THE DAILY CLIPS

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City hosts retreat on ecotourism
By Kathryn Kennedy
The Daily Reflector
Wednesday, December 1, 2010

A push to explore and connect ecotourism opportunities in eastern North Carolina is without a leader, though municipal representatives meeting Tuesday agreed it is a worthwhile effort.

Greenville city staff hosted a planning retreat examining regional ecotourism that reached out to managers and mayors from Winterville, Ayden, Grifton and other Pitt County entities. About 25 people attended.

Often defined as responsible travel to areas rich in natural and cultural resources, ecotourism was first mentioned by City Councilman Calvin Mercer at last January's annual City Council planning session. The council has since heard presentations and made ecotourism strategies an economic development objective.

"It's not an overnight or huge economic solution to anything, but in terms of jobs and the economy, there's no quick fix," Mercer said.

Examples of ecotourism vary from kayaking or biking trails to birding spots to museums or entertainment venues. Local businesses like hotels, bed and breakfasts, restaurants and retail shops would be considered part of an area's attractions.

The bulk of presentations Tuesday came from East Carolina University graduate students studying under the Center for Sustainable Tourism. Program director Pat Long and presenter Alex Naar each have said ECU should not guide the initiative, though the university will offer support and expertise. A representative from North Carolina's
Eastern Region economic development agency implied it is too busy to take on the task full time.

“Everybody looks at their neighbor and says, ‘I want you to do it,’” said Meredith Miller, a City of Greenville intern who organized Tuesday's retreat. “But everyone agrees they want to see it done.”

Miller said it may take another meeting before any type of steering committee or guiding body can be established — a next step mentioned numerous times Tuesday. Those stakeholders would need to represent the spectrum of communities involved in the “hub and spoke” model of tourism, the students said, based from Greenville and extending an hour or so in each direction. It would be their responsibility to champion the cause, to assess tourist draws and potential for expanded tourism in the region and create marketing strategies.

The ECU students believe it should be a grassroots effort, ideally led by local entrepreneurs rather than legislators or public employees who may hold one municipality's interests over another. Miller noted that from that angle, the city is working backward, but certainly “nothing is set in stone.”

She said the hope is to open future meetings and events to business owners and the general public.

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East Carolina accepts bid to Military Bowl
The Daily Reflector
Wednesday, December 1, 2010

Ruffin McNeill will cap his memorable first season as head coach of the East Carolina football team at the Military Bowl in Washington, D.C.

For the 6-6 Pirates, it will be a school-record fifth consecutive bowl appearance when they kick off at 2:30 p.m. Dec. 29 at RFK Stadium against an Atlantic Coast Conference opponent yet to be named.

ECU announced the Pirates had accepted the invitation for the game on Tuesday afternoon, but McNeill, ECU director of athletics Terry Holland and chancellor Dr. Steve Ballard will join officials from the Military Bowl to make it official during halftime of tonight's ECU men's basketball game against Charlotte.

“It is certainly a privilege and honor to have the opportunity to represent East Carolina in our nation's capital by playing in the Military Bowl,” said McNeill, a former ECU safety who played for the Pirates in the 1978 Independence Bowl against Louisiana Tech, and who has been a part of 13 previous bowl experiences as an assistant.

Although it's his first season as a head coach, it will be McNeill's second straight year as a head coach at a bowl game. The long-time assistant head coach to Mike Leach at Texas Tech took over after Leach's firing last winter and guided the Red Raiders to a win over Michigan State at the Alamo Bowl.

“I'm happy our seniors, a group that has provided this program with loyal leadership and stability during their careers and a time of transition, will have the chance to compete for a bowl championship and reach one of our goals this season,” McNeill said. “We are all
looking forward to this special experience, something I know will provide us with lasting memories.”

The game will be televised by ESPN.

It will be the Pirates' seventh bowl appearance since 2000 and 17th in program history.

Following each of the Pirates' last two Conference USA championship seasons, they lost at the Liberty Bowl, last season in overtime to Arkansas and the previous season to Kentucky. Before that, however, the Pirates outlasted Boise State in a shootout at the 2007 Hawaii Bowl.

“An opportunity to play in the Military Bowl is exciting for the Pirate Nation and for team members due to its proximity for fans and families of the team, as well as the opportunity to play another ACC opponent this year,” Holland said. “Washington will still be decorated for the holidays and the bowl experience provided by the Military Bowl committee is second to none. Indoor tailgating at the D.C. Armory will provide a similar experience to that enjoyed at the Liberty Bowl the last two years, so it will be important for fans to get their tickets and tailgate reservations soon.”

Tickets in the Pirates' section for the Military Bowl are available by calling the ECU Athletics Ticket Office at (800) DIAL-ECU or at www.ECUPirates.com. Pirate Club priority will apply for all tickets ordered by Dec. 7. After that, tickets will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

Pirate fans unable to attend the game are asked to purchase tickets to be donated to local and regional military bases.

For more information or to donate, fans can call the athletics ticket office or visit ECU's official athletics website.

The Pirates will be the first team to represent C-USA in the Military Bowl. Last year, UCLA played Temple, while in 2008 Wake Forest battled Navy.

“We are thrilled that East Carolina University will represent Conference USA in this year's Military Bowl,” Military Bowl executive director Steve Beck said. “We look forward to playing host to the Pirate Nation in D.C., as well as welcoming the players and coaches for an exciting and memorable experience in our nation's capital.”

ECU is 8-8 all-time in its bowl history and has captured four victories in the last 10 contests.

In addition to the 41-38 thriller in Hawaii, wins during that span for the Pirates include a 37-34 decision over North Carolina State in the 1992 Peach Bowl (Atlanta, Ga.), a 19-13 triumph against Stanford in the 1995 St. Jude Liberty Bowl (Memphis, Tenn.) and a 40-27 victory over Texas Tech in the 2000 galleryfurniture.com Bowl (Houston).
ECU to play in Military Bowl
Washington bowl invites Pirates

BY EDWARD G. ROBINSON III
STAFF WRITER

East Carolina accepted an invitation to play in the Military Bowl on Dec. 29 and will conclude its football season in Washington, D.C., athletic department officials announced on Tuesday.

ECU athletic director Terry Holland said in a statement that the proximity of the bowl game and the chance to play a soon-to-be-announced ACC team made the bid enticing for the program.

"Washington will still be decorated for the holidays, and the bowl experience provided by the Military Bowl committee is second to none," Holland said. "Indoor tailgating at the DC Armory will provide a similar experience to that enjoyed at the Liberty Bowl last two years, so it will be important for fans to get their tickets and tailgate reservations soon."

The Pirates (6-6, 5-3 C-USA) head to their fifth consecutive bowl game and seventh since 2000.

It's the program's 17th overall bowl game, including ECU's appearance in the 1978 Independence Bowl, which first-year coach Ruffin McNeill participated in as a strong safety.

McNeill returned to his alma mater this season after 10 years as an assistant at Texas Tech. He took over after coach Skip Holtz departed for South Florida.

As the first Conference USA team to participate in the Military Bowl, the Pirates will face an ACC opponent, and Boston College and Georgia Tech are the likely candidates

WANT TO GO?
For ticket information, contact the ECU Ticket Office at 800-342-5328 or visit athletic tickets@ecu.edu.

to fill the slot.

"We are thrilled that East Carolina University will represent Conference USA in this year's Military Bowl," Military Bowl executive director Steve Beck said in a statement. "We look forward to playing host to the Pirate Nation in D.C., as well as welcoming the players and coaches for an exciting and memorable experience in our nation's capital."

On Jan. 2, Arkansas defeated the ECU 20-17 in the Liberty Bowl. The Pirates have won just four bowl games out of the past 10 and are 8-8 all-time in bowl games.

A bowl game offers the Pirates one more chance at finishing the season above .500, after a deflating loss to SMU on senior day last week. They were officially eliminated from a chance to play in a third consecutive conference championship game.

"I'm happy our seniors, a group that has provided this program with loyal leadership and stability during their careers and a time of transition, will have the chance to compete for a bowl championship and reach one of our goals this season," McNeill said in a statement. "We are all looking forward to this special experience, something I know will provide us with lasting memories."

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Two charged with embezzling at Duke

DURHAM Duke Police have charged a surgeon and surgery department business manager with embezzling $267,000 from the university.

John William Cotton, 39, and his boss, Dr. Eric De Maria, 51, both of Raleigh, face felony charges for allegedly stealing the money from Duke in 2009.

Cotton also is charged separately with obtaining property by false pretenses. Police say he ordered goods and services through his job for his personal use, cheating Duke out of $58,706.

Cotton has worked for Duke since 1993. DeMaria, former director of the university's bariatric surgery program, had been at Duke since 2005. Both ended their jobs Aug. 1, though university officials declined to say whether they'd been terminated or had resigned.
Colleges Are Producing New Style of AIDS Activist

By SHERYL GAY STOLBERG
NEW HAVEN — David Carel was never a rabble-rouser. But amid the clutter of his dorm room at Yale University, Mr. Carel, baby-faced and slight-shouldered at 19, keeps evidence of his new life as an AIDS activist: posters, banners and the flier demanding “$50 bn for Global AIDS” that he concealed in his fleece jacket one Saturday in late October when, heart pounding, he sneaked past security into a Democratic campaign rally in Bridgeport.

There, Mr. Carel did something he “never would have imagined”: he heckled the president of the United States.

Cameron Nutt, a medical anthropology student at Dartmouth, says he backs President Obama “100 percent.” But, incensed over the president’s “failure to remain true” to a campaign promise to spend $50 billion over five years fighting the AIDS epidemic overseas, Mr. Nutt disrupted Mr. Obama this fall at a Boston rally. His co-protesters included Luke Messac, a University of Pennsylvania medical student and a field organizer for Mr. Obama’s
presidential campaign, and Krishna Prabhu, a Harvard University senior who caucused for Mr. Obama in Iowa in 2008 — and rescheduled his final exam in global health to attend the president’s inauguration.

“The promise has not been fulfilled,” Mr. Prabhu said, sounding more disappointed than angry.

Roughly a quarter-century after gay men rose up to demand better access to H.I.V. medicines, a new breed of AIDS advocate is growing up on college campuses. Unlike the first generation of patient-activists, this latest crop is composed of budding public health scholars. They are mostly heterosexual. Rare is the one who has lost friends or family members to the disease.

Rather, studying under some of the world’s most prominent health intellectuals, they have witnessed the epidemic’s toll during summers or semesters abroad, in AIDS-ravaged nations like Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

College activism, and AIDS activism in particular, is nothing new. On Wednesday, World AIDS Day, students across the nation will participate in speeches, fund-raisers and the like. But a loose-knit band of about two dozen Ivy Leaguers, mostly from Harvard and Yale, is using more confrontational tactics, as well as some high-powered connections, to wangle encounters with top White House officials in a determined, and seemingly successful, effort to get under Mr. Obama’s skin.

Their protests — which have drawn a sharp rebuke from the president (not to mention some disapproving parents) — come as many in the AIDS advocacy community are wondering aloud whether Mr. Obama is as devoted to their cause as his immediate predecessor, George W. Bush. In 2003, Mr. Bush began vastly increasing spending on lifesaving antiretroviral medicines for AIDS patients in impoverished nations; the number receiving the drugs has shot up from 50,000 to more than five million today. Yet the World Health Organization says as many as 10 million lack needed therapy.

While spending on global AIDS has gone up on Mr. Obama’s watch, and the United States remains the world’s largest contributor to such programs, independent analysts say that the rate of increase has slowed significantly and that it will be difficult for the president to keep his $50 billion pledge — or even meet a lesser goal, set in 2008 by Congress, of $48 billion for AIDS,
tuberculosis and malaria by 2013. The task may grow even harder under a new Congress, with the incoming House Republican majority intent on cutting spending and Tea Party-backed Republicans in both chambers expressing skepticism about all types of foreign aid.

Still, armed with data from Health Gap, an AIDS advocacy group, the students are determined to hold Mr. Obama to his word. When Ezekiel Emanuel, a bioethicist and health adviser to the president (and brother of the former White House chief of staff, Rahm Emanuel) spoke at Yale two weeks ago, he wound up sparring with Mr. Carel at a fruit-and-cereal breakfast at the campus Hillel House, a meal arranged by a fellow Yale student, Dr. Emanuel’s daughter. Later that day, Mr. Carel led a demonstration outside Dr. Emanuel’s talk, which ended with students chanting at the adviser as they followed him down the street.

When Eric Goosby, Mr. Obama’s global AIDS coordinator, traveled to Boston in November for a panel discussion with Senator John Kerry, Democrat of Massachusetts, he was collared at a cocktail party by Mr. Prabhu, the Harvard senior. Also on the panel was Mr. Prabhu’s professor, Dr. Paul E. Farmer, founder of the global nonprofit Partners in Health.

“These students are my retirement plan,” Dr. Farmer said in a telephone interview from Haiti, where he is treating cholera patients. “A lot of them are doing much more than going to protests; they’re writing papers and articles, they’re doing graduate studies.”

Mr. Messac, the University of Pennsylvania medical student, explored the origins of Mr. Bush’s AIDS program in a 120-page paper, “Lazarus at America’s Doorstep,” for his Harvard undergraduate thesis. Mr. Carel, who spent last summer working at a hospital in the rural South African village of Tugela Ferry, now studies Zulu and persuaded a visiting professor from South Africa to let him take her upper-level course on “the political economy of AIDS.” (He had to skip Zulu class for the Emanuel protest; he said his professor understood.)

The students have also befriended a longtime veteran of the AIDS wars, Gregg Gonsalves, who at 47 is completing his undergraduate degree in evolutionary biology on a full scholarship at Yale. Mr. Gonsalves often lectures public-health classes on what he calls “ancient history” — the work of groups like Act Up in the 1990s.
“Theirs is not a first-person commitment, in the sense that none of them is living with H.I.V.,” Mr. Gonsalves said of the new AIDS protesters. “It’s all based out of a sense of solidarity and social justice. I used to wonder where the next generation would come from. They’re here.”

Inside the White House, Dr. Emanuel, for one, is not impressed. He says the students are serving up tired arguments about dollar amounts that ignore the Obama administration’s emphasis on spending money more efficiently and offering services, like circumcision, that can reduce the spread of H.I.V.

While Mr. Bush emphasized AIDS and malaria, Mr. Obama is promoting a six-year, $63 billion “global health initiative” that seeks to address a range of diseases, with emphasis on women and children.

“To be honest, and this is no put-down to the sincerity of the students, I didn’t hear a new argument that I haven’t heard for months,” Dr. Emanuel said in an interview after his breakfast with Mr. Carel. “I’ve not seen a blog post on the number of people we have circumcised, or the number of mothers we treat in maternal-child health. Those are real performance measures.”

Dr. Emanuel would not discuss any conversations with the president about the students, but Mr. Obama’s reaction when he was disrupted in October at the rally in Bridgeport made clear he was irked. “You’ve been appearing at every rally we’ve been doing,” the president complained, telling them it was not “a useful strategy.”

The students were pleased that he addressed them directly, but their heckling prompted even some fellow AIDS activists to take issue with their tactics. Regan Hofmann, editor in chief of Poz, a magazine for people living with or affected by H.I.V., questioned the wisdom of disrupting the president on the eve of a critical election for Democrats.

Mr. Carel says he and his fellow protesters thought long and hard about that. It was his first demonstration; his parents told him they wished he would be “more respectful.” His friends were shocked. Still, he says it was worth it.

“There are very few ways we could have any access to him,” he explained. “This was a way to get Obama’s ear.”
Some Americans like the economics of the London School of Economics.

By KIM HJELMGAARD

LONDON—When final-year economics undergraduate Robert Rogers transferred from Georgetown University to the London School of Economics, his annual tuition fees plummeted to around $20,000 a year from around $41,000.

"It didn't even occur to me to apply abroad when I was in high school," said Mr. Rogers, on a recent afternoon outside the LSE's Students' Union. "I certainly didn't hear of any of my [high-school] classmates applying to study abroad."

Mr. Rogers said that his reasons for moving to the LSE weren't financially motivated. But finances drive others to follow him. As tuition at U.S. colleges increasingly becomes less affordable for many—and as spots at the most competitive institutions more and more resemble gold dust—some American high schoolers are looking to the United Kingdom to meet their educational needs.

Doing the Math

It is almost heresy to say it right now here in the U.K., what with English students recently taking to the streets in protest at the government's proposal to raise tuition fees to no less than £6,000 a year (just under $10,000) for some domestic enrollees, but the fact remains that, by U.S. standards, universities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland remain a "cheap" place to get an education.

Tuition fees in the U.K. vary from institution to institution, and also from region to region, but the cost for an overseas undergraduate at University of St. Andrews, in Scotland, for the academic year 2009-2010 would be about $19,000.
And if you're lucky enough to be able to claim "home" or "European Union" status, this figure would be just shy of $3,000 a year—though it is set to triple or even quadruple from 2012 onward for some institutions south of the Scottish border under the British coalition government's aggressive overhauls to higher-education funding.

Even to study in the University of Oxford's hallowed halls would cost a U.S. student just over $20,000 for an undergraduate program of study. (The fee would be about $4,700 for a U.K. student.)

Every college that features in the top 20 of the U.S. News and World Report's most recent ranking of best U.S. colleges costs at least $34,000 a year for tuition and fees. Most, in fact, are closer to $40,000 a year, and quite a few top that level.

The downsides of going abroad include: plane tickets, time zones, foul weather and the cultural labyrinth resulting from two nations divided, as the saying goes, by a common language. However, if one is contemplating spending at the higher end of the scale, there is also approximately $80,000 or more to be saved.

More than 3,000 normally U.S.-domiciled undergraduate-level students applied to do just that in 2009, according to UCAS, the organization responsible for managing applications to higher-education programs in the U.K. And while only 1,330 were accepted, according to UCAS, the relatively modest numbers mask a rising trend.

There has been a 27% increase in undergraduate applications from U.S. students since 2006, while the total number of U.S. students studying for full degrees at British higher-education institutions as of 2009—across both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels—stands at just over 14,000, data from the U.K.'s Higher Education Statistics Agency show.

It is "very important that [students] enter the global economy with global competencies," said Allan Goodman, president and chief executive officer of the Institute of International Education, in emailed comments.

Todd Weaver, an education consultant with Strategies for College Inc., a Canton, Mass.-based advisory firm, said that while students and parents in the U.S. are starting to realize that it is relatively inexpensive to study in places such as the U.K., they are also weighing the reduced cost against "the ability to have a network in place after college" when job hunting.

"If you go to school in New England, for example, there's a good chance you will be looking for a job in the local area," said Mr. Weaver.

**European Vacation?**

Steven Goodman, an admissions strategist with education specialist Top Colleges who has worked extensively placing students at colleges as far afield as Romania and South Africa, said the major difficulty facing U.S. students who want to study in the U.K. isn't necessarily to do with the perceived job market back home, but with "the English
secondary-school specialization that is not usually a part of the American high-school curriculum."

The postcollege experience is something that is weighing on Mr. Rogers.

"Everyone's worried about the job market today, even if you have a 4.0 GPA from Harvard. The careers office here at the LSE is good, but there's also not the relationship to U.S. employers that you'd expect to find at a U.S. institution, and that is a drawback frankly," he said. On the other hand, Mr. Rogers noted, "my dad likes that I'm in the U.K. because he gets to come visit."