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ECU professor receives North Carolina Award

BY JEANNINE MANNING HUTSON
ECU News Services

An East Carolina University professor known internationally for his designs with found objects was honored Thursday for his contributions in the arts field.

Artist Robert “Bob” Ebendorf is among six North Carolina residents to receive the state’s highest civilian honor, the North Carolina Award. Gov. Beverly Perdue and N.C. Department of Cultural Resources Secretary Linda Carlisle presented the awards at the N.C. Museum of History.

“The North Carolina Award celebrates creativity and innovation, two values which sustain our economy, our culture and our people,” Perdue said.

For Ebendorf the honor is a complete surprise. “I had no idea. This came totally out of the blue. I don’t even know anyone on the committee,” he said recently in his home studio.

“I didn’t even know much about the award and what an honor it is until you look at the past recipients, the leaders in their fields, the scholars and their contributions to the state of North Carolina,” he said.

Previous honorees in fine arts included painter Francis Speight, musician James Taylor, jazz great Billy Taylor, actor Andy Griffith, painter Bob Timberlake and folk and bluegrass music legend “Doc” Watson.

Ebendorf’s work is found in the collections of the Metropolitan Mu-

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seum in New York City, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Smithsonian Institution, the Mint Museum in Charlotte, and the Victoria Albert Museum in London. He holds a master’s degree in fine arts from the University of Kansas and was one of the founding members of the Society of North American Goldsmiths.

He came to ECU in 1997 as a visiting lecturer and was named the Carol Grotenes Belk Distinguished Professor of Art in 1999.

A scholarship to honor Ebendorf is being planned for the School of Art.

The North Carolina Awards were created in 1961 by the General Assembly and have been presented annually since 1964. The award recognizes significant contributions to the state and nation in the fields of fine arts, literature, public service and science.

Additional 2010 recipients include attorney Mike Leonard of Winston-Salem, for his work with conservation-oriented land use in the state; Margaret S. “Tog” Newman of Winston-Salem, for a life of service and leadership in arts and culture; F. Ivy Carroll, a leading scientist in the field of medicinal chemistry at Research Triangle Park; High Point resident Carole Boston Weather, an award-winning poet and children’s book author; and Asheville native Donald Sultan, celebrated as a painter, sculptor, designer and printmaker.
Six receive North Carolina Award, the state’s highest accolade

FROM STAFF REPORTS

RALEIGH — Six people received the North Carolina Award, the state’s highest civilian honor, at a ceremony at the state Museum of History on Thursday night.

Gov. Bev Perdue and N.C. Cultural Resources Secretary Linda Carlisle presented the awards, which were established by the General Assembly in 1961 to recognize contributions to the state and nation in the fields of fine arts, literature, public service and science. Past recipients include Bill Friday, James Taylor, John Hope Franklin, David Brinkley, Maya Angelou and Billy Graham.

This year’s recipients are: □ Mike Leonard, a lawyer from Winston-Salem who for more than 30 years has made important contributions in the area of conservation-oriented land-use development in North Carolina and beyond. He was a key player in the move to place Chimney Rock Park in the state parks system, and he helped complete a deal that protected Grandfather Mountain through its purchase by the state. He received an award for public service.
□ Margaret S. “Tog” Newman of Winston-Salem has made a life of public service in the areas of arts and culture, with leadership roles at cultural, civic and community organizations across the state and nation. Newman now serves as chairman of the board of directors of the N.C. Center for Nonprofits and has led the N.C. Arts Council and the Southern Arts Federation, among other organizations. She received an award for public service.
□ F. Ivy Carroll is a leading scientist in the field of medicinal chemistry, with groundbreaking work in the areas of biochemical addiction and drug-abuse research.

Carroll joined Research Triangle Institute in 1960, and his achievements have included the development of a diagnostic agent for Parkinson’s disease and other central nervous system disorders, as well as potential treatments for cocaine and nicotine addictions. He received an award for science.

□ Carole Boston Weatherford of High Point composed her first poem in first grade, dictating to her mother. Since her literary debut with “Juneteenth Jamboree” in 1995, Weatherford has written more than 40 books and has received several literary honors, including the Ragan-Rubin Award from the N.C. English Teachers Association, a Caldecott Honor, the Juvenile Poetry Award from the N.C. Poetry Society, and the Golden Kite Honor from the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators. She received an award for literature.

□ Robert Ebendorf of Greenville has been a leader in the studio jewelry movement since the early 1960s. Ebendorf’s work can be found in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Smithsonian Institution, the Mint Museum in Charlotte and the Victoria Albert Museum in London. Ebendorf is a professor at East Carolina University. He received an award for fine arts.

□ Asheville native Donald Sultan is celebrated as a painter, sculptor, designer and printmaker. Since moving to New York City in the mid-1970s, his work has placed him at the center of the international contemporary art scene.

Sultan’s work is in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, the N.C. Museum of Art and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, among others. He received an award for fine arts.
Playing the field: Baseball coach nabs spot in Cosmo's top bachelor lineup

BY KRISTIN DAY
The Daily Reflector

A local youth baseball coach and former East Carolina University baseball player is in the running to be Cosmopolitan Magazine's Bachelor of the Year.

James Molinari, 33, who founded Carolina Elite Baseball, was chosen as North Carolina's nominee and pitted against 50 other men from the United States. Visit www.cosmopolitan.com to vote.

Molinari said he was surprised when he received the congratulatory phone call from the women's magazine in May. In April, his friend Emily Schnabel submitted photos and a short essay explaining why Molinari is a top bachelor. Contestants were chosen by Cosmopolitan editors based on looks and personality.

"I did not expect to get that phone call," Molinari said. "And I was excited about it, too. I thought it would be a neat experience."

The feature already has taken him to New York City for one of three designated photo shoots. Molinari returns to the city on Monday and, on Tuesday, he will appear with his fellow contestants on the "Today Show." Tuesday also is the day of Cosmo's annual Bachelor Party, where they will reveal the next Bachelor of the Year. The winner will stay

See BACHELOR, B3

JAMES MOLINARI has been nominated as Cosmopolitan Magazine's Bachelor of the Year.

BACHELOR
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for further press events, and will receive a $10,000 cash prize and a $5,000 Express wardrobe.

"I've been there (Express) before and you can do some damage," Molinari said with a laugh.

Voting began on Monday and will remain open until 11:59 p.m. on Sunday. Cosmopolitan editors will choose the Bachelor of the Year from the six men who receive the most votes.

Part of what caught the editors' attention was Molinari's work in youth baseball. After playing for and coaching ECU baseball, he joined some independent minor league teams and worked with kids' baseball on his downtime.

"I always knew I wanted to go into coaching," Molinari said. "I just thought for the longest time it was college coaching."

He decided he wanted to make coaching youth his full-time job and founded Carolina Elite Baseball in 2006. He coaches boys between 8 and 16 years old.

Molinari also began working as a model in 2005, a side job that still allows him to fulfill his duties at Carolina Elite. The only downside is the "ridiculous" hat he has to wear at practice to protect his face from sunburn, if he has a photo shoot the next day — and the heckling he receives from the kids for it.

While making voting decisions, Molinari invites Cosmo readers to check out more of his modeling pictures on his Facebook page: "I just don't think the photos that came out of that (Cosmo) shoot were very flattering."

And, as the only "old guy" in the group, he says, readers should vote for him because he's the real bachelor; everyone else is in their mid-20s and should be single.

"Me, on the other hand," he said, "I obviously can't get the job done on my own. So I'm asking for East Carolina and the nation to help me out."

Contact Kristin Day at kday@reflector.com or (252) 329-9579.
Bowles: Fix what you’ve got

The UNC system president urges maintenance before new construction.

BY ERIC FERRERI
STAFF WRITER

CHAPEL HILL — Public universities should focus on repairing their existing buildings before pushing for new ones, UNC President Erskine Bowles said Thursday. Speaking to members of the UNC system’s Board of Governors, Bowles said the system’s next budget request – to be submitted to state leaders in November – will be austere. Thus, new projects won’t likely be viewed with favor when the system has more than $2 billion in backlogged repair needs for steam pipes, air conditioning systems, roofs and other infrastructure.

A story in Sunday’s News &

SEE UNC, PAGE BA

TRIANGLE CAMPUSES’ NEEDS

N.C. Central University: Though it has spent $122 million in higher education bond money on 23 renovations and new construction projects since 2000, it has put off additional fixes totaling $85 million, according to UNC system records.

N.C. State University: Has a maintenance backlog totaling more than $439 million, including Gardner Hall, a decaying, 58-year-old science building that is the university’s poster child for disrepair.

UNC-Chapel Hill: Spent more than $500 million through the higher education bond on 50 projects over the past 10 years, but still reports serious deficiencies, including deferred needs of $35 million at Davis Library, which opened in 1984.

cont’d...
Observer illustrated the UNC system's struggles to fund even a small piece of the repairs and renovations it needs each year. The system needs billions to fix its building stock, even after a decade of construction fueled by a $2.5 billion bond issuance that state voters approved 10 years ago.

Universities would need $2.1 billion from the state this year to adequately address all of the system's repair and renovation needs, according to UNC system data. "Certainly we're not going to get anything like that, but it shows you how much deferred maintenance you have," Bowles said Thursday, adding that campuses delay repair projects too often. "It's easy to say you can do it next year."

**Paralysis feared**

Bowles' comments on the maintenance backlog came during an analysis of next year's budget climate. He's telling campus leaders to prepare for 10 percent budget cuts -- a cautionary step as the state deals with a budget shortfall now estimated at $3.5 billion.

"I hope it's less," Bowles said. "But the arithmetic is pretty compelling."

Bowles said he expects once again to engage in what has become an annual fight with the General Assembly to keep tuition revenues on each of the system's individual campuses rather than having them routed directly to the state's general fund.

Campuses have come to rely on that money, said Hannah Gage, chairwoman of the UNC system's governing board.

"There are no words to describe how important it will be to fight to keep tuition money on our campuses," Gage said. "They will be paralyzed without it."

Bowles said the system budget will largely fund existing programs. He noted just three new line items he's willing to push for:

- $3.5 million to continue development of a new dental school at East Carolina University.
- $1 million in each of the next two years for a new joint nanoscience program at N.C. A&T State University and UNC-Greensboro.
- Some funding for a new system initiative linking enrollment growth to graduation and retention success.

**Collective denial**

James Holshouser, the former governor and longtime UNC system board member, said university leaders can't hide from the realities of the budget.

"We're all collectively in denial right now," Holshouser said. "We need to get ourselves ready. Every time I see a request for a new program now, I get a little shiver. I see the folks at [UNC-Chapel Hill] have deferred construction of the law school. I think that's a lesson we're all going to have to learn."

N.C. Central University Chancellor Charlie Nelms said he agrees with Bowles' no-new-construction approach -- to a point. But Nelms argues that some new facilities are vital if campuses want to meet certain goals institutionalized by the system, such as the graduation and retention initiative.

"Take housing. For a school like mine, we know there's a correlation between students living on campus and retention," said Nelms, whose campus still hopes to build one or more residence halls in coming years. "But it's balancing act."

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Medical Ministries interested in applying for federal status

Move could lure dental learning center through ECU

By David Budenheimer
The Dispatch

Published: Thursday, October 7, 2010 at 11:40 a.m.

Financial questions remain unanswered that would help qualify Davidson Medical Ministries as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), a move that would allow for broader primary care to county residents, and could possibly lure a dental learning center from a major university.

An FQHC is a health provider defined by the Medicare and Medicaid statutes to serve the medically indigent. They receive federal funding of $650,000 annually.

Davidson County is considering entering into a partnership with Gaston Family Health Services (GFHS), an established FQHC. Such a partnership would define Davidson Medical Ministries as a satellite office of an existing FQHC.

Davidson County Health Department Director Layton Long and Sandy Motley, executive director of Davidson Medical Ministries, addressed the Davidson County Board of Commissioners on Thursday to discuss the steps necessary to apply for FQHC status and how to partner with Gaston Family Services.

Both Long and Motley said they believe partnering with GFHS will help them in the grant application process, which they both emphasized was highly competitive.

"They (federal government) will approve 350 applications," said Motley. "They are expecting over 900 applications to be submitted. We already know that 26 are being submitted from North Carolina."

GFHS has partnered with other counties in the past and has helped those counties establish their own business models for a FQHC, according to Long. As part of this proposed deal, Davidson County would need to give $100,000 annually for three years to GFHS. In exchange, GFHS will handle a lot of the administrative issues for Davidson Medical Ministries.

"Gaston is saying to us they need to know by the middle of October where this $100,000 is going to come from, for them to agree to submit the application on our behalf," said Motley. The application date for FQHC status is Nov. 15.

Motley said financial discussions with Lexington Memorial Hospital and Thomasville Medical Center are ongoing as well as now with the board of commissioners.

"It will truly cost us more than $100,000 to do it independently than it will to do it in cost sharing," Motley said in response to what it would cost for Davidson Medical Ministries to forgo working with GFHS.

"The odds are better there are costs inherent with doing it yourself," said Long. "You have to get your own billing system, you have to set up your own administrative process, which will be taken care of."
Last year, Davidson Medical Ministries saw roughly 10,000 patients and provided $5.7 million in free health services, all while working under a budget that was cut by 20 percent from 2008.

"The need is not going away, it's just getting worse," said Motley.

On Monday, Motley said Davidson Medical Ministries held an open enrollment for new patients and had a turnout of 150 people between 8:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. "We are totally maxed out. If we don't look for alternative funding, then reality is we will be making another cutback."

Long also mentioned to the board that he hopes achieving FQHC status would attract a dental learning center from East Carolina University. Davidson County was identified by ECU as having unmet dental needs. Long said he was contacted by ECU in December 2009 about the possibility. Early discussions have pinned Davidson County Community College as a potential location for the learning center.

Long said ECU officials have discussed their interest in working with an FQHC.

Students in the ECU dental school program would spend their fourth year of enrollment in one of the learning centers providing dental services.

The current ratio is 1.55 dentists to 10,000 residents in Davidson County. Long said there have been meetings between ECU representatives, Davidson County Community College, Davidson Medical Ministries and county administration.

Commissioners will discuss the item again Tuesday night at the board's regular meeting before taking any action. Commissioners meet at 7 p.m. on the fourth floor of the Davidson County Governmental Center.

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Area community college could get dental learning center

- Article
- Comments

Friday, October 8, 2010
(Updated 8:14 am)

By HIGH POINT ENTERPRISE

LEXINGTON (MCT) — East Carolina University is considering locating a new dental learning center at Davidson County Community College, according to Davidson County Health Department Director Layton Long.

"They (East Carolina University) are in a selection phase," Long told the Davidson County Board of Commissioners on Thursday. "They have not made a decision, but they are definitely looking at Davidson County, and they are very interested in us."

Long said he was contacted by ECU in 2009 regarding the development of a new dental school at ECU. He said the new dental school at ECU would be a different model from the existing school at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The ECU model consists of 10 learning centers located in communities that have been identified as having unmet dental needs.

According to Long, ECU representatives indicated that Davidson County had been identified as a community in need of dental services and as a prospective site for location of a learning center. He said the college's initial visit was to gather general information about the county and suggestions on possible learning centers.

"It will bring dentists into the community to provide services for the indigent care, but also increase access for them locating here," Long said. "... It's just a win-win situation."

Davidson County officials say the county currently has a ratio of 1.55 dentists to 10,000 residents. ECU dental students would complete their fourth year of training at the learning centers while providing dental services to the underserved population, Long said.

Representatives from DCCC, Davidson Medical Ministries Clinic, county administration and Davidson County Health Department have been in talks with the college. A conversion of Davidson Medical Ministries Clinic into a Federally Qualified Health Center may entice ECU to locate the dental learning center at DCCC, according to county officials.
Online tale of Duke sex romps bears a lesson

It seems so obvious – be very careful with every e-mail message you send, every thought you post on Facebook, every blog entry you write.

But once again, an online joke meant for just a couple of friends has gone viral, bringing embarrassment and a host of new questions about Internet privacy.

In this day of YouTube, blogs and 24-hour news networks with 1,440 minutes of airtime to fill a day, it bears repeating: Proceed with caution.

Karen Owen, a 2010 Duke University graduate, created a 42-page PowerPoint presentation with the title “An education beyond the classroom: excel in the realm of horizontal academics.”

What Owen called a “senior honors thesis” is not really a thesis, of course. It’s a joke in which she rates 13 guys she had sex with while she was a Blue Devil. She names the men, includes photos of them and offers details of their encounters, including locations.

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(once in a library and another in a BMW), descriptions of body parts, quotes and how much alcohol was consumed.

Most of the men are or were Duke athletes; five are on the lacrosse team.

Owen used e-mail to send the joke to a few friends, one of whom sent it to a few more friends. With lightning speed, it went viral, picked up by Deadspin.com and other national blogs. On Thursday, a segment about the “thesis” appeared on NBC’s “Today Show.”

This comes after two Rutgers University freshmen, both 18, were charged with invasion of privacy after allegedly posting a video on the Internet that showed the roommate of one of the freshmen being intimate with another man. Days later, the roommate who was secretly videotaped killed himself by jumping off a bridge into the Hudson River. The case has sparked national outrage over anti-gay bullying and privacy issues.

SEE VIRAL, PAGE 7B

VIRAL
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The real lesson is ...

Making something digital – whether as a joke or as a cruel act – means it has the potential to be repeated indefinitely, says Daren Brabham, an assistant professor at UNC-Chapel Hill who researches new media. It also means it’s permanent, he said.

Brabham said the Duke and Rutgers stories also point to a lesson even larger than watching what you put on the Web.

“I think we need to start teaching different aspects of sexual education,” Brabham said.

Teens need to know that safe sex is more than just preventing disease, he said.

“The lesson here is you need to make sure that all the cameras are off and make sure you trust the person you’re having sex with,” Brabham said.

Duke again?

The Duke campus has been buzzed over Owen’s online joke for the past week. It’s unfortunate publicity for a campus that made national headlines in 2006 when a stripper hired to perform at a lacrosse team party falsely claimed she was raped.

Three lacrosse players were arrested, but the charges were later dropped.

And in 2004, some people drew parallels between Duke and the fictional Dupont University in Tom Wolfe’s novel “I Am Charlotte Simmons,” which chronicled an atmosphere of drunken sexual hookups. Although Wolfe said the elite, Gothic campus in the book was based on research at several colleges, his daughter graduated from Duke in 2002.

Responding to the Owen story Thursday, Duke spokesman Michael Schoenfeld said, “Our foremost concern is to provide for the well-being of our students, and to respect their privacy. We’ve been reaching out to those who’ve been affected by this incident and will continue to support them.”

Schoenfeld added his own warning about the Internet.

“This is an unfortunate and highly visible reminder that anything you create or send in digital form can find its way to the web, where the media have an insatiable appetite for the outrageous and your privacy and reputation can be shredded with a few clicks,” he said.

Owen has been silent except for an interview with the website Jezebel.com.

“I regret it with all my heart. I would never intentionally hurt the people that are mentioned on that,” the website quotes Owen as saying.

But in this digital world, we must remember that everything we do over e-mail, Facebook and YouTube has consequences – not only for us, but also for our families and friends.

I keep thinking about the parents of all of those involved.

Staff writer Eric Ferreri contributed to this report.
Beyond 'taint'

Victorious fall Saturdays won't end the justifiable questions surrounding the UNC football program.

Almost a month to the day after associate head coach John Blake resigned and took a $74,500 buyout from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, football head coach Butch Davis offered apologies for disclosures he acknowledges have "tainted" the program. As the NCAA investigates and as more information rolls out, or is demanded under public records laws by The News & Observer and The Charlotte Observer, that's looking like something of an understatement.

Just this week, more about the connections between Blake and California sports agent Gary Wichard has come to light. It turns out Blake was in frequent touch with the Nebraska star and now big-money pro football player Ndamukong Suh in late 2009, calling numbers connected to Suh and having brief conversations and then almost immediately calling Wichard and talking to him.

Suh says Blake didn't encourage him to sign with Wichard and that's not what the calls to him were all about. (Blake, during a brief time as a Nebraska assistant coach, had recruited Suh for the school.) What about the calls to Wichard?

Then there's that report that an Alabama tackle told the NCAA that Blake recommended Wichard to him last summer. Blake's lawyers won't confirm the two talked about Wichard. A former UNC player says he asked Blake about Wichard and Blake spoke favorably of him, but that Blake didn't push Wichard.

But there are questions in all this that remain without satisfactory answers:

1) How much about Blake's financial connection to Wichard and his long relationship with him have UNC officials discovered in the course of their own investigation? Has everything come as a surprise on requests from the newspapers? If so, why? Or if the university uncovered this information on its own, why didn't it make everything public immediately?

2) How could Davis know Blake for decades, and have him essentially at his right hand on the sidelines, and be completely unaware of his connections to Wichard and of Blake's financial difficulties?

Going-away present

3) If Davis is as disgusted with Blake as he says, and given the revelations about Blake's connections with an agent, why did the university allow him to resign and pay him a sum that is more than some instructors at the university make in an entire year? In other words, why wasn't Blake fired?

4) Athletics Director Dick Baddour may be hesitant to speak up – he's under pressure from boosters to maintain a "big-time" program to justify the outlay of tens of millions of dollars on an excessive Kenan Stadium renovation. But why has Chancellor Holden Thorp seemed so subdued in his reaction to what is an embarrassment not just to the football program but to a university that has long boasted of its ability to keep athletics in perspective?

Winning more football games won't put these issues to rest, though the boosters who breathlessly pursued Davis four years ago (and saw to a multimillion-dollar contract) doubtless hope victory will dim everyone's memory and interest. It will not. These are serious matters, with potentially serious consequences far beyond "tainting" the football program.

Friend in need

Blake had a long association with Wichard, and he took money from the agent, it was also recently reported, during a period when he was in financial trouble – a period that happened to coincide with Butch's working in a top assistant's spot for Butch Davis. If that isn't against the rules, it should be.
Let the record show

When it comes to public accountability, working for a government agency is not the same as working in the private sector. The fact that salaries of North Carolina state employees can readily be determined via an online data base proves the point. Good luck getting that same info for a private company’s workforce.

Taxpayers indeed should be able to learn pertinent details about public employees’ terms of employment. North Carolina personnel law was long tilted against a reasonable level of disclosure, but the General Assembly in recent years has moved to correct that and put this state more on par with practices elsewhere.

Still, with major changes in state personnel laws having taken effect on Oct. 1, it’s clear that some folks didn’t want to get the memo.

The changes, approved overwhelmingly by legislators and supported by Gov. Beverly Perdue, make employees’ salary histories public along with positions held and records of promotions, transfers and disciplinary actions. But some government employers are reluctant to release information about why workers were demoted, suspended or fired. They are worried they might be sued for breaching privacy standards, and have asked the attorney general’s office whether release of that kind of info for actions taken before Oct. 1 is required.

The law doesn’t specify that it applies only to actions taken after that date, so a logical reading suggests the earlier actions are covered. And they should be. An agency should not be able to get rid of a bad apple on the payroll without having to reveal the particulars – even if embarrassing.

Attorney General Roy Cooper has favored disclosure of personnel data, and he should continue to keep the public interest in mind. Nobody’s seeking employee information that obviously should remain private – health records and the like. This data pertains to job performance and instances of misconduct. It must be laid open for the public to see.
CHAPEL HILL -- Investigations related to individual North Carolina football players could be resolved in a matter of weeks, but the NCAA's investigation into the football program may take up to a year to complete, UNC chancellor Holden Thorp said Thursday.

Speaking to the UNC system's Board of Governors for the second straight month, Thorp also said football coach Butch Davis and his staff need to know more about what their players are doing away from the playing field.

"Coach Davis knows he has a lot of work to do," Thorp said. "It does concern me deeply that he didn't know about some of the things going on."

The NCAA and the university are looking into whether football players had improper contact with sports agents and into possible academic misconduct.

Thorp said the academic investigation is now in the hands of the student judicial system, adding that the honor court's role in the process could be finished in a matter of weeks. Thorp and athletic director Dick Baddour said Thursday there is no indication that problems stretch further than the football program, nor do the academic issues appear more widespread than one tutor "that went astray." But Baddour said the school is still investigating.

UNC officials say a tutor who had worked for both the Davis family and with football players through UNC's academic support program is at the root of the academics issue.

University officials declined to renew the tutor's contract in July 2009 after she appeared to foster friendships with football players in violation of guidelines set out for tutors. She continued to work for Davis until last spring.

"Even after she was separated, she continued to have contact with our players, which is not allowed," Thorp said Thursday.

Asked if it was appropriate for Davis to use a tutor who also worked with his players, Thorp said, "No."

Thorp said the overall investigation was developing slowly.

"The facts keep changing, and we're still working to get to them," he said.

Thorp again pledged that the university will come out better on the other side of this episode, with a strengthened athletics program and academic support system.
Winston Crisp, UNC's vice chancellor for student affairs, said football players are getting no special treatment as their cases wind through the student judicial process. Each student suspected of cheating is evaluated by the student attorney general. If charged with an honor code violation, that player will get a hearing with the honor court, which has the power to dole out punishment if necessary.

"I am absolutely comfortable that these athletes are being treated the same way as other students," Crisp said.

As he has repeatedly done during the past several weeks, Thorp publicly apologized Thursday for the football problems, which he said are an unwelcome distraction.

His boss, UNC President Erskine Bowles, praised Thorp's handling of the situation, particularly his willingness to move slowly and deliberately even under increasing public demands for fast answers.

"I don't know anyone who is more disappointed or angrier. ... But he has made sure he didn't jump to any conclusions," Bowles said.

Thorp has indicated a desire to brief the UNC system governing board on the progress of the football investigation each time it meets until the matter is resolved. The board next meets in November.

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Blue Cross seeks public relations boost on state employee health plan

Brad Wilson must have known he had a problem.

Those realizations tend to occur when state legislators take very public swipes at the multi-billion business enterprise you head.

Wilson has been the CEO of Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina for less than a year. He took the top job at the state’s largest health insurer as it came under fire on any number of fronts.

Attempting to shape the debate on national health care reform, Blue Cross took hits from legislators angry about mailers and robocalls that ran afoul of the law. The company paid a $95,000 fine for the robocalls, which violated Do-Not-Call registry rules.

It wasn’t enough. Legislators condemned the use of premium dollars for the effort.

Scrutiny of the lobbying effort came not long after a state audit and public reports questioned whether taxpayers got a bad deal on the contract awarded to Blue Cross to administer the state employee health plan.

State employee groups responded by picketing the company’s office, blaming the insurer rather than rising health care costs for benefits cuts and plan shortfalls in the hundreds of millions.

Allegations of improper conduct by a Blue Cross lobbyist, ultimately unsubstantiated by a State Bureau of Investigation probe, amounted to another public relations hit for the not-for-profit company.

Against that backdrop, Wilson recently announced that the insurer would refund $155.8 million to 215,000 policyholders in the state. The size of the refund will amount to better than a month-and-a-half of premium payments for some customers.

For a customer paying an average of $380 a month, the refund will be about $690. The company also announced that rates for individual policyholders will go up slightly less than the amount previously announced, saving customers another $14.5 million.

The refund and reduction were announced as part of an agreement with Insurance Commissioner Wayne Goodwin, and made possible by changes caused by national health care reform.

Blue Cross explained that the health care reform law phases out certain types of policies by 2014, meaning that reserves needed to cover costs for the lifetime of those policies can instead be distributed.

But making something possible and requiring it are two different things.

Wilson pretty much admitted as much.

“We’re in a time of dramatic change, and as we work through this change together, it’s important that we have credibility,” he said during the announcement.

Blue Cross was a company in search of a public relations boost.

The refund doesn’t directly affect the state employee health plan and its members. But it may signal that company executives recognize that if they want to keep the state’s business in the future they’ll need to be a bit fairer with taxpayers and health plan members.

Over the past few months, Wilson has been privately meeting with legislators and other top state leaders.

Judging from the latest development, the message of those meetings seems to be: We’re going to do better.

Scott Mooneyham writes about North Carolina government and politics for the Capitol Press Association.
Duke Winces as a Private Joke Slips Out of Control

October 7, 2010

By KATHARINE Q. SEELYE and LIZ ROBBINS

DURHAM, N.C. — For nearly two weeks, many here on the Duke University campus had been aware of a certain senior “thesis” that a recent graduate wrote, apparently as a private joke, about her sexual exploits with 13 student-athletes.

Then the Internet seized on it. The thesis, written as a 42-page Power Point presentation, went viral. And students here again found their school in the middle of a sex-related scandal and annoyed at the power of the murky, borderless world of the Internet to wreak havoc and tarnish images.

“It makes me ashamed that the Duke name is attached to what she’s done,” Nicole Queathem, 22, a senior from St. Louis, said as she sat in the student union. “And it’s the age-old double standard: people are more critical of what she did because she’s a girl.”

The woman in question, Karen Owen, 22, who graduated this year from Duke, evaluated what she said were her sexual liaisons with 13 student-athletes during her years at the school, and she prepared a slide presentation, complete with pictures of her subjects and graphs ranking their performance.

She forwarded this mock thesis in “horizontal academics” to a few friends, who forwarded it to their friends. After percolating within the Duke community for nearly a week, with e-mails reaching alumni overseas and message boards buzzing, the report was published online by two related Web sites, Jezebel and Deadspin. From there, it exploded onto the blogosphere, where as of Thursday it was still being shared via Twitter with the frenzied speed of the Indianapolis 500.

The fake thesis made its splash just as concern was raised anew about the power of the Internet to invade privacy and, sometimes, destroy lives. Last month, at Rutgers University, a student surreptitiously recorded his male roommate’s encounter with another man; days later, the roommate killed himself, unleashing a national fury about cyberbullying.
“All the world’s a stage in the Internet age,” said Lee Rainie, the director of the Pew Internet and American Life Project. “This is just the latest of a long list of examples of how things that are often meant for small, private audiences have innumerable opportunities to become public events, because once they have left the creators’ screen, they can be shared, forwarded and posted.”

Ms. Owen did not respond to repeated calls to explain what happened. A man who said he was her father answered the phone in Connecticut and said that his daughter did not want to comment.

On campus, students were abashed, if not a bit fatigued by the notoriety.

Just four years ago, the Duke men’s lacrosse team was embroiled in scandal when a woman falsely accused three Blue Devils players of having raped her at a party where she was to perform as a stripper. One year later, the charges against the players were dropped and the prosecutor in the case, Michael B. Nifong, was disbarred.

Seven of the 13 athletes Ms. Owen wrote about were — or still are — on the lacrosse team. This incident has angered many of those who are already sensitive to their image, according to students and alumni who know them. The lacrosse players contacted would not comment.

On campus, other students had plenty to say.

Kishan Shah, 18, a pre-med student from Carmel, Ind., said the university should not revoke Ms. Owen’s degree, but “they should let her know that she has disgraced the school.”

Mike Lefevre, a 21-year-old senior and the president of the student body, said that people were not sure whom to be more concerned about. “Should we be more worried about the young woman’s privacy or worry about the individuals who were named?” he said. “It’s not so clear to us who was the victim, and who we should reach out to.”

Michael Schoenfeld, Duke’s vice president for public affairs and government relations, said that the education of students about their online presence was continuing, and that it was part of the orientation process for student athletes. “One wonders in the Duke situation if the individuals were not athletes, would it have attracted as much attention?” Mr. Schoenfeld said.

It was precisely because the 13 “subjects” in Ms. Owen’s report were athletes that Deadspin decided at first to publish the report with the names. But later it did black them out. A. J. Daulerio, Deadspin’s editor, explained in an e-mail: “We are a sports site and running the names seemed pertinent to the story. Plus, it had been forwarded so many times and shown up on so many message boards that it seemed silly not to run them.”
“Then I had a change of heart.”

Jezebel, a Web site oriented to women, published the list as well. It also published queries from an editor at HarperCollins, meant to be a private e-mail, about contacting Ms. Owen, possibly for a book. Deadspin published queries it got from an agent at William Morris and a movie producer.

In 1977, two women at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology published a similar “research,” rating the sexual methodology of 36 male undergraduates.

That report appeared in an alternative campus newspaper under the title “Consumer Guide to M.I.T. Men.” The intent was to “turn the tables” on men and show how it feels for women to be objectified. Instead, the two women were put on probation with a notation on their academic record for 10 months.

Information, of course, has warped to a new dimension since then.

Having grown up in the Internet age, students said they were well aware of the dangers.

“Everyone knows how the Internet works,” Ms. Queatham said as she closed her laptop in the student union. “I’ve always been worried about what I put on Facebook. I’m very conscious of future employers looking at it. It’s easy to forget, but important to remember.”

Katharine Q. Seelye reported from Durham, and Liz Robbins from New York. Janie Lorber contributed reporting from Washington.
No more 'marriage gap' for college-educated women

By Donna St. George
Washington Post Staff Writer
Thursday, October 7, 2010; 9:36 PM

White women with college degrees are now just as likely to get married as their less-educated counterparts, ending what researchers once thought of as a "marriage penalty" for generations of young women who sought out higher education.

A new report shows that the marriage gap, though once large, turned around for white women starting with those born in the early 1970s. Now ages 35 to 39, these women have been as likely to marry as those who did not graduate from college, according to the report done by the Pew Research Center.

For both groups, 84 percent had married at some point before they were 40, according to the analysis of 2008 data.

"It's a historic reversal," said senior researcher Richard Fry, author of the Pew study. "There was a time in the early 20th century when there was a huge marriage gap."

The finding, based on data from the Census Bureau, comes as part of a broader analysis of the reversal of the college marriage gap.

Once, the popular notion was that going to college delayed the age of marriage. Now, across the population, the typical age for marriage is 28, both for those who complete higher education and those who don't take that path or in some cases don't finish.

Probing the trend, researchers found that much of this shift has been driven by a declining likelihood of marriage among men and women without college degrees.

"Young adults today believe you shouldn't get married until you're economically secure," says sociologist Andrew Cherlin, who studies marriage at Johns Hopkins University. "Until at least the young man has a steady job, the young adults won't marry. Marriage becomes something you do after you get a decent job, not before."

Cherlin said such couples are "increasingly cohabiting and won't marry until they feel economically secure, which may take many years in today's labor market."

Recent changes are also driven by the marriage patterns of white women in particular, said Fry, the Pew researcher.
In 1950, 66 percent of white female college graduates married by age 40, compared with 93 percent of their less-educated counterparts. That gap has been steadily shrinking for decades. "Now it's at zero," Fry said.

Since 1990, college-educated African American women have been more likely to marry than their counterparts with less education, according to the report. The study did not include marriage patterns of Hispanics because historic census data was not available.

The college marriage gap among African American women is sharpening, said Betsey Stevenson, assistant professor of business and public policy at the University of Pennsylvania.

One of many reasons for this, Stevenson said, is that college-educated women are more likely to think that marriage will make them happy.

"College-educated women of all races are basically in the heyday of marriage today," she said. "They are marrying at rates similar to what the college-educated women of their mothers' generation did, but doing so later in life, and they are marrying at rates much higher than the college-educated women of their grandmothers' generation. And they have become less likely to divorce compared to their mothers' generation."

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Howard allows overnight guests in upperclassman dorm

By Jenna Johnson
Washington Post Staff Writer
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Howard University is experimenting this fall with something that many universities did at least a generation ago, allowing undergraduates to stay overnight in each other's dorm rooms.

To study, of course.

On most of campus, friends and lovers alike still must depart each other's rooms at midnight on school nights, or 2 a.m. on weekends. But in a bow to the requests of student government leaders, Howard officials have agreed to relax such restrictions in one upperclassman dormitory.

In the week since Howard began allowing overnight guests in Howard Plaza Towers, West - a modern brick high-rise on the edge of the Northwest Washington campus - university officials have reported no increase in problems. Yet students have reacted to the pilot program not so much with cheers but with exasperation.

"It should have happened a long time ago. I'm surprised it didn't happen a long time ago," said Safiya DeFour, 20, a junior majoring in sports medicine who lives in the dorm.

Although the sexual revolution swept away or watered down sleepover rules at many schools, some institutions held firm. Chief among them were historically black colleges and religious institutions. Historically black schools have traditionally operated as something like extended families, with officials adopting more of a parental role on campus than common at most state universities or liberal arts colleges.

Michael L. Lomax, president and chief executive of the United Negro College Fund, said historically black colleges are "very much influenced by the values, traditions and social codes of the black community - which tend to be more conservative." Parents especially want that sort of structure, but often students do, too.

"Not every student wants to live in a coed dormitory. Not every student wants 24-hour visitation," said Lomax, a past president of Dillard University in New Orleans.

But Howard's resistance to overnight guests spawned occasional efforts to outsmart it - and a persistent suspicion that late-night fire drills were thinly veiled attempts to ferret out those defying the rules. The policy irked some students, who said that if they were old enough to vote, marry and fight wars they were old enough to choose who slept in their dorm rooms.

With the change have come new rules: Roommates must sign an agreement consenting to host overnight
guests. Guests must be current Howard students. Only one guest may stay over at a time. On school nights, guests must check into the dorm before midnight - and they must leave by noon the next day.

Undergraduates living in other dorms must continue to escort their guests out at the appointed hour or risk losing their visitation rights entirely.

"We're not elementary kids," said Ade Owolabi, 21, a junior who lives in the dorm but hasn't filled out the paperwork needed to have a late-night guest. "We should be able to have people come stay."

Howard Plaza Towers, West is one of the school's biggest dorms, with 840 upperclassmen in apartment-style rooms with full kitchens, private bathrooms and underground parking. It's close enough to academic buildings to allow last-minute dashes to class but removed enough to feel like off-campus housing. The neighboring dorm, Howard Plaza Towers, East, houses mainly graduate and honors students and has long allowed visitors at all hours.

College officials say that if students in Howard Plaza Towers, West handle the program responsibly, it might be expanded next semester to allow non-Howard visitors in the dorm, and the weekend check-in time might be eliminated. There are no plans to extend the program to other dorms.

"We're looking at trying to be progressive and help these students grow into mature adults," said Marc D. Lee, the interim dean of residence life. "Everything has been going well so far. There haven't been any outrageous parties late into the night."

Other colleges are also taking steps to liberalize their dorm guest policies, sometimes to keep upperclassmen from moving off campus. Baylor University, a Christian college in Texas, has gradually added hours to the visitation clock in its dorms. Now, students can have guests of either gender visit between 1 and 10 p.m. on school nights and until midnight on Fridays and Saturdays. Students in on-campus apartments have until 2 a.m. every night.

Last year, West Virginia University began allowing overnight guests of the opposite sex in one of its upperclassman dorms. At Virginia Tech, there are four categories of visiting rules, ranging from strict visiting hours to none, depending on where students live.

Catholic University has modified its visitor policy several times in the past five years. Students can have guests of the opposite sex in their rooms only until midnight on school nights and 2 a.m. on weekends. Last year, the school extended the weeknight curfew to 2 a.m. as long as students hang out in common areas - not bedrooms.

Even schools that allow visitors at all hours have some guidelines, and most require roommate approval. Georgetown University allows overnight guests but prohibits "cohabitation." George Washington University sets a limit of eight nights a month. Washington and Lee University allows roommates to come up with their own policy, as long as it includes "a provision for quiet hours" on school nights.

Some of the schools with visiting hours don't enforce them strictly. But Howard does.

If a student's guest has not checked out by curfew, housing staff members will search for him or her. Visitation rights are among the first that hall supervisors remove if a student gets into trouble.
Lee said the rules keep students safe on the urban campus. That's especially important for freshmen, who are living away from home for the first time.

"We take on that responsibility from parents to assist [their children] and help them through their first year," he said. "Our parents would not want their female freshman daughters in an environment where there is 24-hour visitation."

But as students enter their early 20s, they can handle more responsibility, said student government Vice President William Roberts, 24, a third-year law student. He and other student leaders spent months meeting with officials and researching policies at other schools. "We thought it was time for us to try it out and see if we could handle it," he said. "The main thing is allowing students the freedom to decide what they do with their time."

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