more active than others. Still, six of the 17 campuses offer no Chinese and most only have a limited number of classes on Chinese language, history or politics. Of the UNC students who study abroad, 49.4 percent go to western Europe, while just 3.6 percent go to China. Only 1 percent of UNC system students were enrolled in Chinese classes in 2011-12.

UNC leaders have talked about offering a course systemwide on Chinese history and culture – a beginner’s look at the emerging superpower.

They want to make Chinese language courses available to any student at a UNC system school. The goal could be accomplished with a combination of online instruction and face-to-face classes.

There is also talk about ways to recruit more Chinese students to UNC campuses to diversify classrooms and give North Carolina students more international exposure.

“The thing you’ve got to appreciate is the value they bring to the educational experience,” said Paul Fulton, a UNC board member and former UNC-Chapel Hill business dean.

As China’s middle class grows, more Chinese students have the resources to study abroad, and they typically pay top dollar tuition. Nearly 2,000 Chinese students enrolled at UNC campuses in the 2011-12 year.

Chinese students disproportionately study science and technology disciplines, according to a UNC report, and are more likely than native-born students to start businesses if they stay in the United States upon graduation.

Stancill: 919-829-4559
Davidson suspends Chick-fil-A at student events

By Lindsay Ruebens

Davidson College will suspend Chick-fil-A meals at student events until students later decide about doing business with the fast food chain.

Statements by Chick-fil-A’s president Dan Cathy—who said he was “guilty as charged” in supporting "the biblical definition of the family unit” – sparked a national outcry by same-sex marriage supporters.

The Davidson College Union Board, which is a group of students that organizes College Union activities, usually serves Chick-fil-A sandwiches about once or twice a year at its monthly “After Midnight Events,” according to a release from the school. The monthly events have taken place since 2001, and they offer students free food and entertainment until 2 a.m.

Members of the Union Board choose the menu for the events and have decided to get students’ input about serving Chick-fil-A before scheduling sandwiches for an event this year, the release said. The board will then discuss the situation and make a decision at one of its meetings early in the semester. Classes at Davidson begin Aug. 27.
Veteran officer, gunman die in Texas shootout

By MICHAEL GRACZYK

COLLEGE STATION, Texas (AP) — A law enforcement veteran of 19 years was making what was supposed to be a routine house call to serve an eviction notice at a property near the Texas A&M University campus. But the recipient opened fire and shots were exchanged, leaving him, the police constable and another man mortally wounded.

The spasm of violence Monday left a College Station neighborhood shaken, a tight-knit law enforcement community in mourning and the family of 35-year-old gunman Thomas Alton Caffall distraught.

Just after noon, College Station police began fielding frantic 911 calls about gunfire in the neighborhood near the university's football stadium. Responding officers found 41-year-old Brazos County Constable Brian Bachmann shot on the lawn of the house.
For nearly 30 minutes police exchanged shots with Caffall as a neighbor, a former Army medic, waited with frustration for the all-clear so he could tend to the injured constable.

Bachmann, a police instructor, one-time Officer of the Year and a married father of two, had been mortally wounded. So was Chris Northcliff, 43, of College Station, who was outside and apparently caught up in the gunfire. Caffall too was shot and later died at a hospital.

Police wouldn't speculate on what sparked the shooting and it wasn't immediately clear who shot whom.

"We're trying to make some sense of this," College Station Assistant Police Chief Scott McCollum said.

A neighbor and former medic, Rigo Cisneros, called 911 when he heard the shooting. In video shot on his cellphone showing police officers running into the house, Cisneros, 40, can be heard asking an officer if an ambulance is coming and if he can meanwhile tend to Bachmann's wounds. The officer tells Cisneros he must wait until the shooting scene is secure.

Cisneros told The Bryan-College Station Eagle that by the time he was allowed to approach Bachmann's body, it was too late.

"I performed CPR. There were no vital signs on the constable when I got there," he said. "He took one clear gunshot wound to the chest."

Cisneros said he also went to Caffall, who was shot several times but still conscious.

"I was asking him questions, like if he knew he was allergic to anything," Cisneros said. "He looked up at me and asked me to apologize to the officer that was shot."

Details about Caffall were slow to emerge.

Officials at Texas A&M, the 50,000-student school that dominates the city 100 miles northwest of Houston, said he was neither a student nor school employee. Police said he had been renting the home where he was staying. Caffall's sister said Monday night that the family was shocked by the violence.

"Our hearts and prayers go out to the families and this is just a senseless tragedy," said Courtney Clark, reached Monday evening at her mother's home in Navasota, about 20 miles to the south. "We are just distraught by the havoc that he has caused."
She declined additional comment.

Besides the three fatalities, a 55-year-old woman also was wounded and was hospitalized in serious condition. Her name had not been released by Monday evening.

Another officer, Justin Oehlke, was treated for a gunshot wound in the calf and was in stable condition, police spokeswoman Rhonda Seaton said. Two other officers — Brad Smith and Phil Dorsett — were treated for "shrapnel injuries" and released, Seaton said.

Bachmann was well respected and "very close to everyone in law enforcement," McCollum said. "He was a pillar in this community, and it's sad and tragic that we've lost him today."

Bachmann had worked more than 19 years in law enforcement, according to the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education. He had been a constable since January 2011.

Constables are law enforcement officers similar to sheriff's deputies who are elected to serve in specific county precincts. They primarily serve civil warrants and official paperwork or act as courtroom bailiffs.

Officers lined up to salute Monday afternoon as Bachmann's body was moved from a hospital and placed into a white van for transfer to a funeral home.

Texas A&M issued an emergency alert warning students and residents to stay clear of the area although most students weren't on campus because the fall semester doesn't start until later this month.

Diana Harbourt, 27, whose house is about a block away, said she had just come home for lunch when she and her boyfriend heard five loud popping sounds.

"I just thought it was somebody moving wood or stacking something," Harbourt said. "Then we heard more sirens and more officers and fire trucks came and they were keeping their distance, kind of slowly moving in. More officers showed up and told us to stay inside. ... The fear didn't hit me until after the fact, especially when I found a bullet hole in front of my house."

Texas Gov. Rick Perry, an A&M alumnus, said at an event in Florida that his "prayers are with any of those that have been injured." A&M President R. Bowen Loftin issued a statement calling Monday a "sad day in the Bryan-College Station community."

Associated Press writers Juan A. Lozano in Houston, Nomaan Merchant in Dallas and Melissa Nelson-Gabriel in Destin, Fla., contributed to this report.
Aleah MacKay, 16, of Bedford, N.H., left, plays in a lacrosse tournament in Lake Placid, N.Y. Part of her dedication to the sport is the potential to earn a college scholarship.

Competing for Scholarships on the Field and Online
By HEIDI MITCHELL
August 7, 2012, 6:54 p.m. ET

Aleah MacKay loves playing lacrosse at her high school in Nashua, N.H. But the 16-year-old junior admits that "the driving force" behind her dedication to the sport is "to earn a scholarship to a top Division I school."

To boost her skills and get the attention of college recruiters and coaches, her parents say they spent about $4,000 sending her to six intensive summer sports camps and one clinic at a Division I school, which is generally a big-name university with millions of dollars in sports funding and televised sports teams. Aleah also used an online service that promises to match high-school athletes with college coaches.

With tuition for a four-year private university topping $250,000, families are eager to tap some of the $2 billion that the National Collegiate Athletic Association estimates is granted in athletic scholarships for the 23 NCAA sports each year.

Families are hiring private coaches with specialties—like linear speed tutors to perfect a child's gait. Others are enlisting recruitment consultants and seeking out videographers to make professional-looking highlights reels. Many college-athlete hopefuls attend summer training camps, some that include the chance to network with college coaches—a rare opportunity since it isn't allowed by NCAA rules until a student's junior year.

Some students, like Aleah, register with websites that promise to connect them with college recruiters and coaches.
Even with such preparations, an athletic scholarship is, statistically, unlikely. For men, 59.2% of sports scholarships are given just to football and basketball players, according to Patrick O'Rourke, founder of the data website Scholarship Stats.

In 2010, a student who played high-school sports had a 6% chance of playing any college varsity sport, in any division, according to Scholarship Stats, which bases its numbers on U.S. Department of Education data. For Division I schools, chances were only 3.7%.

College coaches say that in many instances, such as when there are no individual rankings, they often rely on the online services to find the superstar athlete in the haystack.

Other times the student profiles just take up space in a coach's inbox. "I have not seen any useful data for fencing with regard to recruiting services," said Michael Aufrichtig, head coach of Columbia University's fencing team, in an email. "If they were to...tell me how many five-touch bouts they won, along with scores and percentage of wins in overtime situations, that could help. Now I just get an email with a name and some results," he said.

Even if athletic prowess doesn't lead to a scholarship, it may make an athlete more attractive to a selective schools, which can then entice the student to attend and play by offering other types of financial aid.

At the recruiting service beRecruited.com, student athletes can register a free profile and create a digital résumé with their athletic and academic stats, videos and photos. They can bookmark schools and programs, which automatically notifies coaches of their interest.

"If you're in the top 100 football and basketball players in the country, you'll get recruited on your own, says Vishwas Prabhakara, chief executive of the San Francisco-based company. "We're for the other 99% of student athletes across all sports."

The service is free for coaches, who can register and search for athletes across a variety of criteria, and receive alerts when new users join or existing users add updates. Students who pay $60 for a Deluxe membership can see which coaches are viewing their profiles in order to follow up with them.

BeRecruited.com has signed up 800,000 students since 2010. It has about 30,000 coaches registered to the site, Mr. Prabhakara says.

The company makes around one million "connections"—when a coach views a profile, bookmarks an athlete, or reaches out to an athlete, or when a
student does the same to a coach—across 31 sports per month. That is an increase of 33% over the same period last year, Mr. Prabhakara says.

Once a connection is made, all communication happens outside of beRecruited's walls, at which point coaches and students are responsible for complying with NCAA rules of engagement, Mr. Prabhakara says.

Since 2008, more than 20,000 of the service's student-athletes have self-reported that they have committed to a college or university and received some sort of scholarship, says Mr. Prabhakara.

Another service, the Chicago-based National Collegiate Scouting Association, launched in 2000, says its network has about 600,000 student-athletes. In May, 1,600 colleges asked NCSA for specific types of athletes for scholarship placement, says its founder Chris Krause.

NCSA's fees range from $300 to $1,995, which can include virtual one-on-one training on how to talk to coaches, how to set up unofficial and official visits and which schools to target. Mr. Krause says his service has found scholarships or walk-on opportunities for 90% of his clients.

Certain sports offer better scholarship odds than others. Nonrevenue sports, which at some schools are called "club sports," such as water polo and rowing, have grown recently, says Mr. Krause. Ice hockey, sand volleyball, softball, equestrian sports, and women's rugby also have seen a surge in the number of collegiate teams recently. Men's track teams have grown considerably, with an average of $23,000 a year given in scholarships to individual athletes, compared with the typical $8,000 to $17,000 for other sports, says NCSA.

Sue Enquist, who worked as a women's softball coach at University of California, Los Angeles for 27 years and is now a recruiter-consultant for athletes and coaches, says parents shouldn't push students toward a particular sport, as success requires passion and dedication—and sometimes a third party's assistance. "Don't rely on just your local club coach and his three college connections," she says. She says Web-based services can be helpful. She suggests "an unbiased, honest assessment of the student-athlete's potential by a third party in the beginning of the college-application process."

Some third parties specialize by sport. Rowed2College, a small San Francisco-based company run by former college rower and coach Dave Hinshaw, offers consulting for $200 per hour, plus services that range from
$1,500 to $5,000. The company says it has placed 50 rowers since it launched two years ago.

Aleah, the lacrosse player, has two more years of high school, and under NCAA rules, she isn't permitted to speak to college coaches, other than at summer clinics, until Sept. 1, 2013. Still, Aleah has verbally committed to attend Syracuse University, in New York, a Division 1 school. There are 12 full athletic scholarships for a Division 1 women's lacrosse program, which are often split into partial scholarships among the 25 or so players. Aleah hopes to receive some of that money. Her father, David MacKay, an optometrist in Bedford, N.H., says he is "thrilled Aleah's hard work on and off the field is helping her achieve her goals of playing lacrosse at a top Division 1 college while earning a high-quality education."