A former East Carolina University drum major and student body president is in town to — in his words — lift as he climbs.

Tremayne Smith graduated in May and now is a staff assistant for Senator Kay Hagan. He returned to his alma mater for homecoming weekend and took the time to speak about his experiences in Washington, D.C.

On Friday at noon, students, professors and alumni gathered in the ECU Political Science Library to hear Smith tell about his path from music to politics. He excelled as a music major and became drum major of the ECU Marching Pirates as a sophomore.

Later, he became involved with the Obama and Perdue campaigns and discovered his interest in politics which led to his position as student body president, declaring a second major in political science and an internship with Kay Hagan’s office in Greenville.

Because of his work in the Greenville office, he was offered the chance to interview for an after-graduation internship for Hagan’s office in
Washington, D.C. During his interview, Smith said, “You’re not going to regret this decision. You need me in that office.”

He was selected from 900 plus applicants along with 11 other interns.

Three weeks before his internship began, he received a call from Hagan’s office. Smith feared he had gone too far in the interview and cost himself the position. Instead, Hagan’s office was so impressed by his comment that he was asked to apply for his current position as staff assistant where he now is in charge of the interns.

He has been in the position for four months and 21 days and spends every day living his dream. He said he enjoys every aspect of his experience from frozen yogurt with Obama and his daughters to watering the plants in Hagan’s office while looking out the window at the Capitol Building.

He attributes his success and opportunities to connections and going for what he wants.

“I’ve stayed in contact with every person that gave me a business card,” he said.

His connections with alumni got him a house four blocks from the capitol at a discount. Because he asked to be able to watch the South Korean President’s address to Congress, he was able to sit on the floor and shake the South Korean President’s hand.

Despite his success, he has not forgotten where he came from. He talked with pride about his hometown and family.

“I’m from Salisbury, home of Cheerwine and Food Lion and one day home of Cheerwine, Food Lion and Tremayne Smith,” he said.

One student asked about his biggest inspiration. Smith said his mother has always been the driving force behind him. His father was absent in his life and he strives to not follow in his father’s footsteps.

“I will not become a societal statistic. I will be the exception, not the rule,” he said.
Smith’s personal motto is “Lifting as I climb” and he constantly is trying to inspire others with his own experiences.

ECU alumnus Ron Clark of Ron Clark Academy in Atlanta, Ga., brings his students to ECU’s homecoming every year. Smith invited them to hear him speak and spent time talking to the students his presentation. Seventh grader Darius Emmanuel told Smith afterward that he was glad it was not a boring talk with a professor like he expected.

“I’m not boring or a professor,” Smith said.
Students help raise cannon from QAR site

Archaeologists last week raised an 8-foot cannon from what's believed to be the wreck of the Queen Anne's Revenge, and Pirates -- students from East Carolina University -- participated. Blackbeard's flagship sank in Beaufort Inlet in 1718; a dozen cannons had previously been recovered from the site. The dive team Wednesday included 10 ECU students. The one-ton weapon, encased in mineral deposits, was taken to the Queen Anne's Revenge Conservation Lab at ECU.

The recovery, said QAR Lab director Sarah Watkins-Kenney, "has allowed a large group of maritime studies students and professors to not just visit (the recovery site) but to also be part of the team. ... These students are getting hands-on experience."

Of the 12 cannons previously recovered, some are in the process of being conserved at the QAR Lab. Three cannons are on exhibit at the N.C. Maritime Museum in Beaufort, plus one at the Museum of the Albemarle in Elizabeth City. A swivel gun from the QAR is on display at the N.C. Museum of History in Raleigh.

STAFF REPORTS
Cannon Recovered From Blackbeard's Ship, Queen Anne's Revenge

Beaufort Inlet, North Carolina -- The legend of Blackbeard is known around the world, but historians still don't know very much about the infamous pirate's life. An underwater excavation of his flagship, Queen Anne's Revenge, continues off the coast of North Carolina, and it's filling some of the gaps in the story. This week, another one of Blackbeard's cannons was brought to the surface. The remains of the Queen Anne's Revenge were found a short distance from the port in Morehead City in Beaufort Inlet where the ship ran aground in 1718.

As divers dropped below the surface, and a crane hoisted the eight foot, one ton artifact from the water.
"Seeing that object reach oxygen for the first time in three hundred years, it's a pretty awing experience," says East Carolina University student Josh Marano.

A new exhibit at the North Carolina Maritime Museum in Beaufort tells the story of the infamous Edward Teach. The exhibit houses more than 300 artifacts, with thousands more to come.

And that's where the 13th cannon pulled from the shipwreck site is headed upon returning to port.

Conservation of the cannon will take about four to five years to complete.

The team has 12 more cannons and three large anchors to recover before the project is complete.

CBS/WDBJ
Downtown revels in extended Halloween
By KJ Williams
The Daily Reflector
Sunday, October 30, 2011

Halloween is a time for fantasy, a chance for a metamorphosis into someone or something else.

It’s also a celebration embraced by Greenville, where business is brisk at seasonal shops selling costumes and props to adults, especially the college crowd.

But once they are dressed up, they need some place to go, and downtown Greenville is the most popular destination.

Halloween, or All Hallows Eve, falls on Monday this year, but the weekend before also features Halloween-themed festivities.

Some downtown streets will be closed to traffic. There will be a strong police presence, designed to control the huge influx of revelers.

Dressed to kill, people in the streets will parade in their costumed glory. Added to that mix are the people in town for ECU’s homecoming weekend.

Nightclubs on Fifth Street that open later in the evening, like the Rehab Lounge and The Other Place, will attract crowds, along with newcomer Hard Times, a country music club located in the space formerly occupied by Paradise.

Other places like the Pirate’s Den, a bar and restaurant on Fifth Street, and nearby restaurants that stay open late, also will swell with customers, employees said this past week.

At the Pirate’s Den, disc jockey and bartender Andrew Woodard said he’s a veteran of previous Halloweens.
“Especially with homecoming, it’s just going to be packed here all weekend,” he said. “A lot of alumni come here and like to party with us.”

Woodard said they will prepare by stocking up. “You’re pretty much at capacity all night long,” he said.

Owner Tara Mouser said it will be her first Halloween here, but she’s expecting it to be profitable.

At the nearby Pita Pit, manager Justin Wright said last year they had a problem when someone threw something in the street that caused people to choke, and he’s hoping for a less scary Halloween this year.

He estimates that it’s probably one of the busiest business days of the year for the restaurant, which stays open until 3 a.m.

“We just make sure we have plenty of people working and plenty of food,” Wright said.

Also on Fifth Street but outside the barricades, a quieter atmosphere exists, said Katherine Wetherington, general manager of Winslow’s — a restaurant with a bar area.

“If you’re looking for Halloween festivities that aren’t too intense, this is probably a good option for you,” she said.

The restaurant will be decorated and the staff costumed. She expects a good crowd, but doesn’t count Halloween as an especially busy day.

“It’s equal to our football weekends,” Wetherington said.

On Evans Street, the Tipsy Teapot draws costumed customers who come for the Halloween-themed events, owner Delia Liuzza said.

“We usually get about 50 to 75 people of the more sober variety,” she said. “Ninety percent of them are dressed up, and we dress up so it’s usually a pretty good night.”

Liuzza said she expects a busy weekend but Halloween might be slower than usual since it’s on Monday.
Denise Walsh, executive director of Uptown Greenville — an organization that works to improve downtown, said the festivities don’t benefit all the businesses there.

“Sometimes there also is the perception that it’s really crowded and it might actually hurt some of the businesses,” Walsh said, referring to restaurants that serve dinner. “The crowd that you’ll see here late at night is more focused on going out to clubs.”

The majority of the businesses are closed though before it gets crowded, she said.

One of those businesses, The Scullery, a coffee shop and restaurant, located at the corner of Fifth and Evans streets, doesn’t serve alcohol and expects limited Halloween-related business. It will be closed before the crowds converge.

Matt Scully, who owns the restaurant with his wife, Erin, said he doesn’t begrudge people their festivities.

“It will be a little crazy. Just the amount of people and the age (group) and the lack of sobriety, but I hope they have fun,” Scully said.

By the next morning, Walsh said the city crews will have scoured the sidewalks and streets of trash, leaving no traces of the celebrations.

“It often looks cleaner than before,” she said.

Contact K.J. Williams at kwilliams@reflector.com or 252-329-9588.
People make their way through the police checkpoint at 5th and Evans Saturday night for the Halloween celebration.

**Editorial: Expense of Halloween revelry**
Monday, October 31, 2011

East Carolina University’s homecoming events may have provided larger than average crowds downtown this weekend but, like every year, the city is braced for the main event this evening. Greenville’s Halloween festivities are expected to draw thousands, depending on the weather, and fill the streets in an annual exhibition of costumed revelry.

This may be a tradition embraced reluctantly by city officials and many other residents throughout the community, who resent the expense required to ensure public safety. Still, as long as there’s a university here, Greenville will have to accept the Halloween event as a part of its culture, continuing its efforts to keep everyone happy, healthy and free from harm.

Several law enforcement agencies will be contributing to the security effort tonight as revelers take to the streets for Halloween. Security barriers at key locations will act as entry points for the downtown district and all those entering must consent to a search to ensure an absence of weapons. This is the approach used in years past, honed to a near science at the direction of the Greenville Police Department.

That has not always been the case, of course. The city previously attempted to suppress the downtown party, only to find that the thousands who flocked...
to Greenville instead poured into the university neighborhood and other locales. The problem that created was tremendous, forcing the city to reverse that decision and encourage congregation in a centralized place. The security presence helps keep everyone safe.

That has become a more pressing issue in recent years as a renewed focus on public safety in the Fifth Street corridor has consumed the city’s energy. The response to a tragic 2009 shooting seemed excessive at the time and seems more so as time passes. Greenville need not employ Halloween-like tactics each weekend to deter crime and violence, and one hopes that the next City Council revisit that issue when it returns to the issue of public safety in the coming months.

For now, though, the city will accept the tremendous cost of law enforcement and overtime required to hold Halloween in a safe and secure manner. The festivities are an inextricable part of this community, for better or worse, and success depends on everyone being careful and accommodating, from those attending to those working to keep them safe.
ECU research will inform state decisions
Sunday, October 30, 2011
ECU News Services

A two-year research project at East Carolina University is turning up information that could help North Carolina tone down the roar of tires on busy highways.

A $218,000 grant to the Department of Construction Management is funding a study of tire and pavement noise in the state. The findings, said Dr. George Wang, the principal investigator of the project, will help guide state decisions about the best pavement for road building in the state.

“This work has laid a cornerstone for future determination of the most cost-effective and durable quiet pavements suitable for use by the North Carolina Department of Transportation,” said Wang, an ECU construction management professor.

“The project will provide a valuable tool in the reduction of pavement noise for certain pavement types found throughout the state,” he said.

Noise can be detrimental to human health. It has been known to cause hearing impairment, sleep disturbance, cardiovascular effects, psychophysiological effects, psychiatric symptoms, myocardial infection and impact fetal development.
The study will be completed by the end of the year. Information collected has enabled the research team to develop a data collection system for measuring pavement noise.

Traffic noise is considered an environmental impact; it affects where and how highway systems can be built or expanded, Wang said. Pavement noise is a crucial aspect of traffic noise. Identifying a quieter pavement is critical to reducing the impact of roads, he said.

The team has been testing nine different types of pavement on approximately 70 highways and about 30 counties in North Carolina.

“Being able to identify these quiet roads is important to reduce traffic noise levels in urban areas and improve the quality of living for those affected by noise pollution,” said ECU graduate Richard Shores of Apex, who worked with Wang throughout the study.

“Our research trips took us to every border of North Carolina; to the beach, Tennessee, Virginia and to South Carolina,” Shores said. “After all the measurements were done, we worked on data analysis to rank the different types of pavement on how loud they were.”

The data is categorized based on pavement type, age and testing speed.

Shores said he feels more confident in his abilities to manage large projects after working on the research study.

“Working to set up equipment, properly planning testing procedures and performing data analysis are all critical aspects of any physics based job,” he said.

Shores obtained an undergraduate degree in physics and a masters of science in medical physics before graduating in May.

North Carolina is one of eight states participating in the Federal Highway Administration’s Pooled Fund Study on tire-pavement noise, and is the only state in the Southeast participating.

The research was funded by the NCDOT.
Article on suicide personal for therapist

Writing about suicide prevention might not seem unusual for a clinical social worker who counsels patients who may be considering that choice.

But for Sean Pumphrey of ECU, the article in the September-October issue of Social Work Today magazine was a chance for him to tell his personal story of suicide — the likely cause of his brother’s death 10 years ago.

At the ECU Physicians Firetower Medical Office where he sees patients, Pumphrey called the article his time to “come out of the closet” and share his brother’s story to help teach others the warning signs of suicide.

His older brother Tom was the “life of the party” who “stuck up for the little guy,” Pumphrey writes. However, he lived with constant self-doubt and negative self-perceptions. Pumphrey once found a suicide note his brother, then in seventh grade, had written. In 1987, after Tom served in the Army, Pumphrey found him overdosed on pills and alcohol.

Tom entered counseling and rehab and attended Alcoholics Anonymous, but it didn’t soothe his despair. In April 2001, he was found dead, a combination of methadone and alcohol in his bloodstream.

Though science can’t say for certain whether Tom died due to an accidental overdose or intentionally took his own life, Pumphrey is sure.

In his article, Pumphrey writes that women are more likely than men to attempt suicide, but men are more likely to complete suicide. Women prefer drugs; men choose guns. Suicide risks include depression or other mental illness, substance abuse, a prior suicide attempt, a family history of suicide and firearms in the home.

Unemployment, a byproduct of today’s tough economic times, increases the likelihood of suicide, according to the American Academy of Suicidology.

In his 20 years of practice, two of his patients have committed suicide. “That’s tough,” he said. “They hid it.” Many suicide victims, he writes, visit their primary care physician within a month of their deaths.
That’s why recognizing the warning signs and referring patients to therapy is important, and why Dr. Tommy Ellis, a family physician and medical director at the Firetower practice, recruited Pumphrey two years ago. In therapy, Pumphrey aims to move clients on in their lives as opposed to staying in long-term counseling. “I’m not looking at their problem. I’m looking at their solution,” he said. “I want them to become independent rather than dependent.”

Pumphrey was named social worker of the year by the North Carolina Coastal District of the National Association of Social Workers in 2009. He specializes in anxiety, attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder and depression.

**Peter Makuck to read poetry on campus**

Peter Makuck, distinguished professor emeritus at ECU, returns to campus Tuesday for a poetry reading and discussion of uses of nature in writing poetry.

Sponsored by the Department of English, Makuck’s reading is in conjunction with his visit to an English graduate seminar in nature writing. The reading, which will begin at 8 p.m. in the Science & Technology Building, Room C-209, is free and open to the public.

In 1978, Makuck founded Tar River Poetry, the internationally acclaimed magazine published by ECU’s English Department and currently edited by one of Makuck’s first students at ECU, Luke Whisnant.

Makuck also directed the ECU Poetry Forum for more than 20 years. He retired from ECU in 2006, although he has continued to teach poetry writing in the MFA programs at N.C. State and UNC-Wilmington.

Makuck’s eighth volume of poetry, “Long Lens: New & Selected Poems,” was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize by its publisher, BOA Editions. He has also published two collections of short stories.

Makuck has accumulated an impressive list of honors and awards, including a Fulbright Professorship in France and the Monroe Spears Award for the best essay to appear in the Sewanee Review in 2010. He also has been a
lecturer in the “Poets in Person” series sponsored by the National Endowment for Humanities.

Makuck and his wife, Phyllis, live in Pine Knoll Shores. For more information, including admission to the nature writing class, contact Alex Albright, director of creative writing at ECU, at 328-4876 or albrightd@ecu.edu. For more on Makuck, visit http://www.makuck.com/.

**ECU Neuroscience Symposium is Nov. 1**

Research on spinal cord injury and multiple sclerosis are among the topics to be discussed at the 13th annual East Carolina University Neuroscience Symposium on Tuesday.

The daylong event will be at the East Carolina Heart Institute at ECU. It’s free and open to the public. Opening remarks are at 8:30 a.m., and the event lasts until 4 p.m.

The program is jointly sponsored by the national and Eastern Carolina chapter of the Society for Neuroscience and the Harriet and John Wooten Laboratory of Alzheimer’s Disease and Neurodegenerative Disease Research.

The event is $15 for ECU faculty and staff (lunch included) and free for students, and postdoctoral fellows and medical residents ($5 for lunch).

For information about the event or to register, visit http://www.ecu.edu/neurochapter.

**Upcoming Events:**

- **Thursday:** Tom Campbell host of “N.C. Spin,” presenting “Confessions of a North Carolina Centrist,” 7 p.m., First Presbyterian Church. Free. Sponsored by Friends of the Joyner Library.
- **Friday:** An Evening with Ben Vereen, 8 p.m., Wright Auditorium. Part of the S. Rudolph Alexander Performing Arts Series. Ticketed event. Contact ECU Central Ticket Office at 328-4788 or www.ecu.edu/srapas.
Calendar to benefit Humane Society
By Kim Grizzard
The Daily Reflector
Monday, October 31, 2011

A new pinup calendar shot and produced in Greenville features some models who are gorgeous and others who are real dogs.

That’s exactly what Susan Chesson and Kelly Boutilier had in mind when they created Humane Hunnies, a 2012 calendar of gals and dogs. With two dozen models and a potential pet for every month of the year, it is a fundraiser for the Humane Society of Eastern Carolina.

The calendar, which ultimately took more than six months and 50 volunteers to complete, started out as a one-shot deal. Chesson and Boutilier, who have collaborated on several area fashion shows, originally considered staging an image for Pinups for Pitbulls, a nonprofit group that produces a calendar as part of a campaign to promote the breed.

“We just decided instead of submitting and doing something on that level, we thought it would be a good idea to keep it local and try to help an organization that really needs us,” Chesson said. “It was a way for other people to recognize the need for help in the community for the Humane Society.”

With photographers, models and area businesses contributing their services for the calendar and a donor paying for the printing, 100 percent of the sales...
of the $20 calendars will be donated to the local humane society. Since its release earlier this month, 300 of the 500 calendars from the first printing have been sold; Humane Hunnies hopes to have a second printing in time for holiday sales.

For the local humane society, the project has not arrived a day too soon.

“We are really struggling (financially),” said Katie Benson, director of outreach for the Humane Society of Eastern Carolina. “We do need to raise $200,000 this year in order to be functional all of next year, and we’ve only raised $95,000 to date ... so the sales of this calendar are very critical to the humane society’s mission.”

Chesson, a longtime humane society volunteer, had a second mission in mind with the calendar: to promote pit bulls as pets. Three of them, dog models for January, July and October, are available for adoption.

“A lot of times that’s what ends up at the shelter and the humane society because they’re overbred; people get them for the wrong reasons. I’ve become a huge advocate for bully breeds,” said Chesson, whose pets include a rescued pit bull. “They get such a bad rap all the time.”

Humane Hunnies shows the dogs in a different light. Ginney has a New Year’s Eve hat tied on in the January photo. Blossom unfurls a patriotic ensemble in July.

Shot between March and August in local businesses and backyards, the calendar photos have a flirty, fifties feel.

Some models, including East Carolina University students and graduates, wore pin curls; Megan Elizabeth Kennedy sports a kerchief reminiscent of the one worn by Rosie the Riveter.

“A lot of old pinup pictures use dogs and different animals in them,” Boutilier said. “We tried to pick pictures that were just fun, simple, classic pinup style but in a modern-day way.”

To achieve that effect, Boutilier and Chesson, friends since middle school, relied on their shared expertise. Chesson, owner of Set Studios, specializes in hair and makeup. Boutilier, owner of Moxie Promotions and formerly of Moxie Clothing, worked on wardrobe and other planning details.
“I would start doing the makeup; Kelly would come, pick up with the hair,” Chesson said. “I would go run the dog around, pick it up, try to wear it out a little bit. It was quite a day.”

Hair, makeup and dogs? For Chesson, it’s not such an odd combination.

“Probably the main thing I do besides hair and makeup is dogs. It’s a good mix,” she said, laughing. “But we figured out a way to combine them, so I think that’s pretty awesome.”

Humane Hunnies calendars are $20 and are available at the Humane Society of Eastern Carolina, 3520 Tupper Drive, as well as Set, Starlight Cafe, The Scullery, Monkee’s, East Carolina Veterinary Service, Fire Tower Animal Clinic and Cape Fear Tattoo. Calendars may be ordered online at www.facebook.com/humanehunnies.

Contact Kim Grizzard at kgrizzard@reflector.com or 252-329-9578.
Jeremy Grove looked like he had just finished a double shift in a blast furnace or a coal mine on Saturday night, not like he had just played in a football game.

The eye black he’d been wearing earlier in the day as East Carolina powered its way past Tulane at Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium had been partially sweated and showered off. Its remnants remained, however, as he sat in a chair in the Pirates’ postgame interview room, and by then the black smear looked more like a film of soot or even a bad bruise.

In the minutes following a second half shutout by the ECU defense, the freshman inside linebacker and season-long tackles leader sported a knit Carhartt workman’s cap, baggy sweats and Timberland work boots, his longish hair flaring out from behind his ears.

It was fitting apparel in the wake of a blue collar 34-13 Pirate win, the team’s third straight victory and one that kept the team deadlocked with Southern Miss in Conference USA’s East Division with a 3-1 league mark.

Fittingly, Grove and his bruising crew of defenders will stare down the Golden Eagles this Saturday in Greenville in a game that will help dictate which team represents the East in this year’s C-USA title game.

The switch to a 3-4 defense might be part of the renewed swagger of the Pirates, but there is more to it than Xs and Os.
The retooled defense has undoubtedly helped quarterback Dominique Davis and the ECU offense by giving them reasonable field position and not forcing them to score on every possession like they did last year.

Further, it’s giving the Pirates the belief that was suffocated late in the 2010 season under an avalanche of yards and points by opposing offenses. On Saturday against the Green Wave, a new trend was on display that proved as much.

In between possessions, the Pirates had spirited full-team huddles on the sideline. As though they were coming out of the tunnel to start the game over again each time, they bounced up and down in unison before the appropriate unit sped onto the field.

The guys left on the sideline after those huddles continued to be what head coach Ruffin McNeill calls the fourth side of the ball — the intangible part of the team beyond the offense, the special teams and the defense which is now striving each week to match the explosive offense led by Davis.

The ECU sideline told the tale of the game, and often its reactions were evoked by the Pirate defense.

The players exploded in emotion after cornerback Derek Blacknall’s thunderous hit on Tulane running back Orleans Darkwa and raved with delight as linebacker Marke Powell and linemen Michael Brooks, Lee Pegues and Derrell Johnson washed over Wave quarterback Ryan Griffin for a season-high four sacks.

They leapt into the air in unison when safety Damon Magazu snared his team-leading fourth interception of the season.

They stood in satisfaction as the Pirate defense forced six Tulane punts and allowed less than 275 yards of total offense for the second time in three games.

Seemingly a one-man gang at times during the Pirates’ sluggish 1-4 start to the season, the now 4-4 Pirates are much more a group than just Grove on defense.
That group will face its most severe test since a 56-3 shelling at the hands of league front-runner Houston this weekend, as Southern Miss trails only the Cougars with an average of more than 36 points and almost 370 yards per game, and allows just more than 18 points per game, also second in C-USA.

In order to vie for a third C-USA crown in four years, in fact, the Grove gang will need its work boots every Saturday for the rest of the season.

Contact Nathan Summers at nsummers@reflector.com or 252-329-9595.
Teaching Fellows with a new mission

BY SAMMIE PARRISH

Should North Carolina reinstate its Teaching Fellows Program, which is being phased out by a cost-conscious legislature? The answer is a resounding "yes." The more cogent question is, in what form should it be returned?

The program is over 25 years old. It's time to consider how this nationally acclaimed initiative to attract the best and the brightest high school graduates into teaching can be re-envisioned to meet the 21st century needs of North Carolina.

The education establishment has been engaged in transforming significant aspects of public education in an effort to "Race to the Top." Should the Teaching Fellows Program be off limits to such careful and thoughtful scrutiny?

The program is a perfect vehicle for addressing the most intractable problem in education today - the inability of poor rural and urban schools to recruit and retain highly talented and qualified teachers. As a result, the least fortunate and most disadvantaged students are being taught, in disproportionate numbers, by the least talented and qualified teachers.

What better way to transform this situation than to give these students equal access to the best and brightest, the N.C. teaching fellows?

On its 25th anniversary, the Teaching Fellows Program and Commission overlooked an opportunity to rethink and reinvent itself for the next 25 years. Like any successful organization, it had an obligation to remain responsive to its customers' ever-changing needs. Neither North Carolina nor its public schools remain just as they were 1986, when the legislature first funded the program. Moreover, organizations eventually fail when they neglect to revisit their mission and to address their customers' most pressing needs.

Changing demographics provide the first clue as to North Carolina's most pressing educational need. The current birth rate is greatest among demographic groups that have had the lowest literacy rates and the least academic success. Further, research has proven that the single variable that
makes the greatest difference in how well students learn is the quality of the teacher in their classroom.

Ensuring that economically disadvantaged and minority students have equal access to the "best and brightest" teachers, is North Carolina's must pressing educational need. A re-envisioned Teaching Fellows Program would award its scholarships only to high school graduates and, perhaps community college students, who express a desire to teach in rural and urban areas with large numbers of economically disadvantaged students.

Such graduates would likely be those who feel some moral commitment or a calling to teach in these situations. They would demonstrate that commitment by "signing up" not for just four years, as their scholarship payback, but for some longer period of time, perhaps six or eight years. This requirement should present no deterrent to young people who actually intend to make a career of teaching.

The Teaching Fellows program and its supporters stand a better chance of returning the program to the state budget if this action gains favor on both sides of the aisle. What better way to do this than to demonstrate that the decision makes unquestionable financial sense during bleak economic times?

While not every citizen cares about the disadvantaged, every citizen cares about his or her own future. That future is in question unless we begin to graduate larger numbers of well-prepared students from every economic and ethnic group in the state. Bright and talented teachers will still be there to teach the more economically privileged students. The best and the brightest teachers are already teaching in these classrooms in disproportionately high numbers.

There is much about the Teaching Fellows Program that has worked well and will require no modification. Teaching Fellows recipients as a group have had an average SAT score well above the state average and grade point averages generally between 3.5 and 4.0. The high standards are as solid today as they were in 1986. They should remain this way for applicants who apply under a "re-missioned "or "re-envisioned" Teaching Fellows Program.

The state's limited resources should be targeted in ways that make the soundest economic sense. Targeted resources yield the best results. Teaching Fellows scholarships should be utilized to recruit and reward young people who are willing to take on and remain in the most challenging job in public education today - teaching the economically disadvantaged in our most challenging public schools as defined by the state. By acknowledging and
correcting a gross inequity, North Carolina would not only be racing to the top, but would actually stand a chance of getting there.

Sammie Parrish, an independent education consultant, serves as executive director of the Roanoke River Valley Education Consortium, based in Warrenton. The views expressed here are her own.
Now UNC plays waiting game with NCAA

BY KEN TYSIAC - ktysiac@charlotteobserver.com

INDIANAPOLIS UNC-Chapel Hill officials came to Friday's hearing hoping the NCAA Committee on Infractions would not impose more sanctions than the school had already placed on its football program.

Former UNC associate head coach John Blake attended the hearing in hopes of clearing his name after he was charged with three of the nine major NCAA violations levied against the university.

Both parties will have to wait eight to 12 weeks for the Committee on Infractions to issue its findings after a hearing Friday that lasted more than eight hours and was closed to the media and the public.

"All I can do is hope and pray," Blake said when asked if he had restored his reputation.

The hearing was an opportunity for the NCAA enforcement staff to present its evidence to the Committee on Infractions, which serves as judge and jury. During the hearing, Blake and UNC officials also were able to present their version of events.
UNC was able to show corrective measures it has taken since the investigation of impermissible benefits and academic fraud within the Tar Heels football program began in June of 2010.

Fourteen players missed at least one game and seven missed the entire season in 2010. Former head coach Butch Davis, who was not cited personally in the NCAA report, was fired in July.

In September, UNC self-imposed two years of probation, vacated its wins from 2008 and 2009 and reduced scholarships by three for each of the next three seasons.

Holden Thorp, the UNC chancellor, said the school received a fair hearing.

"I think we feel good about the opportunity we had to make our case today and about the hard work we put into getting ready for today," Thorp said. "So while we'd love to get the decision as soon as possible, I think today was a huge, huge milestone. We're grateful to get past it."

Thorp and departing athletics director Dick Baddour met with reporters after the hearing. In a written response to the NCAA last month, UNC officials agreed with the NCAA on most of the allegations but contested a charge of failing to monitor players' use of social media, saying NCAA legislation didn't require it.

Blake, who resigned after the 2010 season opener and who was paid a $74,500 buyout, had a different goal entering the hearing. He sought to disprove the NCAA's charges that while at UNC, he worked to help steer players as potential clients to the late sports agent Gary Wichard.

Since September of 2010, Blake's lawyers have been contesting evidence against him. They called $31,500 paid to Blake by Wichard gifts or loans to help pay for private school tuition for Blake's son.

They collected affidavits from players Blake coached saying he did not steer them toward Wichard.

Asked during a break in the hearing what he hoped to accomplish, Blake responded briefly.

"The truth," he said.

After his time in front of the infractions committee was finished, reporters and cameramen scrambled to catch up to Blake in the hallway outside the JW Marriott conference room where the hearing was held.
The NCAA can impose a "show cause order" against Blake that would be a stain on his reputation and could make it difficult for him to work for an NCAA school in the future. Blake and his lawyers hope to avoid that.

"It was an excellent hearing," said Raleigh lawyer Wade Smith, who is representing Blake, as is Florida lawyer William Beaver. "We're finished for now. We're going to go back to North Carolina. ... and we will await a decision from the committee. I wish I could say more, but it would be inappropriate for me to do so."

Former head coach Davis, who was not requested to attend the hearing, did not appear. Neither did former tutor Jennifer Wiley, whose inappropriate assistance to players was the basis for the academic portion of the probe.

Interim head coach Everett Withers also was not required to appear. Withers said what happened in Indianapolis wouldn't influence the team in today's game against Wake Forest.

The ACC was represented by Commissioner John Swofford and associate commissioner for compliance Shane Lyons. Swofford, a former UNC football player and athletics director, said Lyons represented the ACC at recent Committee on Infractions hearings for Florida State and Georgia Tech.

Swofford said he came to the UNC hearing because Thorp personally requested his attendance.

For UNC and Blake, the waiting game continues now in a probe that began 16 months ago. Thorp said the length of time it takes is one of the most difficult things about an NCAA investigation.

It's likely that UNC won't know its final penalties until after incoming athletics director Bubba Cunningham, who begins Nov. 14, hires a permanent football coach.

"It's something that will get discussed (in the coaching search) and obviously we'd like to have it resolved ahead of time," Thorp said, "but if the search for Mr. Cunningham is any indication, it's not going to be a huge impediment."

The hearing was one of the last acts for Baddour, who is stepping down after 45 years at UNC. He said the issue for him since the investigation began has been helping UNC improve.

Friday's hearing provided a chance for the school to show changes it has made in its academic support program and compliance monitoring in an effort to prevent future violations.
Baddour said it was difficult to know that one of his final tasks would be to go in front of the NCAA's infractions committee. These are the first major violations UNC has been found to commit in 50 years.

At the same time, Baddour said, he was glad to be there to represent UNC and to help the school make a good impression.

"We are well on the way, as we were from Day One, to putting the things in place to make sure that we got better, that we had better procedures, that we were looking at our academic support program," Baddour said. "That's what I've been focused on, and I know that's what Bubba will be focused on."

All that's left now for UNC and Blake is to wait to see what members of the Committee on Infractions think of their presentation and the evidence against them.

Staff writer Caulton Tudor contributed to this report.

Tysiac: 919-829-8942
Northeastern University is opening regional campus today

By David Perlmutt

Northeastern University of Boston is officially laying down stakes in Charlotte today smack in the middle of the city at Trade and Tryon streets.

It is the venerable private school's first venture outside Massachusetts, and likely won't be its last -- with campuses planned elsewhere, including in Seattle within a year.

In Charlotte, Northeastern will offer a doctorate in education and eight master's-level programs tied largely to the region's financial center. Those offerings will include masters of science degrees in finance, taxation, project management, sports leadership, leadership, education and health informatics.

The school is leasing 14,000 square feet of space in the 20-story 101 Independence Building at Trade and Tryon, including administrative offices on the ground floor near the entrance.

N.C. Lt. Gov. Walter and local officials plan to hold a ribbon-cutting this morning for the new uptown Charlotte campus.
RALEIGH N.C. State University was briefly on alert Friday morning, as a suspect in a robbery of a nearby bank ran onto campus, according to a university spokesman.

The robbery happened at the Capital Bank branch, 2127 Clark Ave., near Cameron Village about 10:40 a.m., said Raleigh police spokesman Jim Sughrue.

Police say Corey Eric Sterling of 922-203 Sugar Hollow Lane in Wake Forest handed a robbery note to a teller and fled the bank on foot. Sterling, 35, ran toward the NCSU campus, with Raleigh police in pursuit.

A Raleigh officer caught up with Sterling on campus and arrested him. He was charged with one count of common law robbery, Sughrue said.

Police did not say how much money was taken.
College Web sites to post cost calculators for prospective students

By Daniel de Vise

This weekend, the true price of college will be revealed.

That, at least, was the Obama administration’s aim when it ordered all colleges receiving federal aid to post a net-price calculator on their Web sites by Saturday.

For prospective students and parents, the arrival of the calculator marks a significant change in college admissions. For the first time, applicants can peek behind the opaque curtain of college pricing and divine the “real” expense for an actual student. In the rarefied world of $50,000-a-year residential colleges, that is a big deal.

“I think it’s the first time parents and students are going to be able to go to a college’s Web site and get a good estimate of what they’re going to be expected to contribute to college,” said Mark Lindenmeyer, financial aid director at Loyola University Maryland.
For most students, the sticker price of college is fiction, as inflated as the rack rates on hotel-room doors.

The full price of tuition, fees and living expenses averaged $38,590 at private colleges in the 2011-12 academic year, according to a new report from the College Board. The amount students actually paid, counting scholarships and grants, averaged $23,060. Student aid lowered the average cost of public colleges from $17,130 to $11,380.

Sticker price is rising fast. Net price is rising slowly. At private institutions, it’s barely rising at all. Because of rampant tuition discounting and an expansive definition of “aid,” sticker price is no longer a reliable measure of what the average student will pay.

The federal government has seized on net price in a campaign to make colleges more transparent and accountable. Last summer, the Education Department launched a Web site that ranks colleges by net price, based on the agency’s own calculations. In recent years, federal officials have gathered and published data on admission rates, SAT scores, graduation rates and other metrics.

With the new calculators, officials hope to demystify pricing. Colleges dispense aid based mostly on two factors — financial need and academic merit. To some extent, a college can predict how much aid it will award through such factors as family income, bank balances and test scores.

Calculators vary in length and depth. A typical example, at George Washington University, walks families through several pages of questions, delving deep into Mom and Dad’s tax form to ferret out details about investment income and business losses. Filling it out accurately requires significant time and a stack of financial data.

A trial run of the calculator, for a mythical student with $100,000 in household income, one sibling and essentially no other assets, yielded the following: A GW education might cost that family $29,888 a year, about half off the full price of $58,538.

Barry Simmons, financial aid director at Virginia Tech, expects the calculators will be “heavily used” at most residential universities. Virginia Tech has published its own aid “estimator” for six years.

But four-year residential schools make up only a fraction of the vast higher education universe. By some estimates, as many as three-quarters of students are considered “non-traditional” — living at home, studying part-time,
raising children or doing all of those things. No calculator can measure every life variable.

“I cannot imagine that most students, of the millions who go to college each year, are going to pay it one bit of attention,” said Patricia McGuire, president of Trinity Washington University, which focuses on educating disadvantaged women.

She views the calculator and the movement behind it as a phenomenon “driven by the upper-middle class, well-educated parents who think that they’re missing out on a bargain somewhere.”

Indeed, some college leaders note a trend toward well-heeled parents shopping for value and pressing for discounts, as if they were collecting bids on a roofing job.

For an industry generally leery of regulation, the calculator mandate has met little public resistance. Amid talk of collegiate “sticker shock” and the $55,000-a-year school, net price discussions could cast higher education in a better light.

Nonetheless, some college officials worry the calculator will drive applicants away. Colleges seldom advertise their sticker price. Even the lower net price of an elite residential school is a hefty sum.

“The biggest fear that I have is turning off students,” said Jim Kaster, financial aid director at Washington and Lee University.

Some schools at the top of the pecking order dispense aid solely by need, through fairly predictable formulas. At most others, aid is more fluid. Colleges award aid for need, for merit and for various combinations of the two, in a process about as predictable as the pricing of airplane seats.

Many schools have already quietly posted calculators on Web pages brimming with disclaimers: It is just one tool in the admissions process. It yields estimates. Students shouldn’t take them to heart.

“It’s going to be a human being, not an online tool, who determines whether a student gets an aid award,” said Sally Rubenstone of the Web site College Confidential.

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College Application Essay as Haiku? For Some, 500 Words Aren’t Enough

By MATT FLEGENHEIMER

Penn Weinberger had grown attached to his college admissions essay. The topic — coping with a brother’s attention deficit disorder — was important to him. The anecdotes clicked. The characters had dimension. The meaning, as his teachers at Hunter College High School had long advised him, was shown, not told.

The only problem with Penn’s writing was the math: It was 650 words, outside the 250- to 500-word range re-established by the Common Application this spring — after a four-year experiment with no upper limit — but only now being grappled with as deadlines for early admissions approach next week.

“I just had to chop down all the emotion,” Penn said.

Unlike other parts of the application, which, in its online version, cuts students off midword if they exceed character limits, the personal statement will not be truncated, raising the question in school corridors: Does 500 really mean 500?

In a word, no. In two words, kind of.

“If a student uploaded a 500,000-word essay, there’s nothing we could do,” said Rob Killion, executive director of Common Application, which is accepted by more than 400 colleges and universities. “However, we do ask that all students follow the same rules their peers are following.”

Mr. Killion said the limit was reinstated after feedback that essays had grown too long. But colleges are not told if essays exceed the limit.

Jon Reider, director of college counseling at San Francisco University High School, agreed that concise writing was laudable but said the implication of a strict limit was misleading. “I worry about that kid who’s written 530 and thinks he has to cut 30 words,” he said. “It just puts another stage of anxiety in front of these kids.”
Jeffrey Brenzel, dean of undergraduate admissions at Yale, said he did not stop reading if an essay ran long, but “if they go over the limit, the stakes go up.”

While Penn’s classmates at Hunter have debated on Facebook whether the limit will be enforced, Duncan Hosie, a senior at San Francisco University High School, has winnowed his essay about democracy and family from 890 words to what he described as “a 500-word haiku.” Michail Paunwar, a senior in Westfield, Ind., excluded the painful hospital scenes about his father’s colon cancer, figuring admissions officers could do without “a sob story.”

And a senior in New Jersey, whose first draft topped 700 words, said she decided to fictionalize portions of her piece, merging characters or events. “That really got rid of a lot of words,” she said.

Then there is Eva Peter, a classmate of Penn’s at Hunter, who said the final version of her essay about liking sports and science as a girl was “a worse piece of writing” than the 700-plus word original. Characters are intact, but less vivid. The message persists, though less pointedly.

“It fulfills the duty of a standard college essay,” she said with a shrug.

And, at 497 words, it fulfills the mandate of the Common Application. At 500, so does this article.