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DOLE PRAISES MCCAIN'S EXPERIENCE

Ex-Senator on hand for opening of Greenville headquarters

BY BROCK LETCHWORTH
The Daily Reflector

Former U.S. Sen. Bob Dole says Americans need experience in the White House — and that is why he is supporting Sen. John McCain in the presidential race.

Dole visited Greenville on Wednesday while stumping for McCain and a handful of other Republican candidates, including his wife, U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Dole, R-N.C.

After spending the afternoon touring the East Carolina University campus, Dole served as the guest speaker at the grand opening of a local GOP "Victory Headquarters."

Standing outside of the Commerce Street office, Dole announced his support for Charlotte Mayor Pat McCrory's gubernatorial campaign, called his wife a brilliant woman who is currently being targeted by Democratic rival Kay Hagan and noted several other local and state GOP candidates he said deserve to be elected.

Dole said his nearly 30 years spent as a U.S. Senator taught him that no one is perfect, but also brought to light the importance of conservative values.

"There is a reason to have that philosophy," Dole said. "When you're voting age, you want to make certain your children are not going to be saddled with a tax burden and more government and"

FORMER SEN. Bob Dole talks with television reporters Wednesday afternoon at the new McCain campaign office in Greenville. Below, Linda Daves, State GOP chairwoman, speaks at the opening of the McCain office Wednesday afternoon located on Commerce Street in Greenville.

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more programs that we're not going to be able to pay for."

Dole praised McCain for his time in the military, but said it wasn't enough.

Instead, Dole said, it is the Arizona Senator's resume that voters should admire most.

"I've always felt that if I was going to have brain surgery, I would hope the doctor has done one or two more before I got there," Dole said. "There is something about being first there that doesn't excite me. There is no question who has the experience. I'm not saying a bad thing about the other candidate, except the facts are he doesn't have the experience, and John McCain does."

Dole said McCain's willingness to work with Democrats is also an admirable trait, one voters should consider when going to the polls. He also cautioned the crowd that electing a Democratic president coupled with the party holding a majority in the Senate could hinder the GOP's chances of getting bills through.

"Democrats could do anything they want, and they've got more ideas for more spending and more federal programs and taxes than you can count," he said.

Dole said his wife is being portrayed as inefficient in campaign ads, but she is a top target for Democrats because of her accomplishments.

"She gets a lot of things done because people like her, and she is honest and a woman of integrity," Dole said. "I'm very proud of her."

The local GOP headquarters is one of nine the Republican party has opened state-wide. It will feature one paid staff member and rely heavily on volunteers to register voters and promote early voting, said Brent Woodcox, party spokesman.

Woodcox said the office will serve more than 20 counties in eastern North Carolina.

Nearly 50 people attended Wednesday's event, including state GOP Chairman Linda Daves, state treasurer candidate Bill Daughtridge, District 5 Senate hopeful Louis Pate, N.C. House candidates Ginny Cooper and Dean Stephens, Pitt County Commissioner Jimmy Garris and Greenville City Councilman Max Joyner.

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23% of young adults not registered to vote

STAFF REPORTS

A new report says that one-fourth of North Carolina’s young people, ages 18 to 25, are not registered to vote, despite record registrations.

The Young Voters Index found that 200,000 young citizens still haven’t registered, even though about 90,000 new registrations were recorded since January. In all, 23 percent of young adults have not registered, compared to less than 20 percent of adults over the age of 25.

"Young people are participating more than they did four years ago, but they still have tremendous potential to do so much more," said Bob Hall, executive director of Democracy North Carolina.

In May, 134,000 young people cast ballots during the primaries, quadruple the number of young people who voted during the 2004 primaries. But the rate of participation was the lowest of any age group. Only 21 percent of registered youth voted in May, compared to 37 percent of all registered voters.

Hall suggested that high schools and colleges make a special effort to educate people about their voting rights. For example, 17-year-olds can register now if their 18th birthday falls before Nov. 4.

Duke, East Carolina, N.C. Central, N.C. State and UNC Chapel Hill are among the universities that are early voting sites where students can register and vote on the same day.
Brody welcomes Class of 2012

Class includes FCHS graduate

Seventy-six new medical students capped their first week at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University today as they received their symbolic white coats.

This class is the largest in school history, topping last year's 73 entering students. As usual, all students are North Carolina residents representing 32 counties from across the state. Thirty-nine are women, 37 are men. They range in age from 20 to 32. They have degrees from 29 different schools, led by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (18), ECU (13) and N.C. State University (12). Ten students have graduate degrees.

Among the class of 2012 are the four newest Brody Scholars: Nabeel H. Arastu of Greenville, Bryan Howington of Pembroke, Wesley Thomas O'Neal of Wilson and Mary Elizabeth Windham of Greenville.

Arastu enters ECU having already co-written a book about cancer survivorship among those who were diagnosed with cancer as a child. Arastu worked with Dr. Aziza Shad and nurse practitioner Karen Hennessy of the Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center at Georgetown University to write "The Next Step: Crossing the Bridge to Survivorship."

Windham, a graduate of Farmville Central High School, enters Brody as one of four "MD in 7" students. They have completed three years of undergraduate study at ECU and will receive their bachelor's degrees after completing their first year of medical school.

The Brody Scholars program honors J. S. "Sammy" Brody, who died in 1994. He and his brother, Leo, were among the earliest supporters of medical education in eastern North Carolina. The legacy continues through the dedicated efforts of Hyman Brody and David Brody. Subsequent gifts through the Brody Foundation have enabled the medical school to educate new physicians, conduct important research and improve health care in eastern North Carolina.

The scholarship is administered through the ECU Medical & Health Sciences Foundation.
ECU School of Music seeks students for string lessons

The East Carolina University School of Music is seeking fourth and fifth grade violin, viola, cello and bass students to participate in a teaching practicum for undergraduate music education students.

The program, funded by a grant from the Dana Foundation through an application process from the National String Project Consortium, seeks to increase the number of children playing stringed instruments and to alleviate the shortage of public school orchestra teachers by training the next generation of string educators.

The fourth and fifth grade students will be recruited from the Eastern North Carolina region commutable to Greenville. Eligible students may be beginning or intermediate level, and no audition is required. The purpose of the program is to supplement beginning level string offerings for those in public school programs, and offer group instruction to students who may not have access to a school music program. Students are expected to participate in their school string program if one exists.

Cost of the twice-weekly program is $35 per semester. For fifth graders who have a year of experience, small group classes will be offered once per week at $35 per semester.

Fourth-and-fifth-grade string students interested in participating in the program should contact Dr. Greg Hurley, ECU School of Music, at 252-328-1245, or by e-mail at hurleyc@ecu.edu.
Today's debate: College admissions

Let alma maters decide

Our view:
Schools should determine whether children of alumni get an edge.

A fair number of freshmen arriving at their colleges this week are legacies, a term that sounds fairly disreputable. Arent these the students who get into top-tier colleges because their parents went there and donate heavily?

That's what the critics of admission preferences for children of alumni say, and those critics got a boost from research released earlier this month.

A paper by a Duke University sociology professor and a graduate student concluded that legacy students entered Duke with lower grades and had poorer grades the first year (before recovering). Not only did the Duke legacy students earn lower grades initially, they were more likely to be wealthy, white, Protestant graduates of private schools.

The study is bound to fire up anti-legacy campaigns. On Capitol Hill in recent years, some senators have threatened colleges with reporting requirements on legacy students or, worse yet, sought to revoke tax exemptions for gifts made by legacy parents.

The motives of the anti-legacy advocates are understandable, and if a college decides on its own not to give extra points to legacy applicants, more power to it. But bans on legacy advantages could trigger unintended consequences:

Reduced diversity. Once government starts tinkering with the admissions process, there's no stopping it. If preferences for legacies are barred, so might those for minorities, athletes, tuba players or modern dancers. Colleges, not legislators, should determine their optimal mix of students, one that isn't necessarily based solely on grades and SAT scores.

Revenue drops. States are dotted with regional colleges with limited national pull. These colleges lack the deep pockets afforded by the multibillion-dollar endowments found at elite universities. Encouraging the children of alumni, including alums who are steady givers, is an economic necessity. Denying colleges those donations would inflict serious financial damage.

Limited loyalty. Colleges like legacy students for the same reason they like "early decision" applicants who list a college as their top choice and promise to attend if accepted. Students who really want to be at a college add spirit, carry on traditions and get involved in activities that benefit all students.

To date, only a few public universities have banned legacy advantages. At elite private colleges, legacy students make up as much as 12% of the freshman classes, although most legacies get only a modest edge and intense competition for admission makes getting in far tougher than it used to be. (Satirist Andy Borowitz suggests a LegacyPlus program to allow rejected Harvard legacies to "enjoy all of the perks of students who actually got into Harvard — except for the education part.")

At lesser-known colleges, which are worried about their economic survival, legacy admissions appear to be rising, say college counselors, and might make up as much as 30% of the freshman class.

It's easy to appreciate the unease about legacy admissions. But depriving colleges of the ability to shape their freshman classes as they see fit, as long as they abide by antidiscrimination laws, amounts to denial of an important academic freedom.
Ban legacy preferences

Opposing view:
Practice gives an unfair advantage to less qualified children of alumni.

By Michael Dannenberg

There is no good argument for a legacy preference in college admissions. Legacies are less qualified and perform less well academically than their non-legacy peers. The preference is inefficient for fundraising, and it undermines the role of colleges as engines of socioeconomic opportunity. Schools should do away with it voluntarily, or Congress should ban it just like discrimination against racial minorities.

At elite institutions, typically one in eight students is a legacy. In many schools, there are more legacies than African Americans, Latinos or Pell Grant recipients. Notre Dame, where one in four students gets a legacy preference, has more legacies than minorities and working-class kids combined.

Harvard's legacy admission rate is 40%. Yet according to the Education Department Office for Civil Rights, legacies on average are "significantly less qualified" than their peers.

Elite colleges — with endowments such as Notre Dame's $6 billion and Harvard's $35 billion — claim the preference is "necessary" for fundraising. But students get a legacy preference even if their families haven't contributed a dime. From a fundraising standpoint, it would be fairer and more efficient to auction off acceptance letters on eBay than to give a legacy preference.

Colleges such as Yale claim the preference furthers a sense of tradition. That's the same argument used to exclude racial minorities, women and Jews a generation ago, not to mention justify racial segregation nationally.

Defenders such as USA TODAY hide behind the concept of "academic freedom." But academic freedom has to do with research and what goes on inside the classroom — it's not a blank check for discriminatory admissions policies. It's not as if legacies have an important perspective or special talent that contributes to the intellectual or cultural environment of a school.

The legacy preference doesn't reward achievement, doesn't promote diversity and isn't fair. It should be banned. The last thing colleges and universities should be doing is extending an extra helping hand to those already advantaged by birth.

Michael Dannenberg is a senior fellow at the New America Foundation, an independent think tank, and a former education aide to Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass.