THE DAILY CLIPS

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New ECU dining hall is going green

By Josh Humphries
The Daily Reflector

Thursday, November 26, 2009

The new dining hall at East Carolina University will be the first building on campus to comply with strict green building techniques.

The Croatian Building, currently under construction on the eastern side of the main campus near Brewster and the Rivers buildings, will be certified as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) building by the U.S. Green Building Council if it meets all requirements.

“ECU is committed to designing and building facilities that are sustainable and aesthetically pleasing,” said ECU spokesman John Durham. “It is critical that all new facilities and all existing buildings that are undergoing renovation be designed and constructed to the highest possible environmental standards to reduce recurring operating cost and minimize environmental impact.”

The 18,000-square-foot building will replace the previous Croatian Building, which was less than 6,000 square feet, and house a large Chick-fil-A franchise and a Chili's Too franchise.

The new building is expected to open in January 2011. The original structure was built in 1970.

The $8.2 million building is being funded with dining receipts, said Gina Shoemaker, interim assistant director for engineering and architectural services.

All construction debris from the site will be recycled and nothing that leaves the site can go to the landfill to meet the LEED requirements, she said.

Trees removed from the site for construction of the new building are being sent to a chipper to create mulch, and all metal leaving the site will be recycled, Shoemaker said. Recycled metal will be used in the new building, and it also will include a cistern to collect water to reduce storm water runoff from the site.

The area behind the building, which was largely covered by brick, will include more trees in the future.

“Now it will be more of a natural area with one sidewalk going toward the Rivers Building,” Shoemaker said.

The new building and restaurants are expected to increase traffic in the building. Before closing, the Croatian served about 3,000 people every day.

Contact Josh Humphries at jhumphries@reflector.com or (252) 329-9565.

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Positive pace: ECU fundraising reflects region's support

Monday, November 30, 2009

With a month left in 2009, East Carolina University has collected $38 million for the year in its Second Century Campaign, which aims to boost the university's endowment and help shape its vision for the next 100 years. That puts the campaign at a healthy $152 million toward the goal of $200 million before 2013.

To have such success in a year marked by severe economic struggle is a testament to the high value eastern North Carolina places in the university that continues to grow with the region it serves.

The Second Century Campaign had more than $90 million before it was publicly announced in March of last year. After back-to-back years of successful fundraising, university officials believe they are on pace to reach the campaign's goal a year ahead of schedule.

ECU reported last week that the campaign has helped to create 15 new distinguished professorships, 85 new scholarships and has enhanced the ECU Scholars program. More than $20 million has been raised for scholarships, more than $5 million for capital projects and more than $46 million for athletics scholarships.

The Second Century Campaign represents only a portion of what will be needed to fund ECU's strategic plan. ECU Tomorrow: A Vision for Leadership and Service contains five directions in which the university intends to chart its course into its second century. Chancellor Steve Ballard has said funding that margin of excellence will require more than $1 billion over the next 10-15 years.

In soliciting contributions, ECU points to scholarship opportunities and the university's foundation of leadership. Also listed are ECU's contributions to regional economic prosperity, health care and medical innovation, the arts, culture and quality of life.

The Second Century Campaign is ECU's recognition that its level of ambition far exceeds the state's ability to match its growth dollar for dollar. The campaign's ability to out pace it's own fundraising goals shows how committed the region is to supporting the university's mission and level of ambition.

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More than drop in bucket

Online charity allows donors to give to needs across the world

By Kim Grizzard
The Daily Reflector

Saturday, November 28, 2009

Four years ago, Americans Brian and Mary Dawson found themselves surrounded by need in Uganda. They had money to give but did not know how to choose someone to help.

The Dawsons, both physicians, didn’t want to make a contribution that was no more than a drop in a bucket. They wanted to find something that people could continue to draw from even after the two of them returned home to Greenville.

“You feel so inadequate,” Mary said. “You see so many needs, and there’s just no way to meet (them). We felt like we wanted to do something more.”

So they bought cows.

Though choosing this one need meant saying no to all the others, the Dawsons knew that, over time, the cattle would multiply and benefit more people in the community. What they didn’t know was that the cow project itself would give birth to an effort that would grow to help people far beyond one Ugandan village.

That effort, known as ChooseAneed, has generated nearly $100,000 to fund projects in nine countries. Since its inception, the nonprofit group has supplied everything from chickens to clean drinking water, huts to health care, and sandals to scholarships.

Not bad for an organization that started out as a few notes on a napkin. As they sat in a café in Uganda, the Dawsons wrote it out like a wish-you-were-here postcard. They thought of family and friends back home who would have loved to have shared their experiences.

“We wanted to bring that feeling back home without having to bring people to the country,” Brian said. “We knew that there were some people who would never come to the country but who would love to be involved in what we had the opportunity and blessing to be involved with. We wanted to give them that opportunity as well.”

But what started out as a plan to invite family and friends to donate grew to an online charity with donors across the country. Some, like Mitchel O’Neil of Dallas, Texas, have never met the Dawsons. O’Neil, 46, learned about ChooseAneed.org from a stranger on a flight from Atlanta to Dallas.

“I’ve had this urge to do something and help, but ... sometimes you’re kind of skeptical to where your money goes,” he said. “We looked it up. From there I started seeing some things; I started contributing some money as best I could.”

O’Neil started out by funding a $300 generator for a health center. Then he started asking fellow professionals in the auto financing industry to help finance a $4,000 emergency transport vehicle. He has even started giving coupons that allow family and friends to go the Web site and contribute to needs ranging from constructing a classroom in Sudan to providing goats for widows and orphans in Kenya.

Nearly all the projects listed on ChooseAneed.org cost $5,000 or less to complete. As donors contribute financially, the site tracks each project’s fundraising progress. After a project is funded and completed, ChooseAneed posts a success story, complete with photos and sometimes even video that allows donors to see
how their contributions were used.

So far, there are 45 such stories, including the Open Arms India Well Project, which installed a well in Bihar, north India. Muniya Devi, a 38-year-old mother of four, told ChooseAneed that before the well was put in, she had to walk an hour to find clean water. Gathering water for the family, a chore shared by the children, sometimes meant they would have to miss school. It cost $500 to change that.

Whether donors give $10 or $1,000, all contributions are directed to the need. The Dawsons cover things like fees to wire the donations to other countries, so donors do not pay administrative costs.

That is one thing that drew Steve Long to become a contributor. The 34-year-old son of a missionary, Long found out about ChooseAneed from his brother-in-law, who was in school with the Dawsons.

“I wanted something that was going to have very little, minimal overhead to where if I was going to donate money 10 percent wasn’t going to people that run the organization,” Long said.

In the summer of 2008, Long and his wife gave $15,000 through ChooseAneed to help dig wells and provide scholarships in Uganda. Then they traveled to the country to help complete the work.

Not every donor is as physically or financially involved. ChooseAneed accommodates any level of giving.

“You can go as small or as big as a donor is willing to provide,” Long said. “If it’s $5, then $5 makes a difference. It doesn’t matter how big or small the donation is, it makes a difference, and it certainly will change lives over there like we will never understand.”

The Dawsons learned that on one of their first trips to Africa. While visiting Zambia and Zimbabwe, the couple attended a service at a rural church. The Dawsons and their fellow visitors gave what they considered a modest offering, $5 to $20. But in the collective $200 donation, the visitors had unknowingly contributed more than the church would collect in an entire year.

“That kind of opened our eyes,” Brian said. “I didn’t lose anything by giving the $5. I gave out of my excess ... my excess was their riches.”

Uganda native Dr. Sylvester Odeke, a clinical assistant professor at the Brody School of Medicine, said the economic disparities are difficult for many people to understand. In 2006, the Dawsons traveled with Odeke to his native village, where Odeke is working to build a clinic.

“I think part of the reason why Brian feels passionately about this project is because he’s been there and he’s seen the need first hand,” Odeke said. “You can’t shake that off easily.

“The need is overwhelming, and you could respond in one of two ways,” he said. “It could get so overwhelming that you decide, ‘I’m going to go away and never come back to this place;’ or you could say, ‘By God, I’m going to do anything I can to make a difference.’”

By all accounts, efforts funded by ChooseAneed are making a difference. A project in Tanzania has helped women in small villages to start businesses to support their families. A project in Ghana helped to buy medicine to rid children of parasites and provide shoes to protect them from becoming infected again.

“We have completed so many important needs,” Mary said last year when she and Brian were honored for their work by their alma mater, Mars Hill College. “Simple needs like providing school supplies for Ugandan children, profound needs like completing wells for communities in India and Uganda ... and poignant needs like providing airline miles to transport a young Ugandan girl with burns to the United States to get life-altering surgery.”

ChooseAneed has completed three cow projects and has recently begun a fourth to provide milk for children and bulls to plow the fields. Cow project participants gathered around a cell phone mounted on a mango tree in Kadami, Uganda, to talk about ChooseAneed’s contribution.

“They’re able to sell the milk, and they can buy soap and things they need,” said Odeke, who was translating the call for Brian. “Thank you very much; that’s what he keeps saying. People are very happy. ‘Our children were malnourished but because now they’re able to drink milk, they look much healthier.’”

The second cow project, which began with a herd of 16, has grown to 25 cows, not including some that were sold to help pay children’s school fees and some health-care expenses. Many of the participants in the projects are
widows or widowers.

"You have to understand, having cows is like having a bank account," Odeke explained. "So without that, if you're poor and you don't have a cow, you don't have a goat, it's fairly obvious to anyone that you're really poor.

"It (the cow) gives a sense of wealth. At least you have something."

In a nearby village, Mukose Edwards has received funding from ChooseANeed to begin a chicken-raising project for widows and orphans. Edwards said via e-mail that the community is hoping ChooseANeed will fund more projects there.

The Dawsons realize that needs will continue to outpace donations; there are 18 projects on the Web site awaiting funding. In such a sea of need, it is easy to wonder if the $100,000 that has been generated has even made a ripple, but the Dawsons are encouraged.

"That drop in that bucket in these little communities makes a world of difference to the community that you just gave the drop to," Brian said.

"ChooseANeed is a very small drop in little corners of the Earth, but it makes a huge difference to these people."

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Budget woes halt plan to train medical students at Nash General

By John Henderson
Rocky Mount Telegram

Saturday, November 28, 2009

A proposal for medical students from East Carolina University to train alongside doctors at Nash General Hospital has been put on hold due to the state's fiscal woes.

The plan calls for third- and fourth-year students from the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University to spend their final years of training at Nash General Hospital, shadowing physicians and getting a real-world taste of practicing community medicine.

Brody School of Medicine officials have toured Nash Health Care Systems facilities.

"We feel optimistic that when funding becomes available that Nash Health Care Systems will be one of the sites chosen for the medical school students to train in a regional community setting," said Larry Chewning, chief executive officer of Nash Health Care Systems.

The college wants 40 of its students to train in their final years on an ongoing basis in community hospitals east of Interstate 95, Chewning said.

He estimated that as many as 30 may end up training at Nash Health Care Systems throughout the year.

"This gives (students) more of a real-world experience of what it's actually like to practice in a community like Rocky Mount at a community-hospital setting," Chewning said. "There is a belief that many of the physicians will decide to stay in communities that they are trained in, or gain a better appreciation for what it's like to practice outside of an academic training center."

Nash Health Care Systems is interested in participating in a plan that was approved by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors last year.

In an effort to address an expected shortage of doctors in North Carolina, the board in March of 2008 endorsed a plan to expand medical education at the state's public medical schools.

The plan is based on a collaborative effort between the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Medicine and the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University. In addition, UNC-Chapel Hill plans to develop facilities in Charlotte and Asheville to accommodate students in the last two years of their medical education.

The cumulative cost of the plan is expected to be in the vicinity of $450 million — the bulk of which would provide new or renovated facilities — and would be phased in over the next 10 years, according to a press release last year put out by the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Medicine.

"(Funding) was pulled during the state budget process," Chewning said.

Chewning said he is not sure when the program would be funded, but it is only a matter of time.

"Absolutely this will happen," he said. "There was a legislative edict relative to expanding medical schools and pursuing relationships with community hospitals as alternative training sites for their students."

Under the plan, Brody School of Medicine would expand its first-year medical school enrollment to 120 students in a phased process.
The concept behind the program is that doctors who practice in the community hospitals will be more likely to continue working there after graduation.

According to the UNC press release, medical experts predict a deficit of physicians in the state by 2020, particularly in primary care. "Already, fewer physicians are electing to go into primary care, and there are growing problems arising from imbalances in the geographic distribution of physicians," the release stated. "The predicted shortage is of particular concern in North Carolina, where the population is expected to grow 52 percent by 2030."

Chewning sees many positives to Nash Health Care Systems participation in the program.

"We think that some of the physicians who come here as third- and fourth-year medical students will like our community, our hospital, and physicians they train with," he said. "And ultimately, they will choose Nash Health Care Systems (for permanent employment)."

Nash Health Care Systems can benefit in other ways by becoming the educational campus.

"It gives us an opportunity to do other things with education," Chewning said. "We might be able to create laboratories for nursing students in the same building, or expand onsite educational opportunities for our own staff."

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ECU News Services

Sunday, November 29, 2009

ECU has partnered with the Greenville Fire-Rescue Department to get the word out about aphasia, which is difficulty or loss in communication usually created by stroke or brain injury.

Sherri Winslow, clinical supervisor in the ECU Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, and Mary Beth Woody, a second-year graduate student, have been leading aphasia awareness training for emergency responders to make them cognizant of the acquired language disorder and how to improve communication interactions with people with aphasia.

The training has been so successful that there are plans to take it to rescue agencies across Pitt County.

On Monday morning, more than 15 city fire and rescue personnel gathered in a station conference room. Close to 140 will receive the training in three sessions, said L.R. Hines, battalion chief of safety and training for Greenville Fire-Rescue.

"The brain is very complex, so there are lots of ways aphasia can manifest itself in patients," Woody said.

Some people may be able to speak clearly, but have trouble understanding conversation. Others may comprehend everything, but may only be able to speak a few words. The disorder does not affect a person's intelligence, although it can affect reading and writing. About 40 percent of people with stroke, and about one-third of people who suffer severe head injuries, will get aphasia. North Carolina is in the nation's stroke "belt," and eastern North Carolina is the "buckle" with the highest rate of death due to stroke in the nation. An estimated 625 people in Pitt County, and about 37,000 in North Carolina, have been diagnosed with aphasia.

Emergency responders may come in contact with people suffering aphasia during emergency or service calls or vehicle stops. In general, Woody suggested that they look for halting or garbled speech, or someone who is groping for words or uses nonsensical words.

Emergency responders are most often interacting with people during a stressful time, whether someone has aphasia or not. Those with aphasia may become frustrated because of their inability to communicate easily and will need time to answer questions. She suggested making sure to have the person's attention before speaking to them, using a calm, unhurried voice, eliminating background noise as much as possible, and asking simple, direct, yes-and-no questions.

"We can't tell you what will work with every patient, every time," Woody said.

ECU’s speech language and hearing clinic is providing aphasia patients identification cards and windscreen and window decals to let emergency responders know about their condition.

Woody got the idea for doing local training after attending a North Carolina Speech-Language-Hearing Association meeting. She heard about a traffic stop in another state that resulted in someone with aphasia spending the night in jail because the officer mistakenly thought the man was intoxicated. Materials, including a quiz and video, were provided by the National Aphasia Association.

Hines said the training has been beneficial and is an important reminder to rescue personnel.

"It may be something other than what it first appears," Hines said.
For more information on the training, contact Winslow at 744-6142.

Professor's book looks at fundamentalists

Religious fundamentalists around the world sometimes create great mischief, according to Calvin Mercer, ECU religion professor, therapist and author of the work, "Slaves to Faith: A Therapist Looks Inside the Fundamentalist Mind."

"What I do in this book is explore the structure of fundamentalists' thinking and the emotional life that goes with it," he said.

Author or editor of four books, Mercer has expertise in biblical studies, and he has also been trained in and has practiced clinical psychology.

His book, published in May with a foreword by church history scholar Martin Marty, is a psychological analysis of fundamentalists.

"Unfortunately, traditional and moderate adherents of religion often get a bad name because of the misdeeds of fundamentalists," Mercer said. "I'm trying to help us understand the history and beliefs and, ultimately, the mind of fundamentalists who are outside of mainstream religion."

"Since the terrorist attacks of 9-11, there has been a great interest among scholars in understanding fundamentalism around the world," Mercer said.

"But little attention has been given to the psychology of fundamentalists."

Mercer's analysis draws upon the widely used model of cognitive therapy to suggest that the fundamentalist can be driven by anxiety.

"Fundamentalists' anxiety has serious implications for their well-being and explains their intense rejection of modernity and strong involvement in national political and cultural issues," Mercer said.

"My goal is to promote understanding and dialogue between religions and between the different theological camps within the religions," he said.

"It's not an easy task, but there's a lot at stake and we should do all we can to have religion be a positive, rather than a negative, force in our world."

Mercer earned his undergraduate degree at UNC-Chapel Hill in journalism and psychology, a master's degree in clinical psychology at ECU in 1997, and doctorate in religion at Florida State University. He also holds master's of divinity and master's of theology degrees from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Mercer, who joined the ECU faculty in 1985, is director of the Multidisciplinary Studies Program at ECU.

For more information or to order "Slaves to Faith," visit the publisher's Web site: www.greenwood.com/books/printFlyer.aspx?sku=C36496.

Education on health benefits of nut urged

In a first-of-a-kind study, ECU nutrition researchers have uncovered a lack of understanding of the health benefits of peanuts and tree nuts among consumers. The researchers see opportunities for health professionals, government feeding programs, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and others to educate the public.

Published this month in Nutrition Research and Practice, Dr. Roman Pawlak and Dr. Sarah Colby, assistant professors of nutrition at ECU, and graduate student Julia Herring report that despite the many recent scientific studies showing that peanuts and tree nuts have protective effects against heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, metabolic syndrome, and obesity, no study to date has been published about individuals' perception of eating nuts.

So, they conclude, it is not clear how the recent studies have been translated by the public.

The researchers studied the perceptions of individuals of low socioeconomic status from a rural community, since this population is shown to have higher rates of mortality from health conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, and may especially benefit from increased intake of nuts.
They surveyed 124 participants of the federal Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) supplemental feeding program in a rural North Carolina county about beliefs, benefits, barriers, attitude, intake, and knowledge of peanuts and tree nuts. They found in general that participants' beliefs about the health effects of nuts are inconsistent with the most recent research findings.

For example, only one-third of the participants believed that eating nuts may help lower cholesterol; only one-fourth believed that nuts can lower the risk of heart attack and diabetes; and more than one-third believed that eating nuts causes weight gain.

"In spite of almost two decades of research showing that nuts are important foods to include in a healthy diet, it appears that the general public may not be aware of the relationship between nuts and health," said Pawlak. "This study suggests that more education is needed on the health benefits of nuts."

The survey asked participants if they would eat nuts on most days of the week if their doctor recommended doing so; a majority responded "yes."

The researchers see this as an indication that physicians could be influential in communicating the health benefits of nuts to their patients.

Also adding nuts to a list of foods included on WIC vouchers could be a cost effective and simple way to improve the health of WIC clients, Pawlak said.

Upcoming events:

Dec. 3-5: The annual School of Art and Design holiday sale and exhibition, 9 a.m.- 9 p.m. Dec. 3 and 4, and 9 a.m.- 2 p.m. on Dec. 5, Wellington B. Gray Gallery. Call 328-6336 for more information.

See www.ecu.edu/cs-ecu/calendar.cfm for times, places and more information on these events and other ECU upcoming activities.

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Fighting for breath

ECU student, lung cancer survivor works to remove stigma from disease

By Kristin Day
The Daily Reflector

Wednesday, November 25, 2009

Taylor Bell was 21 when she was diagnosed with lung cancer — and she still doesn’t know why.

Bell was an avid soccer player, she was healthy and strong and, for the record, she did not smoke. And yet, people still try to blame her for her illness.

“I would wish for just one time for someone to say to me, when I told them I had lung cancer, ‘I’m so sorry. How are you doing?’” Bell said, “as opposed to, ‘Did you smoke?’ Because not one time has anyone ever asked how I was doing before asking if I did it to myself.”

Now 23 years old, the senior political science major at East Carolina University and an activist for lung cancer research, Bell says the problem is the stigma attached to the disease.

“I understand they’re curious and they wanna try to place blame ... but my answer to them is always, ‘Would that make you care less?’ And if it does, then I have no desire to even speak with them because that’s just — I think — rude.”

And without more research into all of the causes, she might never know why she was diagnosed with a deadly cancer.

So in November, which Gov. Bev Perdue declared Lung Cancer Awareness Month, Bell traveled across the country trying to dispel the myths and advocating for more research funding.

Favorite sport, favorite school

Bell, a Wilmington native, is a soccer enthusiast born to two East Carolina University alumni, so it was no surprise when she decided to play her favorite sport at her family’s favorite school.

She came to the university in 2005 to play on the women’s soccer team and was in great physical shape, but during preseason, she found herself short of breath a lot.

Bell couldn’t pass the fitness test. She also couldn’t feel her toes and felt tired all the time. She played for a semester, but then had to quit.

She underwent several tests, but no one could figure out what was wrong. So she dismissed her symptoms as simply side effects of being a college student. Then she got pneumonia.

She went to Student Health Services, where she had a chest X-ray and received antibiotics commonly referred to as a Z-Pack. But she never fully recovered.

A year later while at home for fall break on Oct. 14, 2007, she started having terrible stomach cramps. Her parents were away, but her sister, Mary Adelaide, made her go to the emergency room. They did a CT scan of her abdomen to check for ovarian cysts or problems with her appendix.
Shortly after her examination, a doctor told her that she had some cysts on her ovaries, but also that her left lung was partially collapsed.

A mass of about 3 to 4 centimeters was attached to her lung and was resting on her heart, explaining the toe numbness.

At the time, the only other confrontation Bell had with lung cancer was during her grandmother's battle with the disease, which she lost 40 days after her diagnosis.

"I was sitting there like, 'This is a death sentence,'" Bell said.

Unlike her grandmother, Bell had a carcinoid tumor that was in Stage 1, meaning it had not affected any other primary organs.

Early detection

Bell was extremely lucky, she says.

She said that lung cancer patients have a 15 percent survival rate — compared to 89 percent for breast cancer patients — because in most cases, there are no symptoms and it isn't diagnosed until it's reached Stage 4. Plus, people don't receive regular early-detection screenings for it, like they do with mammograms or colonoscopies. The only reason Bell would even think she could be at risk was her genetics.

After her diagnosis, Bell, who had just turned 21, visited several doctors to confirm the mass was on her lungs — and not her heart — and to find a surgeon. She and her family chose Thomas A. D'Amico, a cardiovascular and thoracic surgeon and a professor of surgery at Duke University Hospital who could remove her tumor through two small incisions in her back using a procedure called VATS (Video-Assisted Thoracoscopic Surgery) pneumonectomy.

On Nov. 14, 2007, she went into surgery, where doctors removed her upper left lobe and lingula. She then began about a month-long recovery process.

Doctors inserted a catheter and a tube inside her chest that drained fluids into a box she had to carry. Bell says the process of recovery was "crazy painful," but she thinks that's mostly because she assumed she could handle it much better.

"I really struggled," she said. "I thought it wasn't going to be as bad as it was. I don't know what I was thinking."

She also thought she was kind of being a wimp, especially compared to everyone else on her floor who also had been through surgery.

"The old people were just cruising around on their walkers like it was nothing," she joked. "And the doctors were threatening to kill me if I didn't get up. ... I didn't realize it was going to be that bad."

But she felt a little less embarrassed when her doctor reminded her that she just had part of a vital organ removed.

She left the hospital the day before Thanksgiving 2007 and made it home in time to sit up in a recliner by the dinner table — even if she didn't have her usual appetite.

No. 1 killer

Lung cancer is the No. 1 cancer killer of men and women in the United States, according to the American Cancer Society, but has the least funding for research because of the stigma attached. However, more and more people who never smoked are being diagnosed, as well as people who quit smoking decades ago.

"Therefore, it's going to continue to be the No. 1 cancer killer until people get over the stigma and put research dollars into it," she said.

People tend to think that someone with lung cancer did it to themselves, and therefore, some even believe those diagnosed deserve to be sick.

"That's how bad the stigma is," she said. "People think that you do this to yourself. But the fact of the matter is no one deserves to have any kind of cancer. No one deserves to fight for their life. And until we break that barrier,
it's going to be like this all of the time."

That's why Bell — the youngest lung cancer survivor in the United States — got involved: to be the face of what lung cancer is becoming.

She joined the North Carolina Lung Cancer Partnership and is speaking at receptions and Free to Breathe, a series of races.

On Nov. 12 she was at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., to make a video for the Bonnie J. Addario Lung Cancer Foundation out of San Francisco, which fights for more research funding.

That Sunday, she was in Washington, D.C., with the Lung Cancer Alliance for Lobby Day, where she worked to get politicians to sponsor the Lung Cancer Mortality Reduction Act of 2009. (Sen. Kay Hagan remembered Bell from her own daughter's days playing soccer and agreed to co-sponsor the bill).

Then, on Nov. 19, she was back on a plane and on the way to San Francisco to attend the Bonnie J. Addario Foundation's Simply the Best Dinner Gala IV with her parents.

But the best part of activism for Bell is seeing how well people respond to her.

"I think I give hope to people, and it's very fulfilling because they can see that there is hope," she said.

Returning to life

Bell returned to ECU two months after her surgery in 2007 because she had to be a full-time student to receive full insurance benefits. (Michelle's Law has since changed that). But she said she also just wanted to return to her life.

However, Bell didn't really look sick — just really skinny and pale — so it was difficult for her friends to understand why she couldn't go out as much.

Bell never had chemotherapy but she still has regular checkups.

"I have an 85 percent chance that it will never come back," she said, "but there still is that 15 percent chance. And then I also think about my kids, if I ever have them. I'd never want to put them through this."

Bell met her boyfriend just four days before she was diagnosed with lung cancer. Wearing his T-shirt and a bracelet reading, "Imagine a world with no lung cancer," she says they talk about the risk to their future children and whether genetic testing will help.


"I think that I would love to work for a grassroots organization or a small advocacy group where I could really do something that is beneficial," she said, "or has a really good cause and where I could make a difference, hopefully around cancer, but we'll see."

And as for her love for soccer, that hasn't changed.

"I don't know if I'll ever be able to be competitive like I used to," she said, but she plays for ECU's intramural soccer team.

Because there aren't regular early-detection screenings, Bell says people should request screening when they feel like something's wrong, and she encourages health care workers to think outside the box because "it could be a 21-year-old with lung cancer."

"If you think something is wrong, push until you find an answer," she said. "I knew something wasn't right, but I didn't push."

Bell knows she has a difficult fight ahead in making people more aware of how much research is needed; she understands the lack of activists because, unlike diseases with a larger survival rate, "we're all dead."

To anyone she meets in the midst of their own battle with lung cancer, the thing she says most is to never give
up.

"I had it easy compared to some people," she said. "Just have hope and fight, and if they don't win their fight, I will continue to advocate for them."

Contact Kristin Day at kday@reflector.com or (252) 329-9579.

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Nathan Summers: Holland’s Holtz hire has Pirates back on national stage

Sunday, November 29, 2009

The time East Carolina football fans always hoped for and the time which fans will look back on for years to come is happening right now.

If you live in eastern North Carolina, and you believe the wisdom of ECU director of athletics Terry Holland, you could actually hear the university growing, even from a distance, back in 2004.

Holland was intrigued by that sound, and soon after that, he was knee-deep in an ECU reconstruction effort, serving as the foreman for the school's athletic future. Not long into his tenure, he made the most significant change in ECU sports history by hiring Skip Holtz to lead the football team.

While the thought of hearing actual sounds of construction most certainly is an exaggeration, ECU football wins have never been hammered out more consistently and have never counted for more, and things that have never happened before now happen on a weekly basis.

On this week’s docket is a first-ever Conference USA championship game in Greenville as the Pirates attempt to defend their 2008 C-USA crown against Houston on Saturday. After that, ECU will finish the season the way it always does these days, by playing in a bowl game for the fourth year in a row.

Even if there are no more wins this season, a new tradition of winning is firmly intact.

The Holtz coaching era already has had a greater long-term impact on ECU than any before it, and replacing that becomes harder and harder with every win, every championship and every program standard redefined.

While many fans brace themselves for the inevitable moment Holtz decides to change addresses — his name is already surfacing in connection with job openings and the regular season ended less than 48 hours ago — every day he’s in Greenville that winning tradition deepens.

Rarely has ECU football had the word champion next to its name, and never before has that status given ECU football such national potential. Defending champion or repeat champion? Forget about it.

When ESPN2 cameras come to life at noon on Saturday for the C-USA championship game, one thing that's no longer new will happen. People across the country will once again be reminded that the program which Holland insisted back in 2004 was a sleeping giant on the eastern seaboard has fully awakened.

Another in a slew of nationally televised ECU football games will depict the image of a team that is posturing itself to always look comfortable in the spotlight and a fanbase that regularly provides the necessary backdrop.

Holland, in his sixth year with the Pirates, will be a winner on Saturday regardless of the outcome on the field. He fostered the Holtz legacy at East Carolina and helped spur the team and the fans to think big, act big and play big.

While Holland said the growth at ECU was palpable, he knew the university had a sputtering sports identity, so his first major move — hiring Holtz — was his first major gamble.

Since then, Holland and Holtz have bargained numerous times on new contracts, as the coach has continued to
redefine winning at ECU and the AD has continued to find ways to keep the trend moving by keeping Holtz in Greenville.

The late season rumors of Holtz and coaching jobs have begun to simmer, and undoubtedly ECU football will spend another postseason on pins and needles as the annual courtships play out.

If football's one-game-at-a-time cliché means anything, however, the Pirates and their fans should be mindful that even the final two games of this season are priceless, and Holtz won't be going anywhere before that.

Right this minute, that building sound Holland once described has returned, only this time it might just be the noise outside his office window as ESPN's camera crews set up for the C-USA championship game.

Contact Nathan Summers at nsummers@reflector.com or (252)329-9595.

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Randy A. Reel

Randy A. Reel, 50, died Friday, Nov. 27, 2009. The funeral service will be private. Mr. Reel, was a native of Pitt County, spent his youth in the Wards Bridge community and was a graduate of North Pitt High School. For a number of years he lived in Morganton. He worked as an electrician and was employed at Eastern Omni and at East Carolina University. Mr. Reel was an avid outdoorsman. He is survived by his son, Bradley Christopher Reel; daughter, Tabitha Mae Reel; parents, Gilbert and Trevlyn Reel; sister, Melinda R. Smith and husband, Mark; brother, Mike Reel and wife, Debbie; and fiancé, Jennifer "Jenny" Jenkins, all of Greenville. The family will receive friends from 5-7 p.m. today at Wilkerson Funeral Home. Memorial contributions may be made to Tranters Creek Church of Christ Building Fund, 7108 Cherry Run Road, Washington, NC 27889, to the American Heart Association, 3219 Landmark St. Unit 9, Greenville NC 27834, or to a charity of one's choice. Online condolences to www.wilkersonfuneralhome.com.

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Paul Hartley, painter, dies at 65

BY MICHAEL BIESECKER STAFF WRITER

Paul J. Hartley Jr., a well-regarded painter and art professor from Greenville, died Thanksgiving Day after a 14-month fight against cancer.

Hartley, who was 65, retired from East Carolina University in August after working as an art professor there for about 35 years. During that time, he influenced hundreds of students, including some who went on to follow in his footsteps.

Scott Eagle, who teaches at ECU, was one of Hartley's former pupils. Hartley spoke so rarely and so quietly that those in his class often leaned forward to hear his every word.

"He had an amazing ability to simply show up at the right time whenever you needed help with anything, and he knew what you needed," Eagle said Saturday. "He listened more than any other professor I knew. As a professor, that is what I try to emulate."

As an artist, Hartley favored mixed-media paintings combining oil, acrylic and collage. Many of his works featured carefully rendered everyday objects such as a lemon slice, egg or leaf painted over an abstract background, making the image appear to float out from the canvas. A 20-year retrospective of Hartley's work wrapped up last month at the Lee Hanes Gallery in Raleigh.

Some of Hartley's paintings hang in the collections of the Weatherspoon Art Museum in Greensboro and the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art in Winston-Salem, as well as numerous private collections. A painting is currently awaiting approval to join the collection of the N.C. Museum of Art in Raleigh.

Born in Charlotte in 1943, Hartley grew up in Atlanta. There, he met Lane H. Crawford. They were married for 42 years and had two children.

A memorial service is scheduled for 3 p.m. today at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Greenville. Hartley's family has requested that any memorial contributions be made to East Carolina School of Art and Design.

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Paul Jerome Hartley Jr.

Paul Jerome Hartley Jr. A memorial service for Paul Jerome Hartley Jr., 65, who died Thanksgiving Day after a 14-month battle with cancer, will be held at 3:00 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 29 at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Greenville. Hartley, a longtime professor of studio art at East Carolina University School of Art and Design, was a renowned painter. He was an exponent of mixed media painting in which oil, acrylic, collage and appropriated imagery are combined to make a single painting. His works were characterized by abstractly painted backgrounds with pristinely rendered realistic objects floating on the surface of the canvas. Hartley joined the ECU faculty full-time in 1975 after working at the university from 1970-1972. He retired in August 2009. “There is no art instructor in this state who taught more students than Paul Hartley,” said Lee Hansley, the Raleigh art dealer who has represented Hartley for the past 17 years. “He has influenced more young artists than anyone in North Carolina’s university system. That will be his legacy, along with a remarkable body of work in collections far and wide,” Hansley added. A painting for the North Carolina Museum of Art’s collection is making its way through the approval process now, thanks to the largess of three Greenville art patrons. He has works in the collections of the Weatherspoon Art Museum in Greensboro, the Greenville Museum of Art, the Cameron Museum of Art in Wilmington, the Barton College Museum in Wilson and the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art in Winston-Salem. Additionally, his paintings are in the collections of private institutions like Bank of America, GlaxoSmithKline, Philip Morris USA, the Transamerica Corporation and Merrill Lynch, Inc. A suite of eight major Hartley paintings is permanently displayed at the Sheraton Hotel in Chapel Hill. His work was the subject of over 25 solo shows and over 75 small group or themed exhibitions over the course of his career. His last show was entitled "Looking Back," which was in September and October of this year at Lee Hansley Gallery in Raleigh. In 2002 the Greenville Museum of Art organized a retrospective, complete with illustrated catalogue. Currently his works are featured in exhibitions at the City Art Gallery in Greenville, the Lee Hansley Gallery in Raleigh, and the Green Hill Center in Greensboro. Hartley was born Dec. 30, 1943, in Charlotte to the late Paul Hartley Sr. and to Mrs. Kathleen Hartley Board of Winston-Salem. His early years were spent in Atlanta where he met his loving wife of 42 years, Lane Harville Crewley. He earned a B.A. in 1967 at the University of North Texas in Denton and in 1970 an M.F.A. in painting at East Carolina University. After being hired to teach art at ECU, Hartley was named head of the painting program, a position he held until he entered a phased retirement. In addition to his wife and mother, Hartley is survived by a daughter, Lorin Hartley Kaley, and son-in-law Mark Hamilton Kaley of Greensboro; a son, Paul Randolph William Hartley of Chapel Hill; a brother, William Joseph Hartley of Winston-Salem; and two sisters, Susan Hartley Gunn and her husband, Gilbert Sumter Gunn, of Greenwood, S.C., and Kathy Hartley Smith and her husband, Robert Joseph Meier, of Boone; nieces, Kristen Smith Greene and her husband, Jack Clayton Greene of Chapel Hill, and Rebecca Marsh Meier; nephews, Kevin Stewart Smith, and Nathan Marsh Meier; and one granddaughter, McLane Martha Kaley of Greensboro. The Hartley family wishes to thank the many doctors, nurses, nurse’s assistants, and friends who helped with care during his illness. The family requests that memorial contributions be made to East Carolina School of Art and Design. For more information, call 328-6666. Online condolences at www.wilkersonfuneralhome.com

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Pell Grant boost feeds for-profit college chains

RALEIGH -- Students aren't the only ones benefiting from the billions of new dollars Washington is spending on college aid for the poor.

An Associated Press analysis shows surging proportions of low-income students and the recently boosted government money that follows them are ending up at for-profit schools, from local career colleges to giant publicly traded chains such as the University of Phoenix, Kaplan and Devry.

Last year, the five institutions that received the most federal Pell Grant dollars were all for-profit colleges, collecting over $1 billion among them. That was 2-1/2 times what those schools hauled in just two years before, the AP found, analyzing Department of Education data on disbursements from the Pell program, Washington's main form of college aid to the poor.

This year, the trend is accelerating: In the first quarter after the maximum Pell Grant was increased July 1, Washington paid out 45 percent more through the program than during the same period a year ago, the AP found. But the amount of dollars heading to for-profit, or "proprietary," schools is up about 67 percent.

For-profit colleges say the country has little choice but to accept their help to achieve President Barack Obama's goal of getting every American to enroll in some form of education beyond high school. The for-profit schools have space, while community colleges are bursting at the seams. Besides, their convenience and career-focused curriculum are clearly winning customers, who are free to use their aid where they choose.

But critics say the increased federal aid has unleashed a new gold rush. They complain the industry has too many incentives to enroll students and tap the spigot from Washington - and not enough to make sure students succeed.

The industry is "an aggressive sales operation that has a voracious appetite for recruiting the poorest students," said Barmak Nassirian, associate executive director of AACRAO, a group representing admissions officers and registrars at traditional colleges. "The victims here are the students themselves and the taxpayers, who have to pick up the tab."

From NCSU to Phoenix

On a recent weeknight at a University of Phoenix branch in Raleigh, students began streaming in during early evening. Virtually all work full time. Many were older than traditional college students, and many were minorities. The "campus" is a suburban office building off a highway interchange. Inside, the feel is corporate - computer work stations, sleek desks, wired classrooms with whiteboards.

Aja Holmes, 28, a single mother of two, dropped out of nearby N.C. State University after having her first child a decade ago. Now she's hoping to complete a degree and move up in the pharmaceutical company where she works. She's paying her tuition with a Pell Grant, government loans and employer
support. The big draw is convenience.

"I can work full time and still spend time with my kids," she said. "I can do my homework at night. All my books are online, so I can take my laptop anywhere and read. The program has been good for me."

Critics acknowledge for-profit schools can be a good match for some. But they point out median graduation rates of just 38 percent.

Students who don't graduate will be hard pressed to repay their debts. On average, for-profit schools cost 5-1/2 times the price of community colleges.