THE DAILY CLIPS

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Two East Carolina freshmen killed over university's fall break

BY BOBBY BURNS
The Daily Reflector

Two East Carolina University freshman died over the weekend, one in a wreck in Wake County and the other in an accident in Maryland. William "Willie" Scott Staso, 18, of Ellicot City, Md., died Saturday of head injuries after falling off the hood of a moving car, according to police in Crofton, Md.

Witness reports to police indicated that Staso was directing parking traffic at a party, recognized a friend's SUV and jumped on the hood as it was making a turn, the report said.

Staso reportedly fell off the vehicle and hit his head on the pavement, police said. The driver and a passenger placed Staso into the SUV and headed to the hospital, then stopped and called for assistance, the report said.

A doctor at the University of Maryland Trauma Center pronounced Staso dead hours later.

An investigation indicated alcohol use was a factor in the incident.

A second ECU student, Jarrett Satchell, 18, was killed about 12:50 a.m. Sunday after his vehicle wrecked on Purnell Road near Wake Forest, according to the State Highway Patrol.

Officers believe the vehicle went off the right side of the road near Wolverton Fields Drive. Satchell over-corrected, crossed the center line and ran off the left side of the road, a patrol dispatcher confirmed Thursday.

The vehicle became airborne, struck a pole, ran into a ditch and hit two trees before it overturned and came to a stop. Satchell was ejected from the vehicle, according to the patrol.

No other vehicles were involved in the wreck and no other injuries were reported. A report indicated alcohol was involved in the wreck.

Both students had been athletes in high school and were home from school for the fall break.

Classes at ECU resumed on Wednesday.

Contact Bobby Burns at baburns@coxnc.com and (252) 329-9572.
Caregivers on receiving end at PCMH

My husband and I are both registered nurses at Pitt County Memorial Hospital. We both have had very positive experiences as patients at PCMH this year. In May, my out-patient experience was excellent from pre-admit until my discharge home the same evening.

Just this week, my husband’s experience in the cardiovascular center was exceptional. I was very apprehensive, especially being a nurse, for my husband’s well-being. Every person on the CV team — to include Dr. Walter Tan, care partners, nurses, technologists and the patient representative — was exceptional. They were wonderful to my husband and son, but they were also very attentive to my fears and concerns. As nurses, our patients are our utmost priority. My husband and I give our best efforts every day to give the individuals under our care a positive experience and the very best outcome while under our care. Do not underestimate the wonderful facility, made up of the finest health care providers in the world, that we are so fortunate to have in Pitt County.

Thank you Bill Taft and Walter Tan. You are wonderful human care providers. Thank you to every person involved in caring for me and for my husband in our respective hospital encounters. We are both in better states of health as a result of our positive encounters at PCMH.

FRANI BOBERG, RN
DONALD BOBERG, RN
Farmville
Philadelphia Dance Company to perform at ECU

By The Daily Reflector

The Philadelphia Dance Company — also known as Philadanco — celebrates 37 years of providing exceptional dance performances and training to many communities throughout the United States and abroad.

The company will make a one-night appearance at 7:30 p.m. Thursday at East Carolina University’s Wright Auditorium. The performance is part of the S. Rudolph Alexander Performing Arts Series.

Philadanco will present four works by African-American choreographers. The program, “In the Black Tradition,” features “Ritornel.lo” by Gene Hill Sagan; “Philadelphia Experiment” by Rennie Harris; “Violin Concerto” by Milton Myers; and “Enemy Behind the Gates” by Christopher L. Huggins.

As a special treat for the audience, founder and artistic director Joan Myers Brown will host a question-and-answer session following the performance.

Prior to the event, ticketholders may opt for Dinner & Discussion tickets ($25 for Friends of SRAPAS, $26.50 for others).

Brown will explain the program while patrons enjoy an extensive menu, featuring dishes prepared by campus chefs.

The original mission of the Philadelphia Dance Company was to present the highest quality of professional dance performance and provide exceptional training for emerging professional dancers and choreographers in a nurturing environment while increasing the appreciation of dance among its many communities.

The company achieved this while withstanding budget cuts and the passage almost four decades.

Founded in 1970 by Brown, the company has a history of being a trailblazer.

It was one of the first organizations to hire dancers on a 52-week salary, the first to own housing for its dancers and the first to own a debt-free training facility.

In addition, Philadanco founded the International Conference of Black Dance Companies and the International Association of Blacks in Dance, both of which address the needs of the African American dance community through a supportive environment.

The professional company continues to consistently tour more than any Philadelphia cultural organization, performing as many as 50-60 concerts and 45 residencies annually.

Over the years Philadanco has trained thousands of dancers through an intensive 40-week instruction and training program that includes a variety of disciplines taught by nationally renowned teachers in ballet, jazz and modern as well as Dunham, Horton and African techniques.

In addition to their instruction, dancers receive dance wear including shoes, counseling when needed and mentoring by members of the company.

Young dancers also have the opportunity to study with the organization during the summer. Not only do these children learn how to dance but the Philadelphia Dance Company is a safe haven for the community youth.

Those who may otherwise be on the streets have a place to meet and participate in a structured program.

IF YOU GO!

What: Philadanco
When: 7:30 p.m Thursday
Where: Wright Auditorium
Cost: $10-$32
Call: 328-4788
State college system finds omissions and circumventions in an unauthorized branch.

By Eric Ferreri
Staff Writer

CULLOWHEE — N.C. Central University leaders who created and oversaw an unauthorized satellite campus at a suburban Atlanta megachurch gave students an improper tuition break, ignored several policies and kept poor and incomplete records, according to a critical new report issued Thursday by the 16-campus UNC system.

The report, discussed Thursday afternoon at a meeting of the audit committee of the UNC system’s Board of Governors, is the result of two months of scrambling following the revelation that a series of academic programs NCCU was administering at the New Birth Missionary Baptist Church in Lithonia, Ga., had never been properly approved.

The agency that accredits NCCU never knew about it. That may mean federal financial aid NCCU gave to many of the 126 students who enrolled in the program over its four-year life will have to be sent back to the Department of Education. It isn’t clear yet whether NCCU will have to pay back some or all of that money; New Birth students received more than $3 million in Pell Grants, Perkins loans and other financial aid, according to the report.

The report reveals that students in the New Birth program paid less tuition than is mandated by the UNC system. For example, the university charged New Birth students $296.10 per credit hour in 2007-08; the UNC system’s proper rate for a nonresident distance education credit hour is $417.75. The total lost revenue from those tuition payments isn’t specified in the report.

“While we missed out on some revenue, the bigger issue is that we didn’t follow the established procedures,” Chancellor Charlie Nelms said Thursday after briefing the audit committee, which met at Western Carolina University.

The New Birth campus should have been vetted by campus and UNC-system boards and NCCU’s accrediting agency, and the Department of Education should have been notified of its creation, according to the report. Those regulatory steps “were ignored or circumvented,” it said.

The report doesn’t place blame by name, but the chancellor in 2004 was James Ammons, now president at Florida A&M. The

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provost was Lucy Reuben, now a Duke professor, and Beverly Washington Jones, a dean at the
time, signed off on some of the documents related to the pro-
gram's creation. Jones suc-
cceeded Reuben as provost and
was moved out of that position
earlier this year by Charlie
Nelms, the current chancellor.

The report claims sloppy and
incomplete recordkeeping ham-
strung UNC system and NCCU
officials who, in recent months,
have tried to piece the saga back
together.

The campus offered courses
in business administration, hos-
pitality and tourism, criminal
justice and education.

Other report highlights:
■ The pastor at the New Birth
church is Eddie Long, an NCCU
trustee. There is no evidence of
a conflict-of-interest, the report
states, because NCCU trustees
never voted on the program.
■ While no state money was
directly used to fund the New

Birth program, NCCU will send
$55,426 back to the state as re-
imbursement for employee comp-
pensation and operating costs
incurred by several NCCU busi-
ness offices, the report states.
■ NCCU has partnered with
East Carolina University to cre-
ate a program for 39 students
whose college educations were
interrupted when the program
was abruptly shut down earlier
this year. They would be able
to complete their course work.

The Southern Association of
Colleges and Schools, NCCU's
accrediting agency, concluded
last month that the degrees
evoked by 25 students who gradu-
ated from the program are
valid.

The agency ruled the educa-
tion the New Birth students
received was comparable to what
a student on the main campus in
Durham would receive.

"The students are innocent,
trusting people who thought we
had taken care of our business,"
Nelms said. "We had not."

— eric.ferrer@newsobserver.com
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