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Alumni tap colleges for career services

By Justin Pope
The Associated Press

Dozens of colleges and universities have begun offering career-counseling services not just to recent graduates but to thousands of alumni, including some former students who completed their degrees a decade ago or longer.

At schools like Willamette University in Oregon, the expanded career services are also part of a broader effort to keep alumni engaged in the college community — something that makes them more likely financial supporters down the road.

"When we call them for their annual fund gift, they’re not only going to say Willamette is a place where I spent four great years and that gave me a fabulous foundation liberal arts education, but it continues to provide value and service," said David Audley, the school’s director of alumni and parents relations.

When the tech sector collapsed in the early 2000s, many alumni sought help from colleges, and schools began to think about new ways to help them. In the last year or two, the trend of hiring full-time counselors for alumni has taken off. A listserv for people who held such jobs started two years ago with eight members and now has 125.

Among the institutions offering alumni services is the University of Texas at San Antonio, where Angelina Roman graduated a decade ago. At the time, the school helped her land a job with business technology company EDS.

After taking time off to care for her ailing father, Roman recently returned seeking another job and advice on a potential career change. She got help from the same counselor, Shirley Rowe, whose assignment is now offering career advice to former students.

"It was great walking into their office and being able to talk to Shirley, who I knew from back then," Ramon said. "I have not seen any other place that tops all their resources."

The idea of helping alumni is not entirely new. Many schools offer at least some career services to alumni, such as listservs and job banks, and a few have long-established programs offering comprehensive services like one-on-one counseling and assessment tests.

For instance, the University of Houston started an alumni career services program during the oil bust of the 1980s, when many graduates were looking for work. The University of Illinois has one of the larger programs, which is 20 years old and has three full-time staffers.

But it’s only in recent years that a significant number have begun devoting staff just to alumni. One reason is increasing job turnover in many professions has more former students looking for personalized advice.

"There was a time when if you got a job with a major corporation, you pretty much stuck with them and got your gold watch," said Jack Rayman, director of career services at Penn State.

Now, he says, graduates can expect to hold seven to 10 different jobs.
Storybook Theatre presents 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe'

Special to The Daily Reflector

East Carolina University's Family Fare series kicks off Friday with Storybook Theatre's performance of "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe."

Based on the book by C.S. Lewis, the play tells the story of the Pevensie children, evacuated from London during World War II, who discover a world that can be entered through a magical wardrobe. The world, Narnia, is a land of talking beasts, dwarfs, fauns, centaurs and giants cursed to eternal winter by an evil White Witch. With Narnia's rightful ruler, Aslan, the children fight to overcome the White Witch.

The Daily Reflector's Youth Advisory Panel correspondent, Bailey Cooper, talked with two of the cast members from Storybook Theatre about the upcoming performance.

Chris Timmons, 18, an ECU freshman from Raleigh stars as Aslan, and Dylan Smith, 20, a sophomore from Farmville, stars as Mr. Tumnus. Both are theater students in their first production with Storybook Theatre.

Q: How did you get started in theater?

Chris: I was in middle school and it sounded like an interesting class to take, and I just took it through high school.

Dylan: I started in high school (Farmville Central). I was in a couple of plays ... and then I decided that's what I wanted to do in college.

Q: Tell me about the character you play in "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe."

Chris: My character's name is Aslan, and he is a lion. I guess you could relate him to Jesus in the Bible. He is a character that comes and he saves the children and all the creatures in Narnia from the White Witch. He gives his life for Edmund's life. He comes back to life and defeats the witch.

Dylan: I play Mr. Tumnus, who is the faun in "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe." At first, he's a really weak character; he's always scared of the bad guys and doing the right thing, doing the wrong thing. He gets mixed up in working for the witch as a kidnapper. He plans on kidnapping Lucy, but in the end he turns out to be a lot better. He actually saves Lucy from being captured by the witch.

Q: What is your favorite thing about playing this character?

Chris: I think it's just a really fun character. It's interesting, one, to be playing an animal. He's king of the jungle, the big, strong lion.
If you Go!

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe” will be performed at 7 p.m. Friday in Wright Auditorium on campus. A season family pass (four tickets to each show) is $96, $80 for ECU employees. Individual season passes are $30 for adults and $20 for youth. Individual performance tickets are $9 for adults and $6 for children. Visit www.ecuarts.com or call 328-4788 or (800) ECU-ARTS.

Dylan: My favorite thing about playing Tumnus is the way I get to walk. I have a really weird walk that I have to do that looks very much like in the movie. That's probably my favorite part, other than his voice. He's got a very crackly, kind of high-pitched voice.

Q: Have you read the book or seen the movie?

Chris: I have read parts of the book, and I have not seen the movie.

Dylan: I've done both, actually. I've read the book and seen the movie.

Q: Can you tell me how the play compares to them?

Dylan: Well, the play is a lot more fast paced than the movie or the book. It's a lot more condensed. It moves along at a very quick pace. There's a lot of moments in the play that aren't in the book or the movie, a lot of key moments between people that you don't really get to see. ... In the play you can really see it from all angles.

Q: What is the best thing about doing a play for a young audience?

Chris: That they are a really honest audience. If it's funny, they're going to laugh. If it's not, they won't.

Dylan: The best thing about doing a play for a young audience is that none of the subject matter is really intense. It's not complicated. It's easier to fall into your character because you don't have a lot of conflicts about what they're doing. It's fun; it's loud. It's just plain funny.

Q: What is the most difficult thing about performing for kids?

Chris: You never know what they're going to laugh at, what they're going to respond to. So you just have to keep on your feet.

Dylan: Tumnus changes a lot throughout the play. He actually has a big change of heart and he has to change the way he feels, and I have to change the way I act.

Bailey Cooper is a student at Wintergreen Intermediate School and is a YAP correspondent for The Daily Reflector.
‘A very public job at a very special place’

UNC-CH seeks extraordinary leader

BY JANE STANCILL
STAFF WRITER

CHAPEL HILL — A new leader will take over UNC-Chapel Hill in 2008, just in time to manage a growth spurt, recruit 2,000 faculty members in eight years and tangle with the town over the development of a new research campus called Carolina North.

The successor to retiring Chancellor James Moeser will need management skills, political savvy and respect for the revered traditions of academia. It’s a high-profile job that draws scrutiny from students, parents, professors, politicians, sports fans and more than 250,000 living alumni, not to mention millions of state taxpayers.

Who is qualified?

“Somebody who can do an impossible job — that’s the first criteria,” joked Dr. Shelley Earp, director of the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, who served on the search committee that chose Moeser.

“There is no one that can please all of the people all of the time. It’s a very public job at a very special place.”

This month, a 19-member committee will start the task of finding someone with the ability to do the impossible.

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to run a complex university with an annual budget of $2.4 billion, raise money and be the public face of a treasured state asset. The national search is expected to take months.

Leadership process

UNC-CH, the nation's oldest state university, should look for a candidate who knows the school and its culture, said Art Padilla, a professor of management at N.C. State University and author of "Portraits in Leadership," a study of college presidencies.

In that sense, he said, the best candidate may already be at UNC-CH.

Leadership, Padilla said, comes more from a process than from a person. It takes time, experience and maturity. An outsider usually takes a year or two to learn an institution, and the average tenure of a college president is five years, Padilla said.

"The university is too complicated to get much done in that amount of time," he said.

Moese was an outsider who will have served a relatively long tenure of eight years. When he announced he would step down June 30, he forecast an ambitious agenda for his replacement. The single most critical issue, he said, will be pressure to meet the needs of North Carolina's surging population.

"We cannot freeze-frame this university or embed it in amber," Moese said last week in his State of the University address. "Rather, we must continue to evolve and change to serve the public that created us and sustains us."

Enrollment surpassed 28,000 students for the first time this fall — 4,000 more than when Moese arrived in 2000. The university had planned to grow to almost 30,000 by 2015, but recent discussions suggest the figure will climb.

That has some people worried. Holden Thorp, dean of UNC-CH's College of Arts and Sciences, said that if the campus is to absorb more students, it must increase its research enterprise in a proportionate way so it won't lose momentum. The university has doubled its research grant funding in the past decade.

Moese suggested the campus should maintain a 60-40 ratio of undergraduate-to-graduate students, a mix he called "crucial to the academic ecology of a research university."

That may be difficult to sell to taxpayers and lawmakers, but Thorp said "the next person needs to be someone who can continue to make that case."

Too much growth in the student body could erode quality, Earp said. "If we really grow another four, five, six, seven-thousand and we start to get to the size of Ohio State or Michigan, we lose something special," he said.

"We don't want to lose the coherence and sense of belonging."

The expansion will be accompanied by an extraordinary transition: the impending retirement of the university's most experienced faculty. About 41 percent of UNC-CH's professors are 55 or older, according to one recent analysis.

Add the hiring required to handle growth and replacement of those who leave for other jobs, and the university faces the prospect of having to hire 250 professors a year for the next eight years or so.

Other universities also are experiencing the retirement of Baby Boomers, which will create an environment of intense competition to hire young faculty. In some cases, UNC-CH will find itself bidding against private universities with deeper pockets.

The university's Carolina First fund-raising campaign, which has brought in $2.2 billion so far, has created more than 200 endowed professorships — positions that will offer fatter salaries to attract star faculty members. That will help.

"Fund-raising has given us the ability to attract faculty, but we're all going after a limited amount of folks," said Richard "Stick" Williams, a former chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Tuition is likely to be a source of revenue to pay new faculty, but the next leader is bound to face pressure from the public in a state that constitutionally mandates free public university education "as far as practicable."

Tar Heel ties

Connections to the Tar Heel state won't hurt candidates seeking the UNC-CH job, especially in a climate of higher public expectations of accountability by colleges and universities.

"I think we need somebody who really understands the issue of service and engagement with the state," said Roger Perry, chairman of the trustees.

Unlike N.C. State, which has a built-in connection to the people through its extension service, UNC-CH often battles an elitist "Ivy Tower" image.

Perry said the campus needs to "tell its story" and achieve more results for the people, too.

"The state gets a great return on its investment, but I think we can do better," he said.

UNC-CH leaders see Carolina North as the next step in that return on investment. The satellite campus planned north of the main campus is seen as a place for UNC-CH scientists to team up with private industry on inventions and spinoff companies. But the plan faces opposition from the town of Chapel Hill, where big development is always controversial.

The to-do list is long, and no candidate is likely to have every skill, experience and qualification that people want for UNC-CH's next chancellor.

"In the end, it's the quality of the person," Earp said.
Searching for what?

Is UNC-Chapel Hill seeking a new chancellor for a liberal arts university, or a CEO for a Wall Street firm? Going by the makeup of the committee searching for a successor to retiring Chancellor James Moeser, it's an even bet. The speedily appointed panel is heavy on businessmen (and a couple of businesswomen) and light on professional academics. Of the five professors on the 19-member panel, exactly none is from the humanities.

(Women on the panel — six, including two students — also are in short supply — this on a campus where six of every 10 students are female.)

To those Carolinians who think the inmates are apt to run the asylum, and that "political correctness" reigns on campus, all this will be comforting news. What chance is there that a search committee packed with so many influential businesspeople (nine in all) will turn up a chancellor in the mold of Frank Porter Graham or his 21st century equivalent?

It's risky to make predictions, and none is offered here. But the committee's composition favors selection of a professional education administrator or organization head who will bend his or her efforts to expanding enrollment and getting the business-oriented Carolina North satellite campus in high gear.

Those are generally accepted goals, although either could be overdone. A campus can get too big for comfort, and this nation doesn't lack for research parks.

The fundamental priority for the Chapel Hill campus lies instead in establishing (or re-establishing) its primacy among public universities on the East Coast.

Moeser has been fond of proclaiming his intention to make the campus No. 1 nationally in the public research university category — an unrealistic project for all its appeal. But with its heritage of scholarship and academic freedom, exceptional alumni support and solid state backing, becoming widely recognized as a stronger school than the University of Virginia — stronger in undergraduate and graduate education, as it probably already is in research — lies within Carolina's grasp. The benefits for the state's best students would amply justify such an effort.

The man or woman who can best accomplish that mission — a distinguished scholar, perhaps? — is the chancellor the committee should seek.
BRIEFS
FROM STAFF REPORTS

DURHAM COUNTY

Duke names head for brain institute

DURHAM — David Fitzpatrick, a professor of neurobiology at Duke University, has been named the first director of the new interdisciplinary Institute for Brain, Mind, Genes and Behavior.

The institute is an outgrowth of the university's latest strategic plan, and hopes to build on Duke's strengths in fields related to understanding brain function.

The institute has funding to become a research incubator for Duke faculty to open up new lines of inquiry, and also a hub for recruiting new faculty who may straddle multiple departments and research centers, said Fitzpatrick, whose own work focuses on how circuits in the brain develop and become programmed for various functions.

Duke's research into brain function is now spread across a number of units on campus.
UNC, Dorrance may face harassment trial

BY JANE STANCILL
STAFF WRITER

The U.S. Supreme Court has denied a petition by the state Attorney General’s Office for the court to hear a nine-year-old sexual harassment suit against UNC-Chapel Hill and its women’s soccer coach, Anson Dorrance.

The case was one of many that the high court declined to consider, according to a list of orders posted on the court’s Web site Monday.

The refusal by the Supreme Court to hear the case means that the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling from this year will stand. And that means Melissa Jennings, the former player who sued Dorrance, could finally have a trial of her claims in federal court.

Mike McFarland, director of university communications at UNC-CH, said the decision by the Supreme Court was not unexpected. “This does not mean that the Supreme Court approves the decision of the lower court,” McFarland said in a prepared statement. “Rather, the next step is to proceed to trial. The university continues to dispute the plaintiff’s version of the facts in this case.”

The case involves comments of a sexual nature that Jennings said Dorrance directed at her and other players. The coach’s attorneys have argued that the comments were jokes that were part of the coach’s banter with players.

But this year, Judge M. Blane Michael wrote in the 4th Circuit Court’s majority opinion that Dorrance’s conduct “went far beyond simple teasing and qualified as sexual harassment.”

A trial could be an embarrassing spectacle for the university and its star soccer coach, who has presided over 18 NCAA championships in women’s soccer at UNC.

At stake in the case is the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX, the federal mandate that prohibits gender discrimination in school sports. The attorney general’s petition argued that the Supreme Court should set a clear baseline for determining when sexual harassment harms a student’s access to education.

The case began in 1998 when Jennings and her teammate, Debbie Keller, sued Dorrance and the university. Keller, who had been a national player of the year, settled her case in 2004 for $70,000 and an agreement that the coach would have to undergo sensitivity training.

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Something happens when girls get around Sister Souljah.

So Souljah said Saturday, quoting a male friend who kept his girlfriends away from the activist for fear of what her influence may do to them. Time with Souljah makes women more demanding, hungrier for respect — more like Souljah herself, the rapper-turned-author told an audience of 125 students and a few administrators at East Carolina University's Mendenhall Student Center.

That influence is strong enough that Souljah's friend once left a girlfriend in the car for three hours during a visit to the Souljah household, she said. Many black women are leaving themselves in the car; metaphorically speaking, by mistaking sexuality for power and following media-perpetuated female stereotypes, Souljah said.

"Some of you have been sitting in the car, and it's your car," she said. "It's your car, and you have the license, but he's driving."

Disrespect for black women was a central topic Saturday for Souljah, the keynote speaker at the Ledonia Wright Cultural Center's 2007 Multicultural Student Leadership Conference. In more than an hour of comments, she urged audience members to learn about African culture, take advantage of the learning opportunities college will offer them and follow their own moral compasses, even when doing so is difficult.

"Leadership isn't easy," she said. "Because in order to be a leader, you have to be defiant."

Souljah recounted her own rise from poverty in the Bronx — "free cheese, free peanut butter, food stamps, Section 8 (housing) and Medicaid" — to a four-year scholarship to Rut-
SOULJAH

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gers University and, eventually, notoriety as a rapper, author and activist.

“A lot of times when you come from the ghetto, people have already decided you aren’t going to be anything,” she said.

Souljah recalled her mother guiding her to the New York Public Library as a child, where a book about Harriet Tubman shaped her thoughts on race and sex. It also helped launch a lifetime of independent reading, something Souljah said is essential.

“Some of y’all are only reading what’s on the syllabus,” she said. “And some of y’all ain’t reading that.”

Knowledge gleaned from outside reading helps put modern events into context, Souljah said. She referenced a series of formative books she’d read: “100 Years of Lynching,” by Ralph Ginzburg; “The Mis-Education of The Negro,” by Carter Godwin Woodson; “A People’s History of the United States,” by Howard Zinn; Malcolm X’s autobiography; and others.

“If you read ‘100 Years of Lynching,’” then you wouldn’t be surprised about the Jena six,” she said. “If you read Carter Godwin Woodson, then you would understand why those boys asked permission to sit under a tree.”

Souljah was referring to ongoing controversy over the arrests of six black teenagers in Jena, La. Months of racial tension, precipitated by the hanging of nooses from a shade tree where white students typically sat, preceded a fight for which the teenagers were charged. The charges sparked nationwide protests on Sept. 20.

Souljah’s comments were “a boost” to a pair of siblings in the audience. It was good to see “somebody that’s like you actually doing what you want to be doing,” said Tee Washington, a Wilmington senior studying psychology and philosophy.

“It was real,” said her sister Quin, a junior majoring in psychology and criminal justice. “It wasn’t like somebody higher than us talking to us. It was like somebody more on our level.”

Bryan Smith, an ECU employee, has been a Souljah fan since reading her novel, “The Coldest Day Ever,” last year. He said he was “very impressed” with her comments Saturday.

“It kind of helped me (see) what I need to do in order to treat not just black women but women better and also carry myself and have better standards,” he said.

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