THE DAILY CLIPS

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ECU is pondering safety issues at off-campus complexes

By Ginger Livingston
The Daily Reflector
Saturday, August 21, 2010

When East Carolina University Police Sgt. Stephanie Carnevale meets parents during freshman orientation one question is asked repeatedly.

"The biggest question we get is what is the safest place where my kid can live," said Carnevale, the department’s community affairs liaison.

The shooting death of a New Jersey native at a student housing development in Greenville nearly two weeks before college students returned to town for the 2010-11 school year again left some parents questioning the safety of their child’s living arrangements.

Crime statistics from the Greenville Police Department reveal that relatively few criminal incidents took place in off-campus student housing developments during a 2 1/2-year period.
beginning in January 2008. The statistics show that less than 2 percent of all calls for service answered by city police during that period came from the developments.

"I would say (off-campus developments) are safer, or at least as safe as can be expected," said Lt. Chris Ivey, Greenville police’s special operations division commander, whose office works closely with the university and student population.

Greenville police received about 153,000 calls for service citywide during a 37 1/2-month period between January 2008 and Aug. 17. There were 2,663 calls from 11 complexes developed for student housing during that time span, according to data from the police department.

“It’s like Chief (William) Anderson says, perception is everything,” Cpl. Kip Gaskins, Greenville Police Department spokesman said. “It’s why we put the (crime) numbers online. We want to provide an accurate count of what is going on.”

The majority of East Carolina University students have historically lived off campus because the school’s 15 dormitories have 5,491 beds to serve the almost 28,000 students enrolled in classes on campus and online, said Virginia Hardy, the university’s vice provost for student affairs.

Traditionally, off-campus students not living at home have lived in apartment complexes or rental housing. However, developers in recent years have created housing which allows students to rent individual beds in units with shared living and dining spaces.

The city of Greenville’s planning rules call it dormitory housing and define it as “a building or group of buildings where group sleeping accommodations are provided e.g., SLPs in one room or in a series of closely associated rooms under joint occupancy and single management.”

While city officials were not able to identify the exact number of dormitory housing developments, the majority of students are living in 11 complexes that offer about 8,600 bedrooms, according to the Greenville planning department.

The largest off-campus student housing development is North Campus Crossing, located north of the Tar River on Martin Luther King Jr. Highway, with nearly 1,700 beds, according to city planning records. Copper Beech, on 10th Street, has more than 1,200 beds. The Bellamy, off N.C. 43 South, and Pirates Cove, also on 10th Street, each have more than 1,000 beds, according to planning records.

The remaining developments have between 216 and 880 beds.

“Of course, we want to take care of our students the best we can, and we want to keep them safe, but because these are private apartment complexes we really don’t have the authority to do all the things we can do on campus,” Hardy said. “We talk to our students about safety.” The school offers numerous safety courses and requires freshmen to take health classes that include alcohol awareness education.

Carnevale said the management of off-campus student housing complexes works closely with her office to provide safety education.

Many host pizza parties so Carnevale can present safety programs. They sponsor Operation ID events, where students have identification numbers engraved on their valuables for easy identification if the items are stolen and later recovered.

Several developments also have hosted Rape Aggression Defense courses, which teach basic self-defense skills, on-site, she said.

Lucia Brannon, coordinator of ECU’s Off-Campus Student Services, spent Thursday and Friday leaving information packages at the 11 student housing developments and 16 other apartment complexes with large student populations.

The packages provide information about registering for the school’s emergency notification system and brochures explaining the city of Greenville’s rules for roommates, animal control, the noise ordinance, parking rules and other issues.

It’s the first year Brannon’s office has reached out to students living in the complexes.

Traditionally her office focused its attention on students living in the neighborhoods surrounding
the university. With more students moving to the off-campus developments, her office’s reach is expanding.

Amenities such as swimming pools, fitness centers, parties and other social events are the main lure, she said, but many students have told her they also are looking for safe places to live. Safety was the reason Brittany Colley of Eden moved out of ECU’s dorms and into The Bellamy.

“I feel more secure because it is gated and each apartment comes with its own alarm system,” she said. Colley said she didn’t like how her previous dorm suite opened to a walkway with exterior stairs. Since arriving at ECU last year, she has had concerns about the amount of crime in Greenville and the campus’ College Hill area, where she lived.

“Honestly, Greenville is not the best community,” she said.

“Well, that’s anywhere,” her mother, Rayne, said.

Rayne Colley said safety was the first thing her daughter discussed when she asked about moving off campus. She was impressed with her daughter’s research.

“I was confident with what she did, and I trust her instincts,” Rayne Colley said. “That she took responsibility and did the research and made sure it was safe, I was proud of her.”

“Safety is a huge issue for students and parents alike these days,” said Sarah Brook, property manager of North Campus Crossing.

“I think more students are doing their homework. I’m not sure if the safety aspects and questions about it have increased, but they are seeing what is out there and making comparisons,” Brook said.

“A gated community is a major plus for parents and students. The number two (draw) is having on-site security,” Brook said.

Most student housing complexes have on-site security and a growing number are gated, she said. Gated communities, security personnel and alarms offer important protection, law enforcement says. However, the main weapon in combating crime is personal responsibility, Ivey said.

“We want the kids to be hard targets,” he said. “We want them to lock their cars, take their valuables inside and lock their apartments.”

Contact Ginger Livingston at glivingston@reflector.com or (252) 329-9570.
Campus abuzz with classes set to begin

BY JOSH HUMPHRIES  
The Daily Reflector

The campus of East Carolina University is abuzz as students return for fall classes, set to begin Tuesday. About 5,500 students are moving back into campus housing for the new semester.

"We think this will be a great year," ECU spokesman John Durham said.

Fall enrollment numbers will not be available until September but officials believe enrollment will be close to last year's count at 27,674.

Officials do not know the exact number of students until they all arrive and pay their tuition. Durham said it is difficult to guess a number in the uncertain financial environment.

Tremayne Smith, the new Student Government Association president, spent Friday afternoon catching up with old friends and welcoming new students to campus.

JOHN DURHAM, East Carolina University executive director of university communications, speaks to the media during a news conference on Friday.

"I always remember how I felt when I first came to campus," Smith said. "Now I can help freshmen as they arrive. It's a lot of fun to be back."

The university will feature a number of new programs and facilities this year. Students will be welcomed to Wright Place by a complete renovation with new food options including bagels, burgers and Italian food, and new decoration and furniture.

Officials expect to reopen the Croatian dining building.

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ECU

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with a Chili's Too and a Chick-Fil-A restaurant this spring.

Construction continues on a 7,000-seat expansion at Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium, the new Olympic sports complex and softball field.

"The new complexes will offer a more welcoming and competitive environment for our students and visitors," Durham said.

The Family Medicine Center and the ECU Dental School also are set to open next year.

As students and their families arrived Friday morning, officials began a series of tests on a new ECU Alert outdoor notification system on the main campus.

EAST CAROLINA conducted tests on Friday of the outdoor notification system.

The outdoor speakers are mounted on the tops of several buildings throughout campus and would be used in the event of an emergency to alert students of important information. The speakers can be heard in all areas of the campus.

The speakers are part of the ECU Alert emergency notification system that includes instant messages to computers on campus, text messages and display screens located in most buildings throughout campus. University phones also are set to make announcements in the event of an emergency.

"With an increasing concern about safety, we try to make sure that we use all the tools at our command to protect our students," Durham said.

Students can sign up on the ECU website to receive text messages in the event of an emergency or follow the ECU Alert team on Twitter.

Contact Josh Humphries at jhumphries@reflector.com or (252) 329-9565.
PEOPLE IN THE NEWS SPOTLIGHT

Pitt County Memorial Hospital names Hofler chief nursing officer

Linda D. Hofler has been named chief nursing officer at Pitt County Memorial Hospital.

Hofler, who has worked in University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina hospitals for nearly 30 years, has held the position on an interim basis for the last year. For the last five years, she has served as PCMH vice president for the office of quality.

"Linda has experienced every level of nursing during her career," PCMH President Steve Lawler said. "I can't think of anyone better equipped to lead our nursing professionals."

The chief nursing officer is responsible for leading nursing practice to ensure the hospital nursing staff provides safe, high-quality care. The chief nursing officer coordinates nursing activities at PCMH, including patient care, professional development, education and research.

Hofler also serves as a liaison to the hospital's physician staff, other leaders throughout the organization and community agencies outside the hospital.

"Being a nurse is the core of who I am," Hofler said. "I feel privileged to be selected to lead such an amazing nursing team. The nursing staff at PCMH is among the best in the country. Our nurses are all about delivering incredible nursing care to the citizens of eastern North Carolina. I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as the chief nursing officer and lead nursing practice at PCMH."

Hofler's roots run deep at University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina. She joined PCMH as a clinical instructor in 1983. Over the next nine years, she served in several bedside and managerial capacities at PCMH.

For most of the 1990s, Hofler was an executive at Roanoke-Chowan Hospital, eventually becoming vice president of patient services. From 2000 to 2005, Hofler was an administrator for the UHS legal affairs office and served as privacy officer for UHS and PCMH. For the last five years, she has been vice president for the PCMH office of quality.

Hofler began her health care career as a staff nurse at LaCrosse Lutheran Hospital in LaCrosse, Wis. She is a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives, and she earned a doctorate in nursing from East Carolina University in 2007. She is the board chairwoman for the United Way of Pitt County.

New at ECU

Dr. Amir Butt, a specialist in digestive diseases, has joined the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University and its group medical practice, ECU Physicians.

Butt joined ECU as an assistant professor. He comes to Greenville from the Brooklyn (N.Y.) Hospital Center, where he completed fellowship training in gastroenterology.

Butt has a medical degree from Quaid-e-Azam Medical College in Pakistan and completed residency training at Lutheran Medical Center in Brooklyn. He is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine.

Butt's clinical interests are hepatitis B, hepatitis C, peptic ulcer disease, colorectal cancer and capsule endoscopy. He sees patients at Moye Medical Center. Appointments are available by calling 744-1400.
Chancellor’s house broken into

The Daily Reflector

An East Carolina University student was arrested and charged with first-degree burglary after reportedly breaking into Chancellor Steve Ballard’s home on East Fifth Street early Friday morning, according to a news release.

Jaleesa Analda Vales, 20, of 302 S. Meade St. has been a student at the university since the fall of 2008 and was enrolled in the school’s hospitality management program, the release said. University spokesman John Durham said he could not reveal if Vales has been suspended.

Pitt County Detention Center records show she remained in jail Friday afternoon under a $20,000 secured bond.

ECU police responded to a burglary alarm at the chancellor’s house shortly after 3 a.m., the release said. Officers said they saw someone in the house and then observed the person entering the back yard where Vales was taken in custody.

Durham said there were no reports of anything being taken from the home by the alleged burglar.

Ballard and his wife were home when the incident occurred. They were not injured, the release said.

“1 appreciate the quick action by ECU police officers,” Ballard said. “They responded immediately, and I have complete confidence in the way they handled this.”
ECU to use North Campus Crossing;
Pirates to host clinic

The Daily Reflector

The East Carolina University Department of Athletics and ECU Educational Foundation have entered into a contractual agreement with North Campus Crossing to utilize its Recreation, Entertainment and Activity Center as an alternate practice facility for its basketball and volleyball teams.

"The agreement with North Campus Crossing gives their residents a first class gym and gives our volleyball and basketball teams an outstanding practice facility," ECU Director of Athletics Terry Holland said. "It is a win-win for everyone and we appreciate this opportunity to partner with North Campus Crossing."

The gymnasium includes six hoops on a regulation size basketball court. The floor was recently refinished and has been painted with the exact same markings as the Minges Coliseum floor.

"We are very appreciative of the generosity of North Campus Crossing for providing us with the use of this facility," Pirate men’s basketball coach Jeff Lebo said. "It will allow us to alleviate some scheduling conflicts and will enhance what ECU basketball can offer our student-athletes as we continue to work toward an on-campus practice facility."

East Carolina’s teams should have more flexibility in scheduling practices, individual workouts, camps and clinics when displaced by graduation, concerts or other events taking place at Minges.

The Pirate Club is currently in the silent fundrais-

Clinic

East Carolina’s women’s basketball staff will hold its first fall coaching clinic Sept. 18 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at Minges Coliseum.

The event will cover a variety of topics and is slated to include question and answer sessions with the coaches from the North Carolina High School State Championship game as well as round table discussions.

The cost for attending the clinic is $30, which includes lunch. Prospective attendees must register by Sept. 10.

Visit ecupirates.com for more information.

— ECU Media Relations
Food aid from N.C. bound for Haiti

RALEIGH -- More than 1,500 volunteers - students, Girl Scouts, church group members, senior citizens - will gather in N.C. State University's Carmichael Gymnasium today to pack more than 400,000 meals for Haitians still suffering from the effects of a devastating earthquake in January.

It's the kickoff of a series of the festive, rally-like campus events organized by the Raleigh aid group Stop Hunger Now that aims to pack 1 million meals for people in poor countries. UNC-Chapel Hill and East Carolina University will hold their own meal packing events next weekend, and UNC-Wilmington plans another in November.

NCSU has played an outsized role in sending food to Haiti. At a similar event in February, volunteers packed more than 120,000 meals, all paid for via a "Howl For Haiti" fundraiser started by student leaders, who collected money at basketball games, a fashion show and at tables set up around campus.

Even with 1,700 or so volunteer jobs to fill, the fall meal-packing events have become so popular that NCSU turns away hosts of would-be volunteers, event coordinator Tierza Watts said. This year, it added a blood drive, in part to give an outlet to those who didn't make it off the waiting list.

Each meal is a mix of rice, soy protein, dehydrated vegetables and vitamins. The aid group uses most of it to support school meal programs in more than a dozen impoverished countries but has boosted its efforts this year because of the disaster in Haiti, group founder Ray Buchanan said in an interview Friday.

It has been more than half a year since the earthquake, and Buchanan fears that people here will forget Haiti's woes.

"The needs are just so immense, and will continue to be," he said.

More than 31 million meals have been assembled at Stop Hunger Now events since they started the meals program in 2005, about a third of them this year. That's a big number, but not nearly big enough and, in a way, not really the point, Buchanan said.

"Yes, it's amazing, and there is a real need for those meals," he said. "But we want build a mindset among people that we're not going to tolerate hunger any more."

At the beginning of each meal packing event, a Stop Hunger Now staff member speaks about hunger, and throughout their training volunteers are encouraged to reach out to others to talk about it.

"We want this to be an introduction to hunger action, so that it's not the last thing that they do to fight hunger, but the first thing," he said.
A $100,000 event

To help pay for the $100,000 cost of today's event at NCSU, the university asked volunteers to raise $50 each, not just by pulling it out of their own pockets but by approaching others and talking to them about hunger and seeking smaller donations, said Watts, the event coordinator.

Some went well beyond $50. Hunter Isgrig, 18, a sophomore biology major from Weaverville, was a lifeguard at the tony Grove Park Inn in Asheville this summer and talked his bosses into letting him and another NCSU student, Amanda Antono of Raleigh, hold a fundraiser at the pool.

Isgrig packed meals at NCSU last year and has taken Buchanan's fight to heart.

"This is one big issue that is correctable, so why not do something about it?" he said.

Isgrig and Antono collected $375 at the pool party. He figures that if they had been focused entirely on money they could have pulled in significantly more, but they took the time to chat up donors about the basics of hunger.

"It's not just about getting a check," he said. "The real purpose is to spread the word about the cause."

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Transfer QB Davis paces ECU effort

Junior quarterback Dominique Davis threw two touchdown passes, and redshirt freshman inside receiver Torrance Hunt had two scoring receptions during East Carolina's second and final scrimmage of preseason camp Saturday afternoon at Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium in Greenville.

ECU passers combined to go 32-of-50 for 541 yards and seven touchdowns, and senior Giavanni Ruffin broke off a 40-yard run on the way to a game-high 75-yard rushing performance. On the other side of the ball, sophomore defensive back Jacobi Jenkins had a 31-yard interception return.

"It was very competitive," coach Ruffin McNeill said. "I thought the offense did some good things today. Our first-team defense did a really good job as well. Making routine plays was one of the goals of the scrimmage."

Davis, a transfer from Boston College, Brad Wornick and Rio Johnson split the majority of the repetitions at quarterback, combining to account for 29 of the 32 completions.

More football

NCCU scrimmages: An eager crowd of devoted fans braved 90-degree heat to "Meet the Eagles" on Saturday as the NCCU football team made its public debut. The 85-member team signed autographs and chatted with fans before entertaining the crowd with a 61-play scrimmage at O'Kelly-Riddick Stadium in Durham.

Coach Mose Rison said he is pleased with the progress of the team. "I think it's been a good fall camp, and I know come the second of September it'll be a good turnout," Rison said of the Eagles' season-opener against Johnson C. Smith.

In limited action under center, junior quarterback Michael Johnson completed 2 of 7 passes for 70 yards. Winston-Salem State transfer Jordan Reid took a majority of the snaps, collecting 176 yards on 8-of-16 passing. Junior Keon Johnson was 3-for-8 with 56 yards passing and 22 yards rushing.

The Gray ground game was paced by senior running back Tony McCord with 52 yards on eight carries, including a 15-yard touchdown run.

Falcons scrimmage: All-CIAA linebacker Mark Hall recorded nine tackles, including one sack, and an interception to highlight St. Augustine's intrasquad scrimmage Saturday at Emery Field.

The defense, led by Hall, collected five sacks, three fumble recoveries and two interceptions during the two-hour morning scrimmage. The defense held the offense scoreless in the first half, but the offense responded with six touchdowns during red-zone situations in the second half.
"We showed good signs of stopping the run and throwing the football well in the red zone," Falcons coach Michael Costa said. "It was a good first scrimmage. We are starting to see everything come together that we have worked on in practice."

The Falcons will hold their second intrasquad scrimmage at 1 p.m. Saturday. They open the regular season Sept. 4 at Catawba College.

Beamer gets extension: Virginia Tech has extended the contract of football coach Frank Beamer through the 2016 season, the university announced Saturday.

Beamer's current deal was set to expire at the end of 2012.

Beamer, 63, is second among active coaches behind Penn State's Joe Paterno with 229 career victories.

Beamer has guided the Hokies to six straight 10-win seasons and 17 consecutive bowl appearances in his 24 seasons.

The Associated Press
Parents, not law, are best credit-card teachers

WASHINGTON -- Entering freshmen at colleges across the country will be the first class of regular semester students to face credit card restrictions under the Credit Card Accountability, Responsibility and Disclosure Act of 2009.

If you are under 21, to open a credit card account you will need to either show you have the income to make required payments or get a co-signer 21 or older who has the ability to do so. Once you have a card with a co-signer, if you want a higher credit card limit, your co-signer must agree in writing to the increase.

Credit card companies are prohibited from marketing credit within 1,000 feet of a college campus. This limit would include related college events, such as concerts or athletic competitions. Companies are also banned from offering certain "tangible" gifts.

But I wonder how successful the law, also known as the Credit CARD Act, will be.

There will be plenty of locations near a campus that will give credit marketers a chance to pitch to students. The companies may not be able to offer a free T-shirt or stuffed animal, but they can entice students with discounts, reward points or promotional credit terms, according to final rules released by the Federal Reserve.

And I'm sure there are plenty of parents who are convinced that their kid needs to establish credit. So they will be all too willing to co-sign for a credit card. By the way, the Federal Reserve says that anyone 21 or older, not just parents, legal guardians or a spouse, can co-sign for younger students to get a credit card. This means it's possible that older siblings or even college friends may be persuaded to co-sign. But no one should ever do this.

Co-signing doesn't mean you are the backup borrower. You are equally responsible for the debt. Unless you are prepared to treat any charges as your own, don't co-sign.

I've long advocated that college students who are not employed full time shouldn't have credit cards. It's possible for them to get through college using just cash and a debit card. Trust me, I've seen it happen, even with a student who studied abroad. Although there are tougher credit standards now, credit issuers are still pursuing young adults.

The age restrictions and co-signer requirements of the CARD Act were meant to teach students financial restraint. But if they can still get through the loopholes in the law, the efforts to help them steer clear of credit card debt will be for naught.

Yes, I know many kids are financially responsible and can handle credit. I hear from parents all the time who think it's important to expose their children to credit as a means of teaching them how to
manage money. However, using credit only teaches you to be a debtor. I unfortunately know all too well the consequences of putting a credit card - with little or no supervision - in the hands of a financially naive young person. I hear their horror stories long after the pizza, clothing or spring break charges. With credit, they learn how easy it is to live above their means.

But since I know I'm swimming against the tide, at least be sure if you're determined to co-sign for a college student that he or she has a good understanding of how to use credit as wisely as possible.

To help you with this conversation, creditcards.com (a really great and informative website) has posted information about the section of the CARD Act pertaining to students. Search for "How credit card reform impacts young adults under 21." You'll also find on the site a credit card contract for parents and adult children created by John E. Whitcomb, a medical doctor and author of "Capitate Your Kids." You can also download the contract from Whitcomb's site at capitatelyourkids.com.

The contract calls for parents to show the child how to pay off the card every month by scheduling regular sessions to review the credit card bill. The son or daughter agrees, among other things, to stick to an agreed-upon spending limit, and to pay off purchases or services by the next billing cycle. If the bill is not paid in full, the credit card will be canceled immediately.

If you're going to just sign this contract, tuck it away and not enforce its terms, don't bother. But if you're serious about making this a teachable moment, this contract is a great way to emphasize your son's or daughter's responsibilities and yours as a co-signer.

Michelle Singletary, the personal finance columnist for the Washington Post, can be reached at singletarym@washpost.com singletarym@washpost.com.
UNC insurance plan under fire over abortion

A national anti-abortion group is asking Gov. Bev Perdue to look into the details of a new UNC system requirement that all students have health insurance.

Students for Life of America has asked Perdue to investigate a number of issues surrounding the UNC system's new health insurance program for students.

The university mandates that students buy into a new insurance plan it is offering unless they can prove they have coverage from another source.

In the face of criticism, UNC system leaders last week said students could opt out of the portion of their UNC insurance plans that covers abortion.

The "opt-out" provision, in which students in the program have automatic abortion coverage until they request it be dropped, is one of several of the plan's features under fire by the national pro-life group.

The group raises several other questions, including why students who opt out of the abortion coverage of their plans pay the same rate as those students whose plans include it.

UNC officials have said the abortion coverage is a small enough piece of the entire plan that its individual cost is negligible.

Myrick gets an app

Rep. Sue Myrick has her own app for the iPhone.

The app from Myrick, a Charlotte Republican, is a free download on the iTunes App Store.

Myrick's app includes links for constituent services, scheduling an appearance for the congresswoman, and quick access to regular video features that she posts on YouTube.

Those videos often focus on terrorism, immigration and other issues important to Myrick. We're assuming that's why Apple gave Myrick's app a rating of 12+ ("may not be suitable for children under the age of 12") for including "Infrequent/Mild Alcohol, Tobacco or Drug Use or References and Infrequent/Mild Realistic Violence."

The bigger they come ...

Before he can take on Columbus County Democratic state Rep. Dewey Hill in a grudge match at the polls, Republican Tristan Patterson must first defend his honor in the ring against a semi-pro wrestler.

The Wilmington Star-News reported that Patterson dared suggest on a radio show that wrestling
sometimes doesn't look real. Bad move.

So Patterson was scheduled Saturday night to take on Donald Brower, a wrestling promoter and owner of Wilmington-based United Pro Wrestling Association, the paper reported.

If Patterson, a 185-pounder, can't defeat Brower, a 325-pound wrestler with 10 years of ring experience, Patterson promises to drop out of his race and endorse Hill - who, by the way, is recovering from bypass surgery.

Brower is a New Jersey native. If he wins, the terms of the bout also require Brower to denounce the Carolina Hurricanes and wear a New Jersey Devils jersey.

"If Patterson wins, Brower has to declare southeastern North Carolina the best place to live in the country and back Patterson on the campaign trail," the paper reported.

We'll get back to you on how things went.

By staff writers Eric Ferreri and Benjamin Niolet

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Electronic health records getting boost from state

Joel Gerber
2010-08-22 17:38:11

Electronic health records are on the way, and rural counties such as Lenoir are getting a boost from state funding.

The North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund created a system that will assist in the transition to electronic health records. The program — the N.C. Electronic Health Record Loan Fund Pilot Program — will provide financial assistance to health care providers in Tier 1 counties seeking to create or upgrade electronic health record systems.

"Doctors in rural North Carolina need as much help as we can provide," Gov. Bev Perdue said in a press release. "These electronic health record systems will enable them to deliver better medical care in the smaller towns and cities across our state."

All physicians will have to have a government-mandated electronic health record in place by 2015, as part of the Obama administration's health reform. Doctors and hospitals could receive as much as $27 billion over the next 10 years to buy equipment to computerize patients' medical records. An estimated 50,000 new jobs will be needed in this area by 2015, according to the department of Health and Human Services.

Electronic health records will be an important part of health care reform, and making sure rural counties are up to date is a goal of the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, according to Dr. Chuck Willson, Health and Wellness Trust Fund chair and pediatrician at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University.

"Technology will enhance the ability to care for their patients and to participate in quality improvement programs," Willson said. "In this era of health care reform, it is especially important for the Health and Wellness Trust Fund to support the infrastructure needed by rural providers in order to improve access to care for North Carolina's vulnerable and underserved populations."

Joel Gerber can be reached at 252-559-1076 or jgerber@freedomensc.com
Students, Welcome to College; Parents, Go Home

By TRIP GABRIEL

GRINNELL, Iowa — In order to separate doting parents from their freshman sons, Morehouse College in Atlanta has instituted a formal “Parting Ceremony.”

It began on a recent evening, with speeches in the Martin Luther King Jr. International Chapel. Then the incoming freshmen marched through the gates of the campus — which swung shut, literally leaving the parents outside.

When University of Minnesota freshmen move in at the end of this month, parental separation will be a little sneakier: mothers and fathers will be invited to a reception elsewhere so students can meet their roommates and negotiate dorm room space — without adult meddling.

As the latest wave of superinvolved parents delivers its children to college, institutions are building into the day, normally one of high emotion, activities meant to punctuate and speed the separation. It is part of an increasingly complex process, in the age of Skype and twice-daily texts home, in which colleges are urging “Velcro parents” to back off so students can develop independence.

Grinnell College here, like others, has found it necessary to be explicit about when parents really, truly must say goodbye. Move-in day for the 415 freshmen was Saturday. After computer printers and duffle bags had been carried to dorm rooms, everyone gathered in the gymnasium, students on one side of the bleachers, parents on the other.

The president welcoming the class of 2014 had his back to the parents — a symbolic staging meant to inspire “an aha moment,” said Houston Dougherty, vice president of student affairs, “an epiphany where parents realize, ‘My student is feeling more comfortable sitting with 400 people they just met.’”
Shortly after, mothers and fathers were urged to leave campus.

Moving their students in usually takes a few hours. Moving on? Most deans can tell stories of parents who lingered around campus for days. At Colgate University in Hamilton, N.Y., a mother and father once went to their daughter’s classes on the first day of the semester and trouped to the registrar’s office to change her schedule, recalled Beverly Low, the dean of first-year students.

“We recognize it’s a huge day for families,” she said. Still, during various parent meetings on Colgate’s move-in day, which is Thursday, Ms. Low and other officials plan to drop not-so-subtle hints that “activities for the class of 2014 begin promptly at 4,” she said.

Formal “hit the road” departure ceremonies are unusual but growing in popularity, said Joyce Holl, head of the National Orientation Directors Association. A more common approach is for colleges to introduce blunt language into drop-off schedules specifying the hour for last hugs. As of 5:30 p.m. on Sept. 11, for example, the parents of Princeton freshmen learn from the move-in schedule, “subsequent orientation events are intended for students only.”

The language was added in recent years to draw a clear line, said Thomas Dunne, the associate dean of undergraduates. “It’s easy for students to point to this notation and say, ‘Hey, Mom, I think you’re supposed to be gone now,’” he said. “It’s obviously a hard conversation for students to have with parents.”

For evidence, consider a chat-board thread by new Princeton parents on the Web site College Confidential. “Do parents hang around for a day or two after orientation in case their kids need something?” one poster, mrscollege, asked. “I say no, but we have a friend who is planning to hang around for a while in Princeton for her son just in case.”

Some undergraduate officials see in parents’ separation anxieties evidence of the excesses of modern child-rearing. “A good deal of it has to do with the evolution of overinvolvement in our students’ lives,” said Mr. Dougharty of Grinnell. “These are the baby-on-board parents, highly invested in their students’ success. They do a lot of living vicariously, and this is one manifestation of that.”

He and other student-life officials encourage parents to detach — not just at drop-off but throughout the freshman year, including limiting phone calls and text messages.

Parents, of course, know that in their head. But they still struggle to let go.
After lunch on Saturday at Grinnell, before the hail and farewell ceremony, Gary and Glorallynn Calderon easily welled up while visiting the campus mailroom with their daughter. “It’s hard, we’re overprotective,” Mr. Calderon admitted.

His wife, a kindergarten teacher, said Grinnell’s message that at 4 p.m. college was starting and parents must go reminded her of what she tells the mothers and fathers of her pupils on the first day of school: “Say goodbye and just leave, because the kids calm down.”

Their daughter, Aileen, a softball player, said that she had initially been fearful about starting college, but “now I’m excited and ready to go.”

That seemed altogether typical of the freshmen, who were looking forward to the “floor bonding” exercises with dorm mates and were failing to share parental nostalgia.

The pressure to let go had really begun a year earlier while touring colleges, said Leslie Nelson, who with his wife, Jill Hayman, had spent three days driving their son, Micah, from New York City.

Ms. Hayman corrected her husband: “I think the pressure starts when the umbilical cord falls off,” she said. “I’m not the only mom here who’s been dreading this since that day.”

As a comfort, she had read books about the stages of grief. “You have to just allow yourself to experience the loss and grieve over what’s gone,” she said.

But Micah was eager to get on with it. “I haven’t been thinking about anything they’ve been saying,” he said, as his parents looked on.

As for Mr. Dougharty of Grinnell College, for the first time in his academic career he missed his own campus’s move-in day. He and his wife were busy Saturday, dropping off their only child, Allie, at Earlham College in Richmond, Ind., to begin her freshman year.

Mr. Dougharty had made reservations at a bed-and-breakfast near the campus for Saturday night, but then his wife, Kimberly, questioned why they should stay around after dropping Allie off.

“I had to look at myself in the mirror,” Mr. Dougharty said. “I had thought, ‘On Sunday morning we can swing by and take Allie to breakfast.’ Kimberly was good and sane — ‘We have to get down the road.’ ”