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East Carolina University News Bureau
E-mail to durhamj@ecu.edu Web site at http://www.news.ecu.edu
252-328-6481
UNC Wilmington has named East Carolina administrator Jimmy Bass as its athletic director.

The school said Tuesday that Bass will replace Kelly Mehrtens, who resigned last month. “I am so appreciative of this wonderful opportunity to serve as UNCW's next athletic director,” Bass said in a release. “I sensed right away Chancellor (Rosemary) DePaolo's genuine commitment to athletic excellence, and I am so excited to be joining her team.”

Bass has been East Carolina's senior associate athletic director for external operations for the past three years. UNC Wilmington officials say he was chosen from a field of about 90 applicants. Bass will be paid $220,000 annually, according to the Wilmington Star-News. Bass was UNC Wilmington's first full-time athletics fundraiser in 1986 when he was executive director of the school's Seahawk Club and associate director of athletics.

“We're very pleased to welcome Jimmy Bass back to our Seahawk family,” DePaolo said. “He understands the passion and dedication that Seahawks everywhere have for our teams. He also has the highest respect for our student-athletes, coaches and athletics staff. Most importantly, he values UNCW's commitment to academics as well as to athletics.”

Bass, who had been with East Carolina since 2006, coordinated all fundraising, marketing, promotional, ticketing and media relations efforts while also acting as ECU's top liaison for ISP Sports.

It was actually the second stint at ECU for Bass, who was assistant director for marketing with the Pirates from 1989-94. Bass also has worked at Davidson, N.C. State, Pitt and Mississippi State. Bass becomes UNCW's sixth athletics director, following William J. “Bill” Brooks, Paul Miller, Peg Bradley-Doppes, Mike Capaccio and Mehrtens.
UNCW looks for energy from new athletic director
Jimmy Bass has fundraising experience and ties to the school

By Andrew Dunn
Andrew.Dunn@StarNewsOnline.com

Published: Tuesday, October 19, 2010 at 1:55 p.m.

What Jimmy Bass brought to the room packed with athletes and coaches on Tuesday is just what they hope he will bring to UNCW's athletic department: energy.

His announcement as the university's new athletic director came with an enthusiastic standing ovation and praise.
And it also came with high hopes for the future, from repairing ties with corporate donors to improving playing fields and facilities.

"Our new athletic director understands and shares the passion and dedication that Seahawks everywhere have for our sports teams and our student athletes," Chancellor Rosemary DePaolo said at the well-attended afternoon press conference.

A Dunn native, the 54-year-old Bass comes with extensive fundraising and marketing experience – as well as ties to UNCW.

He is a former executive director of the Seahawk Club, and he has also held positions at N.C. State, Pittsburgh, Mississippi State and Davidson. He is currently a senior associate athletic director for external operations at East Carolina University.

His annual salary at UNCW will be $220,000.

Bass told the crowd Tuesday that he has made two promises: that he won't do anything to embarrass UNCW, and that he will work to make a degree from the university more valuable.

But he also talked about addressing the "splintered" relationships between the university, alumni and corporate donors to give the program more resources.

He said one of his goals is to fully fund athletic scholarships to NCAA limits and to address facility needs.

"We're going to work real hard to re-establish relationships in the business community," he said.

The announcement came just 22 days after former athletic director Kelly Mehrtens resigned, saying that "distractions" had brought attention to her instead of student athletes.

Some of those included the reassignment and firing of former men's basketball coach Benny Moss last spring, the subsequent 79-day search for
his replacement and the punishment of a women's basketball player in September.

Bass is the fourth athletic director to serve under DePaolo, who became chancellor in 2003.

And he will be called on to do some of the same work he did for the university as executive director of the Seahawk Club and associate director of athletics from 1986 to 1989.

In those three years, Bass raised membership in the booster club from 250 to 1,100 and increased the number of scholarships in the program.

"Jimmy was a guy who had a lot of energy in the 80s when there was a lack of energy in the athletic department," said UNCW trustee Gary Shipman. "Energy is what we need. I think it is a great hire."

Women's tennis coach Jenny Garrity also talked about Bass in terms of the energy he will bring.

"We're ecstatic. I think he's going to restore so many fabulous things," Garrity said. "The excitement has already been restored, in an hour."

Staff writer Brian Mull contributed to this report.

Andrew Dunn: 343-2328
On Twitter.com: @Andrew Dunn

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COLLEGE FOOTBALL

ECU officials address chant

In an online message on the school’s athletics website, several East Carolina University officials denounced a chant that arose from the student section at Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium during the nation anthem at last Saturday’s ECU-N.C. State football game.

The message from ECU chancellor Steve Ballard, athletics director Terry Holland, football coach Ruffin McNeill and SGA president Tremayne B. Smith apologized to those that heard the chant.

“We are sure the students who made the poor decision to join a chant belittling our opponent did not hear the anthem beginning,” the message said. “However, that error in judgment by a small number of students should serve as a stark reminder to all that a seemingly frivolous prank can embarrass (and anger) a great university’s tens of thousands of constituents as well as our visitors.”
UNC-CH to extend med school to 2 cities

CHAPEL HILL The School of Medicine at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is expanding into Charlotte and Asheville.

The university has announced plans for regional campuses in those two cities, allowing the medical school to expand its class from 160 this year to 180 by 2012.

In Asheville, the school will work with Mountain Area Health Education Center and the Mission Health System, which will contribute $7 million to accommodate students at its hospital.

In Charlotte, the regional campus will collaborate with the Carolinas HealthCare System and UNC Charlotte. The campus will be located at the Carolinas Medical Center, and Carolinas Health Care will contribute $4 million to renovate its facility to accommodate students.

This initiative is a scaled-back version of an earlier plan to expand the UNC-CH School of Medicine to 230 students. That plan proved too costly.
WSSU e-mail called illegal

By Wesley Young | JOURNAL REPORTER

Some 6,400 staffers and students at Winston-Salem State University received e-mail exhortations Monday to take advantage of early voting and help the Democratic Party, setting off local Republicans.

After a complaint by Nathan Tabor, the chairman of the Forsyth County GOP, university officials acknowledged that the e-mail — sent from the student-affairs division — was improper.

The university cited a state law that prohibits the use of a state employee’s authority or state property to support or oppose a person or an issue in any election.

“We regret it,” said Nancy Young, the director of public relations at WSSU. “We sent out a retraction and said to disregard the earlier e-mail.”

That wasn’t the end of it, though. Yesterday, the university sent out what Tabor called an “equal time” e-mail inviting all the same recipients to work for Republicans during early voting.

That message was to be retracted by the university last night once it had been out six hours — the same amount of time the Democrat message was out before being retracted.

Tabor said he’s upset that he had to call the university and complain. “That is a tax-funded school,” Tabor said, calling the original e-mail “highly illegal and unethical.”

The university said it would try to discover who sent out the e-mail and whether it was sent intentionally or accidentally in a partisan form.
Early voting started last Thursday in Forsyth County and runs through Oct. 30. Election Day is Nov. 2.

About 2,200 people had voted in the county by mid-day yesterday since the start of early voting. Slightly more than half the voters were Democrats, with Republicans making up 36 percent and unaffiliated voters making up another 15 percent, a board of elections official said.

wyoung@wsjournal.com

Journal reporter Paul Garber contributed to this story.

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Land near NCSU rezoned for mixed-use project

By Ray Martin, staff writer

RALEIGH A developer's plan to transform an abandoned industrial area near N.C. State University's campus into a bustling mix of apartments, shops and townhouses cleared its last major hurdle Tuesday.

The project went through more than two years of planning and, recently, 10 hours of deliberations with city officials.

Raleigh's City Council voted 6-1 to approve a zoning change and special pedestrian district for the 6.67-acre site between NCSU and downtown Raleigh off Hillsborough Street. That will pave the way for one of the most ambitious development projects in Raleigh since the Great Recession struck.

"We are very thankful and excited about the outcome," said Jim Zanoni, an owner of the FMW Real Estate of Charlotte, which owns the land.

Zanoni said he is still acquiring the financing for the project, which he hopes will be under construction next spring. He said he is confident about the financing, primarily because of the stability of the market in Raleigh.

Only Councilman Thomas Crowder, whose West Raleigh district includes the FMW land, voted against the project. Crowder, an architect, said that parts of the plan were too ambiguous and that the developer should have submitted drawings and a site plan of what the area will look like once it's developed.

"The City Council had the opportunity to ensure great urban mixed use," he said. "And I hope that does take place, but given the current conditions, I couldn't support it."
The council's Comprehensive Planning Committee spent more than 10 hours, across three meetings, ironing out details of the plan and asking the plan's architects to agree to more conditions.

The $40 million first phase of the project would include a five-story, 240-unit apartment building; 32 town houses on Ashe Street; and 10,000 square feet of restaurant, retail and office space.

The vote on the project follows a $9.9 million renovation of Hillsborough Street that added roundabouts, street parking and possible permanent bike lanes. And the site is near a recommended stop for a future light-rail train, which Zanoni says makes the project more ideal.

Representatives of several surrounding neighborhoods asked for more details and drawings of the future site before granting their support. The developer and architect working on the project made several changes to their plan over the course of the council's review to ensure that parking doesn't spill over into existing neighborhoods and that buildings on the property are constructed with quality materials.

Beginning in 2007, FMW paid about $10.5 million for four parcels of land. FMW also owns property fronting Hillsborough Street, including the IHOP restaurant site, and is acquiring more land in the area.

ray.martin@newsobserver.com or 919-836-4952
College completion rate among men has stalled, new report finds

By Daniel de Vise
Washington Post Staff Writer
Tuesday, October 19, 2010; 11:41 PM

A new report on minority achievement in higher education sounds an alarm about a stark reversal of fortune for an unlikely minority group: men.

Younger men are significantly less likely to have completed college than older men, according to an analysis of federal data by the American Council on Education, a nonprofit group that represents college leaders. The educational stagnation of men is hindering the progress of the nation as a whole and largely offsetting gains by women, the group says.

The 24th edition of the Minorities in Higher Education report provides the latest evidence of academic decline among men, particularly in college. Women outnumber men nearly 3-to-2 in the college population, largely because men are more likely to drop out of high school and to forgo college for manual labor or the military.

Many generations of Americans exceeded the academic attainment of their parents. That remains true, the new study finds, but only for women. As of 2008, 42 percent of women ages 25 to 34 held at least an associate's degree, compared with 34 percent of women ages 55 to 64.

For men, the reverse is true. The college completion rate is 33 percent for younger men and 40 percent for older men.

"Clearly, women of the post-baby boom generations have been successful in raising college attainment while men have not, and the gap between women and men is growing," the report states.
Young men of every racial group are less likely to have finished college than older men of the same race. The sole exception is Asian Americans, whose completion rates are much higher among young adults of both sexes.

Young women of every race, by contrast, have a college completion rate equal to or higher than that of their elders.

It's not that men have stopped going to college. Male completion rates have effectively stalled, while female completion continues to rise, creating an exaggerated appearance of male failure, said Bryan Cook, director of the Center for Policy Analysis at the D.C.-based council.

"One of the things we know is that women need higher levels of education than men to earn the same salary," Cook said. "So you see women persisting in school and going further than men. You also see more women returning to work who are single heads of household."

Among whites ages 55 to 64, the college completion rate is 37 percent for women and 43 percent for men.

Among whites ages 25 to 34, the completion rates are 49 percent for women and 39 percent for men.

Among Hispanics, the fastest-growing ethnic group in American colleges, 14 percent of younger men have completed college, compared with 19 percent of older men.

Combining both sexes, the overall college completion rate for young and old is virtually the same - 38 percent among the young and 37 percent among the old.

The report finds some progress among other metrics of educational achievement. High school completion rates have remained fairly constant, rising from 81 percent in 1988 to 83 percent in 2008.

The share of young adults enrolled in college increased significantly for every racial and ethnic group in that span, and overall college enrollment among the young rose from 30 percent in 1988 to 41 percent in 2008. But most of the gains came in the 1990s.
College enrollment rates for the Hispanic population are rising, but they remain lower than comparable rates for blacks, whites and Asians. That group "presents key challenges, and opportunities," for improving success rates in higher education, the report states.
CLINTON, N.Y. — They text their friends all day long. At night, they do research for their term papers on laptops and commune with their parents on Skype. But as they walk the paths of Hamilton College, a poster-perfect liberal arts school in this upstate village, students are still hauling around bulky, old-fashioned textbooks — and loving it.

“The screen won’t go blank,” said Faton Begolli, a sophomore from Boston. “There can’t be a virus. It wouldn’t be the same without books. They’ve defined ‘academia’ for a thousand years.”

Though the world of print is receding before a tide of digital books, blogs and other Web sites, a generation of college students weaned on technology appears to be holding fast to traditional textbooks. That loyalty comes at a price. Textbooks are expensive — a year’s worth can cost $700 to $900 — and students’ frustrations with the expense, as well as the emergence of new technology, have produced a confounding array of options for obtaining them.

Internet retailers like Amazon and Textbooks.com are selling new and used books. They have been joined by several Web services that rent textbooks to students by the semester. Some 1,500 college bookstores are also offering rentals this fall, up from 300 last year. Here at Hamilton, students this year have a new way to avoid the middleman: a nonprofit Web site, created by the college’s Entrepreneur Club, that lets them sell used books directly to one another.

The explosion of outlets and formats — including digital books, which are rapidly becoming more sophisticated — has left some students bewildered. After completing the heavy lifting of course selection, they are forced to weigh cost versus convenience, analyze their own study habits and guess which texts they will want for years to come and which they will not miss.
“It depends on the course,” said Victoria Adesoba, a pre-med student at New York University who was standing outside that school’s bookstore, a powder-blue book bag slung over her shoulder. “Last semester, I rented for psychology, and it was cheaper. But for something like organic chemistry, I need to keep the book. E-textbooks are good, but it’s tempting to go on Facebook, and it can strain your eyes.”

For all the talk that her generation is the most technologically adept in history, paper-and-ink textbooks do not seem destined for oblivion anytime soon.

According to the National Association of College Stores, digital books make up just under 3 percent of textbook sales, although the association expects that share to grow to 10 percent to 15 percent by 2012 as more titles are made available as e-books.

In two recent studies — one by the association and another by the Student Public Interest Research Groups, a national advocacy network — three-quarters of the students surveyed said they still preferred a bound book to a digital version.

Many students are reluctant to give up the ability to flip quickly between chapters, write in the margins and highlight passages, although new software applications are beginning to allow students to use e-textbooks that way.

“Students grew up learning from print books,” said Nicole Allen, the textbooks campaign director for the research groups, “so as they transition to higher education, it’s not surprising that they carry a preference for a format that they are most accustomed to.”

Indeed, many Hamilton students waxed passionate about the weighty tomes they still lug from dorm room to lecture hall to library, even as they compulsively check their smartphones for text messages and e-mails. “I believe that the codex is one of mankind’s best inventions,” said Jonathan Piskor, a sophomore from North Carolina, using the Latin term for book.

That passion may be one reason that Barnes & Noble College Booksellers is working so hard to market its new software application, NOOKstudy, which allows students to navigate e-textbooks on Macs and PCs. The company, which operates 636 campus bookstores nationwide, including Hamilton’s,
introduced the free application last summer in hopes of luring more students to buy its electronic textbooks.

“The real hurdle is getting them to try it,” said Tracey Weber, the company’s executive vice president for textbooks and digital education.

The company is giving away “College Kick-Start Kits” to students who download NOOKstudy in the fall semester, with ramen noodle recipes and a dozen classic e-books like “The Canterbury Tales” and “The Scarlet Letter.” CourseSmart, a consortium of major textbook publishers, is letting students try any e-textbook free for two weeks.

But not every textbook is available in digital or rental format. At Hamilton, for instance, only about one-fifth of the titles are sold as e-textbooks this fall. A stroll through the campus store revealed the price difference. A book on constitutional law, for instance, was $189.85 new, $142.40 used and $85.45 for rent. (Typically, an e-textbook is cheaper than a used book, though more expensive than a rental.)

The expense of college textbooks, which is estimated to have risen four times the inflation rate in recent years, has become such a concern that some politicians are taking up the cause. Last month, Senator Charles E. Schumer of New York urged more college stores to rent books, after a survey of 38 campus bookstores in New York City and on Long Island by his office found that 16 did not offer the option.

On Thursday, students at more than 40 colleges nationwide are planning an Affordable Textbooks Day of Action, organized by the Student Public Interest Research Groups, to encourage faculty members to assign texts that are less expensive, or offered free online.

For now, buying books the old-fashioned way — new or used — prevails. Charles Schmidt, the spokesman for the National Association of College Stores, said that if a campus store sold a new book for $100, it would typically buy the book back for $50 at semester’s end and sell it to the next student for $75.

The buy-back price plummets, however, if the professor drops the book (or edition) from the syllabus or if the bookstore has bought enough books to meet demand. When Louis Boguchwal, a junior at Hamilton who is
majoring in economics and math, tried to sell a $100 linear algebra textbook back to the college bookstore, he was offered $15.

“It was insulting,” he said. “They give you next to nothing.”

Thus, the creation of Hamilton’s new nonprofit Web site, getmytextbooks.org. So far, traffic has been light: only about 70 books have been sold this fall. But Jason Mariasis, president of the Entrepreneur Club, said he expected sales to pick up as word spread. The site also lists hundreds of other colleges.

Mr. Begolli, a member of the club, recently sold three German novels for $17 on the site. “If I had sold them back to the bookstore, I would have gotten $7 or $8,” he said. “The bookstore is king when it comes to textbook sales. We felt there should be something for students, by students.”

Yet some students have to go it alone. Rosemary Rocha, 26, an N.Y.U. student pursuing a degree in hospitality and tourism management, tallied up her required reading for the semester: $600. “It’s harsh,” she said. “I’m currently collecting unemployment, so that’s not going to happen.”

Instead, she waits to borrow the few copies her professors leave on reserve at the library, or relies on the kindness of classmates. “My friends will let me borrow their books in exchange for coffee or a slice of pizza,” she said. “I very seldom buy the textbooks, but I’m always like a chicken without a head.”