Brody Pharmacy Delivers

The Brody School of Medicine Pharmacy has expanded its services to offer free delivery to customers on the central campus as well as at the medical school.

Ruth Parish, director of pharmacy services, said, “We are a full-service pharmacy offering both prescription and over-the-counter products. We intend to make it convenient for every ECU employee to take advantage of our low prices and excellent service.”

As an incentive to use its services, the pharmacy is offering a free $25 gift certificate good at several Greenville restaurants to customers who have ten prescriptions filled between now and June 30, 2005.

The pharmacy has locations in the Family Practice Center, the Brody Outpatient Clinic and the Leo Jenkins Center.

Holtz Named New Coach

Louis “Skip” Holtz was appointed head football coach at East Carolina University, Director of Athletics Terry Holland announced at a Dec. 3 press conference.

Holtz has played an active role on coaching staffs that have captured seven major bowl titles in eight appearances since 1987. He will end a six-year position on the South Carolina offensive staff.

Holtz, 40, will become East Carolina’s 19th head football coach in the school’s all-time history and will directly succeed John Thompson, who announced his resignation Nov. 17 after compiling a two-year record of 3-20.

“We have great confidence in Skip to take over and lead our football program into a new era as its head coach,” Holland said. “His background and enthusiasm make him a perfect fit for ECU, our community and the Pirate Nation.”

Holtz completed his sixth season as South Carolina’s assistant head coach and quarterbacks’ coach in 2004. He displayed his all-around abilities as a coach, remaining closely involved with the Gamecock offense in addition to handling special teams.

DE Enrollment, Funding Needs Expand

By Nancy McGillicuddy

The enrollment rate for distance education at East Carolina University has far outpaced sister institutions in the University of North Carolina system. And so has its funding needs.

Of the $14 million in allocation increases by the UNC system to state institutions for distance education this year, ECU received $11 million for the university’s 4,000 distance education students. It’s a percentage that ECU officials attribute to a well-developed and supported program.

“We are good at it and we intend to get better,” said Chancellor Steve Ballard at a meeting between ECU and officials from the UNC Office of the President.

The rising numbers of distance education students and the subsequent monetary allocations in favor of ECU prompted the meeting. At the Dec. 1 gathering, distance education leaders outlined reasons for the phenomenal growth of the program and offered future projections, which will require additional funding.

There are several funding challenges when it comes to distance education. One is that projected enrollment figures fall short of actual numbers.

“While projected student enrollment is growing, those numbers continually fall low,” said Bob Thompson, director of Institutional Planning, Research and Effectiveness. Another roadblock is that on-campus student credit hours receive more money per credit hour from the UNC system than do distance education hours. This creates a negative financial impact because fewer cents on the dollar are coming into the university as enrollment increases online. Officials maintain that the credit hours should be funded equally because they have the same educational value.

The growth of the program and need for funds is a priority, Ballard said. “The funding of distance education is a critical one,” he said. “It is the number one legislative priority.”

ECU offers 10 undergraduate and 27 graduate degree programs through distance education. The option serves students who cannot attend classes on campus. For the 2004-05 academic year, a total of 4,042 students enrolled in distance education courses. About 3,300 were distance education-only students. Courses and programs available in distance education are from a variety of disciplines such as the College of Education, the School of Nursing, the College of Technology and Computer Science, Allied Health Sciences and the College of Business.
Dr. John Stevens
Foreign Languages and Literatures
Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences

I have had the good fortune to learn from some magnificent teachers. The teacher to whom I was closest treated me as his friend and taught me four things which I carry with me always. The first of these is that a teacher has the opportunity to educate a mind. The teacher is like a host preparing a feast. And given the opportunity to serve anything he wants, he chooses to offer only the best with an eye to making his friends better each day. A teacher cannot offer trendy fluff to starving minds that crave real substance.

The second lesson is that we are all human beings. The mind has deep longing but also wide shortcomings in the pursuit of its desires. Teachers are not gods and students have feelings. Both need some compassion for human frailty. The educational moment is something that passes between two people. It is pushing the sluggish, giving courage to the frightened; it's in a tone of the voice that sparks a revelation, an unexpected kindness or forgiveness that renews hope. One doesn't reach only the self-motivated genius but also the inept beginner, and those who require special help and clarity and charity.

The third lesson is to be interested in everything. I was asked to study some crazy things: expressionist German drama, the decoration of Etruscan hand mirrors, what gesture the Armenian king Tiridates made before Nero, a papyrus receipt for the sale of a donkey in ancient Egypt, the tubas of Tibet. When I ask my students bound for graduate school to study Latin, Ancient Greek, French, German, philosophy, history and art history, it is because I want them to be ready to learn whatever the world has to offer, and I want them to be interesting people that anyone would want to know.

The last lesson is that “We teach the C-student.” Not every student will reach a point of clarity at which they can become self-learners. But we have an obligation to have high standards and to give students the tools to reach them. Some will remain dependent on crystal clear explanation to learn material bit by bit. Yet every student who makes the effort deserves attention. I learn more about how to teach from the fearless C-student who will ask questions than from the facial expressions of all the A-students who are too afraid to admit that my explanations are unclear. Not all of my students achieve the highest standards or go on to graduate school. But I know that my courses asked them all to be more thoughtful substantial people.

For me, teaching begins with an acknowledgement that I am entering into a complex and unique relationship with each of my students. I am at different times a teacher, mentor, coach, and finally a friend to my students. To avoid any component in this relationship is to close the door on effectiveness. My relationship with my students begins while they are still in high school, as I recruit them to choose ECU and they participate in the application and audition process within the School of Music. It extends through the four to five (sometimes even six) years they spend in the School of Music as a major and into their career beyond ECU.

The nature of music and the special relationship developed between teacher and student transforms the classroom environment into one that is intense and highly personal. Each student’s approach to making music is charged with emotion. In recent years, I have found that encouragement coupled with careful analysis to be far more effective and productive than criticism.

My goal is to create a learning environment where each individual develops a strong sense of self-confidence, feels supported and free to make their best music, to take chances and be bold in expression. It is through imitation (first of the teacher and then other great artists) and trial and error that these young musicians develop a full palate of expressive tools for music making.

Dr. Jeff Jarvis, Instrumental Music
School of Music, College of Fine Arts and Communication

The process involves guiding a student to develop specific technical skills; to develop the intellectual ability to perceive the musical choices available; to grow into a musically mature and creative performer. For each student the beginning and ending points of this process are established, but the path from start to finish is unique for each student.

The teaching skills involved in this process include lectures, demonstration, discussions, analysis and coaching. In grading students I take into account the overall standard of the studio and school as well as the personal growth of each individual. The actual grade is less important than the various ways of communicating its meaning. My students meet me before each semester to set goals. They meet with me following each semester to review those goals and discuss the upcoming break.

Becoming a more effective teacher begins with acknowledging that there is always room for improvement. In music there is a constant review and critique, not just of students and their performances, but also of their teachers and their effectiveness. Each student performance is recorded and I review these recordings, critically evaluating not only strengths and weaknesses of my students, but also of my teaching effectiveness.

Also, becoming more effective involves ongoing discussions with colleagues here at ECU and around the country. These discussions revolve around both practical and philosophical issues relating to students, music and teaching. Attendance at national and international conferences allow me to listen to other’s students and gauge my own studio and its progress against national standards.

Overall, I would say that my philosophy of teaching is relationship oriented, maintaining high national standards while encouraging each student to find the best way of meeting those standards. Thus far, I believe my teaching has been highly effective, measured by the successful career of those graduating from this studio. The feedback from those going on to graduate study at major universities has been that they are well prepared to undertake such study.
News in Brief

Byrd Named Board of Visitors Chair

Doug Byrd of Fayetteville, manager of community relations for the N.C. Department of Commerce, is the new chair of ECU’s Board of Visitors. Byrd had previously served as vice chair of the 50-member board, an advocacy group that assists the chancellor and Board of Trustees in improving and promoting the university. He succeeds Joel Butler, who was named to the ECU Board of Trustees. Byrd holds a bachelor’s degree in business from ECU and is a longtime supporter of the university. He is a past president of the East Carolina Education Foundation (Pirate Club) and is the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award given by the ECU Alumni Association. He is a past president of the Raleigh Sports Club and a past board member of N.C. Economic Developers Association.

Contributions Up for Combined Campaign

In an e-mail to employees, Chancellor Steve Ballard thanked employees and campaign volunteers for a successful 2004 State Employees Combined Campaign (SECC). Contributions this year totaled $222,000, up nearly $29,000 from last year’s total of $193,400. Ballard noted a trend of increased contributions since 2002, when total pledges approximated $182,000. He commended the Division of Health Sciences, which increased its contributions by 7 percent for a total of nearly $109,000. Campus participation in the campaign increased as well. The overall participation rate was 32 percent, up from 30 percent last year.

Doctor of Physical Therapy Program Approved

A proposal to establish a doctor of physical therapy program in the ECU School of Allied Health Sciences was approved by the UNC Board of Governors on Nov. 12 following a unanimous recommendation by the UNC Office of the President, Graduate Deans Committee. The doctoral program will begin in May and will accept 30 students annually. The program is a three-year, 106-semester-hour program that will include 32 weeks of clinical education. The Department of Physical Therapy and the undergraduate program at ECU began in 1970. It graduated its first students in 1972 and has since grown from three faculty members to 11. The department transitioned to a master’s program and admitted its first graduate students in 1996. For more information, visit www.ecu.edu/pt.

‘Great Decisions’ Coming To ECU

ECU will offer the Foreign Policy Association’s ‘Great Decisions’ Program for eight consecutive Saturdays, beginning Jan. 22, 2005. The program is a series of lectures by academic and professional experts on the Middle East, Russia, Intelligence Reform, Overseas Job Outsourcing, Global Water Issues, Sudan and the Darfur, Global Poverty, and China. Each session will be held from 10 a.m. to noon at the Rivers West Building Auditorium. Attendees may participate during the question and answer period, and voice their opinion by voting for or against certain foreign policy positions for the U.S. government. The fee is $49 for all eight sessions, textbook and refreshments. Full-time students and teachers can attend for free and purchase the book for $15. Teacher renewal certificates or continuing education units are available. The Great Decisions Program is a world affairs educational program that encourages discussion, debate, and learning about international affairs, national security, and U.S. foreign policy. For information or to register, visit www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/cpe/great_decisions.htm. Program contact is Rick Kilroy (Political Science) at 328-2349 or kilnryr@email.ecu.edu.

ECU Collaborates on Fitness Initiative

ECU was one of four collaborating institutions featured prominently on a new Web site, “Fit Together,” a part of a state obesity prevention initiative. The site web focuses on individual and community action to help North Carolinians undertake healthier weight and lifestyle choices. Fit Together is a three-year partnership between the N.C. Health and Wellness Trust Fund and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. Additional aspects of the program include television, print and radio ads that spotlight successful local approaches to promoting healthy lifestyles. For more information, see Crawford and Cummings’ article on obesity-related grants, p. 7, or visit www.FitTogetherNC.org.

Input Sought for ECU Faculty Mentoring Program

The Faculty Welfare university committee is charged with documenting existing faculty mentoring practices at East Carolina University. This committee will report on these practices to Faculty Senate in January. All East Carolina University faculty are encouraged to complete an online faculty mentoring survey found at https://secure.coec.org/ecu/survey/mentoring. This survey is due Dec. 16. Faculty input is vital to the committee will help the committee accurately portray these practices to Faculty Senate and key university administrators. Refer questions about this survey to Dr. Bill Sugar, Faculty Welfare vice-chair at sugarw@coe.ecu.edu.

Distinguished Visitor

Brad Wilson (left), chairman of the University of North Carolina Board of Governors, speaks with James LeFroy Smith, interim vice chancellor for academic affairs, during a visit to ECU on Nov. 17. While on campus, Wilson met with Chancellor Ballard and his cabinet, SGA president and students, and representatives of the Faculty and Staff Senates. His visit was part of an ongoing tour of all UNC-system campuses. Wilson was elected May 14 to his second two-year term as chair of the board. He was first appointed to the board in 1997. He is senior vice president, corporate secretary, and general counsel to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. (Photo by Marc J. Kawanishi)

Sprau, IAEA Help Kazakhstan Secure Radioactive Materials

By Erica Plouffe

An East Carolina University radiologist lent his expertise this month to the nation of Kazakhstan as part of a U.N. team to secure industrial radioactive materials.

Daniel Sprau, a professor in ECU’s Environmental Health and Safety Department, traveled to the former Soviet republic as a consultant for the U.N.’s International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in early November.

The goal, Sprau said, was to provide recommendations to secure the nation’s medical and industrial radiation materials.

“On this mission, we located ‘orphan’ sources of radiation. We met with many Kazakh ministries, through the IAEA,” said Sprau, who has served as a consultant for the Vienna-based IAEA for more than a decade. “We talked with customs agencies, health and environmental agencies, hospitals.”

The IAEA was established in the 1950s by the U.N. as a way to promote safe use of nuclear technology around the world. Responding to a request for assistance by Kazakh government officials, Sprau and two other IAEA investigators helped the Kazakhstan National Atomic Energy Authority develop a strategy that would strengthen its control over potentially errant medical and industrial radioactive materials.

“When the former Soviet Union collapsed, the army just left and the Kazakhs were left to their own devices to control or regulate these radiation sources,” Sprau said. “The biggest problem they could have is to ‘do nothing.’ There are a lot of sources nobody has control over. And of course, we don’t want them coming here. We want them either to be put to use or placed in a waste disposal site.”

Kazakhstan is about five times the size of France and shares a long border with Russia, China and burgeoning nations such as Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. It is just north of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan, although it does not share a border with those nations.

Pieces of Eight

www.piecesofeight.ecu.edu

Pieces of Eight, a newspaper for East Carolina University faculty and staff, is issued monthly during the academic year by the ECU News Bureau (News & Communication Services). Items may be sent to the Editor via campus mail addressed to Howard House, East Campus, delivered in person to Howard House, corner of East Fifth Street and Rotary Avenue; or e-mailed to holster@ecu.edu. Phone inquiries may be directed to 758-1025.

Editor: Joy Manning Holster

(5,000 copies of this issue were printed at an approximate pre-tax cost of $595 or 12 cents per copy.)
On all corners of campus, residence halls are helping to curb the space crunch at East Carolina University.

On College Hill, ECU officials in November broke ground for a new residence hall with the hope of making more room for the campus’ growing student population. The new 488-bed residence hall near Todd Dining Hall will likely be completed by fall 2006.

The new College Hill residence hall will feature two-bedroom, four-student suites with semi-kitchenettes in each suite; two private baths for each suite; data ports and cable in every room; noise resistant walls and floors; and a full kitchen, recycling and laundry facilities on each floor.

“Our university is growing and we can’t control that, but we can get ready,” said Garrise Moore, vice chancellor for student life. “We are responding to the needs of the university and our students.”

ECU’s residence halls house more than 5,100 students. The new residence hall is part of a long-term expansion program for on-campus student housing. University officials are now exploring a privatized residence hall near Reade and Third streets that would provide apartment-style dorm space closer to campus.

On the main campus, Slay Residence Hall will likely be converted this summer into faculty office space, providing an on-campus presence for the 97 new faculty hires. Todd Johnson, associate vice chancellor of Campus Living, said approximately 200 students live in Slay and could be relocated to other residence halls across campus, including the proposed privatized residence hall. Should ECU be given permission to allow the development of this project to be privatized, students could move in as early as Fall 2005, Johnson said.

Slay was determined to be the most viable option to provide office space for the anticipated office space shortfall. As many as 154 faculty and support office spaces would be needed next fall if Slay isn’t utilized, according to Bob Thompson, ECU’s director of Institutional Planning, Research and Effectiveness.

“Until we build new academic offices, we don’t have much choice,” Thompson said. “If we don’t get new a building that allows us to address the need for office space, we’ll be in extremely tight circumstances.”

On all corners of campus, residence halls are helping to curb the space crunch at East Carolina University.

While construction has just begun on the College Hill residence hall, an artist’s rendering provides a look at how the completed building will appear. The new residence hall, part of an expansion of on-campus student housing, is scheduled to start immediately following graduation in May, with an early August project completion date. Office space in downtown Greenville might be rented as well, Thompson said.

The Slay conversion would likely serve only the space needs of the new hires and support staff, said Thompson. Existing faculty space crunch issues, he said, would remain as is.

Todd Johnson said student enrollment projections indicate that there could be as many as 27,000 students attending ECU by 2008. An increasing number of those students take their classes solely online. In the past four years, ECU’s distance education program has grown from 2.5 percent of all credit hours taken to more than 7 percent this year, Thompson said. State funding figures provide money for professor salaries based on student population growth.

ECU officials anticipate they will need to hire an additional 128 new faculty in 2006-07 and another 120 in 2007-08 to keep up with student enrollment. The completion of the Flanagan and Old Cafeteria renovation projects, as well as the opening of the Howell Science complex, will accommodate many of the new hires and even provide a surplus of office space during these years, said Thompson. But the enrollment figures projected for the start of the 2008-09 school year, he said, would result in a space deficit of 63 offices.

Johnson said he has heard the concerns from some Slay residents about the change and will work with them and the administration to provide the best possible result.

“We recognize that Campus Living is a partner in the university. Our primary charge is to house and feed the students, but it’s also to support the university’s ability to provide education to the students and allow them access to faculty,” Johnson said. “We see the need for faculty space. It’s not only a campus concern, but also a student life concern. If we can collaborate, we make it a win-win situation for all.”

Changes Planned for Office Space, Residence Halls

ECU Chancellor Steve Ballard speaks with Reps. Marian McLawhorn (left) and Edith Warren Friday at the ground breaking for the new residence hall on ECU’s College Hill. (Photo by Marc J. Kawanishi)

University officials expect as many as 97 new professors will be hired by next fall to meet the increase in online student enrollment. About half of those positions are earmarked for distance education, said Thompson. Given this relatively new method of instruction, on-campus faculty office space becomes an important aspect of the distance education program.

“Distance education enrollment is not having an impact on the need for new classrooms, but most professors don’t, or can’t, teach the courses from their homes,” he said.

“Plus, we want people to be a part of their college and department and to be accessible on campus. But there is just no other available space in the size we need near campus.”

Slay is one of 15 residence halls on campus and is often a choice for students who are disabled or who choose to live on campus for their entire college career at ECU. The plan to convert Slay into office space would require renovation efforts to start immediately following graduation in May, with an early August project completion date. Office space in downtown Greenville might be rented as well, Thompson said.

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Russoniello Researches ‘Fun’ Through Biofeedback

By Erica Plouffe

The concept of fun is something not many people think too much about: either you have it or you don’t.

But for Carmen Russoniello, determining the scientific aspects of what “fun” is through a monitoring method known as biofeedback could provide clues to what factors keep people happy and which ones contribute to stress and depression.

“I look at the concept of fun and ask questions and look at the physiological differences when people have fun. How is that different from depression or distress?” said Russoniello, a professor in ECU’s Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies. “As therapists, we know it’s not possible to be depressed and have fun at the same time. So what happens chemically? By studying one, we can get some insight into the other.”

Russoniello, who launched ECU’s Biofeedback Lab in Christenbury Gym shortly after he arrived in Greenville in 1999, is getting to the heart of “fun” through biofeedback, the blanket term for a matrix of high-tech monitoring tools that capture human functions, including heart rate, brain activity and skin temperature. The data enables a person to see, in real time, his or her physiological reactions to specific situations.

Biofeedback has slowly gained acceptance by many health disciplines during the past 20 years as the medical field has become more comfortable using computers and technology to aid medical practitioners.

“As the equipment has evolved over the years, it’s allowed us to become more efficient at picking up physical signals,” Russoniello said. “They’ve become more diagnostic. We’re always using different technology to get new and more information for healthcare providers. At this point, we’re seeing many people from different disciplines using it — nursing, counseling, exercise science.”

A person who is undergoing biofeedback will have sensors attached to fingers, head or shoulders that detect factors such as energy, temperature, brainwaves and heartbeat. During a therapy or counseling session, for example, a client would have an opportunity to observe firsthand through biofeedback computer sessions. The Biofeedback Lab at Christenbury Gym offers an opportunity for students from various disciplines to train for biofeedback certification. (Photo by Erica Plouffe)

To some degree, we can articulate what fun is, physiologically, from hormonal and psychological perspectives,” he said. “Your biochemistry changes and that correlates with moods. By studying fun, we can shed light on depression. Hopefully, we could get to a prescriptive nature of recreational activity, like you need to do ‘X’ amount of this to get a certain kind of result.”

“Biofeedback should not be used by just one profession, it should be part of everybody’s profession. Like hypnosis… it goes where it’s needed,” Russoniello said. “The university has a mission of collaboration between departments and this is an ideal example of that.”

While the Biofeedback Lab is available to students and researchers from many disciplines and could soon offer a formal counseling partnership, Russoniello continues to further his interest in the concept of fun through biofeedback computer sessions. The Biofeedback Lab at Christenbury Gym offers an opportunity for students from various disciplines to train for biofeedback certification.
**Darty Publishes Comprehensive Text on Enameling**

By Michael Crane

When East Carolina University’s Linda Darty couldn’t find a text on enameling and started typing handouts for her students, she threatened to write a book.

“That was 20 years ago,” said the School of Art and Design professor. This month, her work, *The Art of Enameling*, was published by Lark Books.

“I guess I got tired of typing handouts,” she said. Darty says the work is the first comprehensive book on the subject since the 1950s. “Colleagues and students have asked me to write a book for a long time. There are many metals programs that want to offer enameling, but the instructors don’t know the techniques.”

The project and technique sections of the book feature enameling examples by East Carolina faculty artists who hadn’t previously enamelled. Painting, drawing and printmaking professors Paul Hartley, Michael Voors, Catherine Walker, Joan Mansfield, Scott Eagle, Beth Blake and Ray Elmore all created enamels for the book using their drawing and painting skills. Professors Robert Ebendorf, Tim Lazure and Mi-sook Hur have never enamelled before to illustrate that some artists and most of the general public have yet to discover enameling for themselves. The project signified that the book can be used as a teaching tool to introduce students to the craft.

Darty’s book can be found in bookstores and on e-commerce sites such as Amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com. Darty appeared Nov. 5 at her first booksigning at Chicago’s Sculptural Objects and Functional Art Exposition, where she signed and sold 100 copies in two days. Northern Illinois University has adopted the book for courses offered this spring.

Darty is in demand as a lecturer, scheduled to appear this year at the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, Arrowmont School of Crafts, the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen, the Armory Art Center of West Palm Beach, Fla., and the conference of the International Enamelist Society.

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**Pizarro Bridges the Gap Between Needs, Resources**

In coordination with the Recognition and Rewards Committee of the ECU Chancellor’s Staff Senate, the Pieces of Eight series honoring exceptional ECU staff members recognizes Maura Pizarro.

**By Judy Currin**

As ECU’s community development specialist, Maura Pizarro believes community engagement benefits everyone. The Office of Community Development administers the active partnership between communities of Eastern North Carolina and East Carolina University. It was established in 2003 to develop and exchange information, expertise and resources.

“It is my job to listen to the needs voiced by the community, to analyze the results and recommend how and with whom the university can partner to meet those needs,” Pizarro said.

She receives requests through the Internet, “ECU Connect” (www.ecuconnect.org), by telephone or in person. While the needs vary in size and scope, many can be handled in-house.

“A church may be having a youth gathering and want Pirate give-aways, a school may be having a youth...” Pizarro recalled.

“We try to find a faculty expert who is interested in working on a community project. “We want to serve as mentors by encouraging other Hispanic students to stay in school,” Pizarro said. “It’s an honor to be their advisor.”

Pizarro bridges the gap between needs, resources and exchange information, expertise and culture.

The program is scheduled to continue during the spring of 2005. Plans for a literacy center for the Hispanic Community are also underway. “The Plaza Comunitaria or Transition Center,” Pizarro said, “will offer primary and secondary education in Spanish to assist adult members in the community who cannot read in their native language. It will also provide English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and tutoring for school children.” She said the center would also serve as a clearinghouse of information covering legal services, public instruction and health issues.

The Center, scheduled to open in the fall of 2005, includes partners from the Department of Public Education, Self Help, Pitt Community College and AMERICAN, a non-profit organization in North Carolina that focuses on leadership, education and Hispanic Culture.

Last semester, Julie Ventura, president of the ECU Student Hispanic Organization (SALSA), contacted Pizarro.

“The organization was searching for an advisor,” Pizarro said. “They wanted someone who would support their efforts to promote diversity within the university and in their social and community service endeavors.”

In addition to providing peer support to each other, celebrating their diversity, they have continued their effort through the SALSA Dances and a Hispanic Cuisine fund raiser, efforts are under way to assist the organization in building links with the public school system.

“SALSA wants to serve as mentors by encouraging other Hispanic students to stay in school,” Pizarro said. “It’s an honor to be their advisor.”

Darty holds a bachelor’s degree in humanities and education from the University of Puerto Rico. She expects to complete a master’s in English with a concentration in technical and professional writing from ECU this May.

Pizarro’s work ethic, which she applies toward her educational goals and to her position as community development specialist, comes from her mother and her Aunt Amelia.

“It doesn’t matter what you do for a living,” her mother said. “Just do your best, be the best at what you do.”

“I live by that advice.” Pizarro said.
Weight Loss Research Leads to Achievement Award

By Erica Plouffe

It wouldn’t be a stretch to say that Robert Hickner’s research could someday unveil the wonder drug for weight loss. But truth be told, for all the hours he spends surveying data in his lab, Hickner would much rather have folks lose weight the old-fashioned way: through exercise.

‘The bottom line is, how do you keep people healthier?’

— Hickner

“I prefer people exercise. You have so few bad side effects with exercise,” said Hickner, a professor in the department of Exercise and Sport Science in the College of Health and Human Performance. “Sure, you might get sore, or sometimes injured, but exercise has a huge number of benefits. If you just take a pill, it serves one or two functions, but there could be a host of adverse effects on the rest of your system.”

Hickner, who studies enzyme functions in primarily the obese and aging populations, was awarded with East Carolina University’s 2004 Five-Year Achievement Award for Excellence in Research and Creative Activity. Since his arrival to ECU in 1997, Hickner has been involved with research grants totaling $4.3 million, $800,000 of which he has been the principle investigator.

“Dr. Hickner has made exceptional research contributions in the past five years, not only in quality but also in the quantity of his work,” Glen Gilbert, dean of the College of Education, wrote in Hickner’s letter of recommendation. “He is part of several interdisciplinary research groups and has a growing national and international reputation as a fine researcher.”

Hickner, who also holds a joint post in physiology at the Brody School of Medicine, gave a presentation, “What’s So Bad About Excess Body Weight?” on Nov. 23.

Since 1997, Hickner’s research has ranged from the effectiveness of chiropactic treatments, to the factors that contribute to diabetes in children, and the metabolism of African-Americans. But the bulk of Hickner’s research focuses on the function of Nitric Oxide Synthase (NOS), an enzyme in the human body that controls glucose and aids in the breakdown of fat (lipolysis).

The NOS enzyme content tends to be low in overweight and in older people. “We’re finding that, as people get older, they put on more weight and fat and we’re finding their NOS enzyme is low,” he said. “With overweight people, we’re seeing cardiovascular problems as well as what we’ve identified as a metabolic syndrome: high blood pressure, hypercholesterol, and insulin resistance, which can lead to diabetes.”

Hickner said that because overweight people can suffer earlier from these conditions, they are at a greater risk for developing serious illness. He has received two National Institutes of Health grants to study NOS, exercise and aging, and has applied for a third grant that would enable him to extend his study to obese individuals.

With an eye on prevention, Hickner hopes his research will help contribute to knowledge of how the human body functions, and convince people that to remain healthy, they should continue to exercise.

“I think I’ve always been into exercise and into advocating a preventative mindset,” he said. “The bottom line is, how do you keep people healthier?”

He acknowledges a host of factors can keep people from getting regular exercise, which is why developing drugs to help this population could be a viable option.

“There are people who can’t exercise and there are others who absolutely won’t. So it can be useful to have a pill,” he said. “But this work is important so we can learn how things work in the body and develop drugs that mimic the normal function.”

A key aspect of Hickner’s research has to do with the process he employs to gather data from test subjects. While earning his PhD in physiology from Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden, Hickner was part of a team of researchers who developed microdialysis, a new way to track and record the presence of nutrients and enzymes in the body. A porous probe attached to a small receptacle is “threaded” just under the skin in the abdominal region of a subject, enabling the device to collect the nutrients and enzymes found in blood and muscle. Using microdialysis and a leg muscle biopsy (where a small strip of muscle is taken from the leg), Hickner has worked with fellow researchers on a range of projects. In addition to his research, Hickner has worked with dozens of graduate-level students and he has produced many research articles that appear in international academic journals. In 2001, Hickner received the Researcher of the Year award for ECU’s School of Health and Human Performance.

Hickner, who collaborates with researchers from ECU and other institutions, said he was grateful to his fellow faculty members for their support and willingness to team up on research projects.

“It’s one of the best places in the field to work. The collaborative environment we have here at ECU is noted by our peers,” he said. “It’s made us all work harder, perhaps, we might have otherwise on our own.”

Hickner shares the five-year research and creative activity award with ECU Art Profesor Carl Billingsley. Billingsley will give his presentation Jan. 20 at 5:15 in Speight Auditorium, Jenkins Fine Arts Center. He will also hold an art exhibit at Gray Gallery.

Grants Fund Programs to Combat Childhood Obesity

By Yancey Crawford and Skip Cummings

East Carolina University, Pitt County Memorial Hospital and Pitt County Schools are leading the way to combat childhood obesity in eastern North Carolina, the state and nationally.

Each organization has recently obtained grants aimed at preventing or reducing childhood obesity, one of the most compelling public health concerns in our nation today. These grants collectively total almost $3 million in federal, state and private foundations funding. They will train new physicians to care for at-risk and overweight children, determine effective intervention strategies to prevent or reduce childhood obesity, provide case management services for the most overweight children in Pitt County and promote healthy eating and physical activity in the public school system.

The ECU-University Health Systems Pediatric Healthy Weight Research and Treatment Center at the Brody School of Medicine’s Departments of Family Medicine and Pediatrics have been awarded close to $1.5 million over the next three years for three obesity-related projects.

The first of these projects is a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration training grant. This three-year, $980,416 project will fill a gap at the university by developing and strengthening collaborative teaching and research infrastructure between the Family Medicine and Pediatric departments. The goal is to train physicians to better understand, prevent and treat childhood obesity. It will focus on conducting translational research — that is, taking what is learned in academic and research settings and discovering the best methods for “translating” this knowledge for use at the patient’s bedside or in the doctor’s office. Researchers at ECU plan to disseminate their findings to physicians and health professionals locally and nationally through presentations, publications and web page summaries.

The North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission (HWTFC) funded the second project, called the “Obesity Prevention Evaluation Project.” In 2003, the HWTFC awarded grants to 20 community and school-based programs across North Carolina, known collectively as the FitTogether grantees, and charged them with developing innovative programs to prevent and reduce childhood obesity. ECU’s Pediatric Healthy Weight Research and Treatment Center and the Department of Family Medicine will receive $414,500 over three years to evaluate how well the FitTogether programs help prevent and reduce childhood obesity, either through direct services and programs for children or through policy or environmental changes. ECU is collaborating with Duke University to design an online system for the grantees to use in reporting their program evaluation data. This system will enable the projects to report their data in a consistent manner so ECU researchers can determine the effectiveness of the programs.

The Obesity Prevention Evaluation Project will help researchers at ECU learn which of the 20 FitTogether intervention strategies are most successful in preventing or reducing childhood obesity and thus, be replicated in other areas. ECU is also assisting grantees in identifying and tracking outcomes of specific programs or “cohorts” of children from each grant site. This data will be used to evaluate how successful all 20 FitTogether programs are overall in preventing or reducing childhood obesity across the state.

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In the Spotlight

Appointments/Elections

Janette Fishell (Music) was appointed to the national screening commit-tee of the Fulbright-Hayes Scholarship Program. She will serve a three-year term as one of three specialists who recom-mend applicants in the organ field.

NewsMakers

Gerald Strope (Medicine) on WNTV-TV, on Sudden Infant Death Syn-drome, Oct. 20.

Rosa Cuenca (Medicine) on photodynamic therapy to treat chest wall recurrence of breast cancer, WTEB radio, Oct 22 and Oct. 25.

Hamid Hadi (Medicine) with Dr. G. Oakley of Emory University, on the importance of folic acid during pregnan-cy, WCTI-TV, Oct. 28.

Carson W. Bays (Economics) in The Daily Reflector, on the upcoming Christmas buying season, Nov. 11.

Service, Honors and Professional Activities

Karen R. Dawks (Education) was named 2004 Collegiate Teacher of the Year by the Southern Business Education Association (SBEA), for contributions to business education through teaching, research, administrativa, or humanitarian activities.

Dorsey “Blaise” Williams (Al- lied Health) was one of 30 selected to participate in the Intensive Workshop on Grant Writing, Preparation, and Submis-sions in Rehabilitation Research sponsored by Enhancing Rehabilitation Research In the South.

Peggy Wittman (Allied Health) received the Award for Outstanding Practice in Community Service from the N.C. Occupational Therapy Association. Wittman was recognized for her work in after-school activities for children with Asperger’s Syndrome and her research on social therapy dogs.

William “Art” Rouse Jr. and Har-old Blakeman Jr. (Education) received the 2004 Best Research Paper Award at the 2004 Delta Pi Epsilon National Re-search Conference in Washington, DC for “A Comparison of Student Test Results of Business and Marketing Education National Board Certified Teachers and Business and Marketing Education Non-National Board Certified Teachers.”

The Association for Continuing Higher Education (ACHE) awarded the Crystal Marketing Award to ECU’s Division of Continuing Studies for four television commercials promoting ECU’s distance learning programs. The ads were unanimously chosen from 37 entries sub-mitted nationally. Representatives from Continuing Studies discussed the televi-sion spots at the ACHE national confer-ence in Newport, Rhode Island.

Dindy Reich (Art) displayed jewelry in an invitational show entitled “Interpretive Pathways” at the Tointon Gallery for the Visual Arts in Greeley, Colo. Reich was in a group show, “Figurative Work in Metal” at the Catalun Crafts Centre in Barcelona, Spain. She attended and presented at the opening. Her work is also featured in the Spanish jewelry magazine, Yeris.

Nelson Cooper (Recreation and Leisure Studies) received the Leadership for the Future Award from the Society of Park and Recreation Educators at the 2003 National Recreation and Park As-sociation Conference.

Katie Walsh (Health and Human Performance) served as vice president for the N.C. Athletic Trainer’s Association, and program chair for the association’s District 1 meeting.

Joyce Reed (Human Ecology) traveled to Athens, Greece to attend the Annual Conference of the U.S. Fulbright Association, “Celebrating the Fulbright Ethics,” and the Fulbright Scholars In-ternational Interdisciplinary Conference, “Olympism and the Fulbright Spirit: Human Rights and Peace in Action.” She is a former Fulbright Scholar and president of the N.C. Fulbright Alumni Chapter.

Beverly Moore (Medicine) was named one of two District Chairpersons for the Year for the State Employee As-sociation of North Carolina (SEANC). Moore is serving her second term as chair.

Brody Pharmacy Offers Delivery

Just released is ECU music professor Karen Hall’s collection of art songs and musical theatre selections. The recording features 38 tracks including works by Harold Arlen, Theodore Chanler, Aaron Coplan, and the world premier recording of Max Morath’s “In Separate Rooms.” At ECU, Hall teaches voice techniques to musicians before they have performed with the Seattle Choral Company and Orchestra, the Seattle Bach Choir, as soloist with the Seattle Symphony, with the American Symphony Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic. For additional information, visit www.cdbaby.com/cd/karenhall. (Contributed photo)

Parish said prescription refills may be requested by phone, fax or e-mail. An interactive voice-response system is available for refills and inquiries. Pre-scriptions may be transferred from other pharmacies by bringing in empty bottles or packages with their labels.

Delivery service is available for all pharmacy products, both prescription and over-the-counter.

For more information, or to register for the delivery service, call 744-1846 or e-mail pharmacybrody@mail.ecu.edu or pharmacyFPC@mail.ecu.edu. A link to the registration form may be found at http://www.ecu.edu/grouppractice/.

Faculty Attend NCAEA Event

Art Education faculty and students participated in the North Carolina Art Education Association (NCAEA) conference in Wilmington, Nov. 5 - 7. Entitled Renewing the Creative Spirit in All of Us, the conference was organized by Debra Pylypiv, president-elect and ECU adjunct faculty. The event drew attendance of 444 art teachers from across the state.

Presentations by Art Education fac-ulity included the following by Dr. Cyn- thia Bickle-Green, NCAEA president, “A Comparison of Art and Art Education in Belize and North Carolina”; and by Nanyoung Kim, NCAEA treasurer, three workshops and one presentation — “Art Appreciation in the Manner of ‘Picture Study’”; “East Carolina University’s 2004 Summer Study Abroad in Art Education” with former ECU art education graduate student R. Baker; “Rearranging the Color Wheel” with H. Jathar Salji; and “Botanical Illustration with Watercolor,” with Joyce Joines Newman, Nancy House, ECU art education faculty and NCAEA higher education division chair presented, “Everyone Present” and “Kente Cloth Weaving in the Classroom” with co-presenter Catherine Billingsley (Art). Sara Gant (Art) presented “Sketchbooks: A Portable Laboratory.”

Mark Malley, ECU art education faculty and N.C. Student Chapters spon-sor, presented “Closer to Nature” with grad students R. Minton and P. Morrison. The ECU Art Education Guild dressed as Pirates and conducted an “answer cor-rectly or walk-the-plank” art history quiz.

Vital Records

BORN: to Nicole Winslow (Medi-cine) and husband Mike, a son, Rashad Lee Winslow, Nov. 11.
Years of Research Shed Light on Shrimp Industry

By Erica Plouffe

The shrimpers dotting the coastline of North Carolina have intrigued John Maiolo for the past 30 years.

In his new book, *Hard Times and a Nickel a Bucket* (2004, Chapel Hill Press), Maiolo, a retired ECU sociology professor, explores his decades-long fascination with North Carolina’s shrimp industry. Drawing from research he collected in the 1980s with ECU history professor William Still (retired) and then-ECU anthropologist John Bort, Maiolo revisited the data in 2002 and completed the book this year with the hope of shedding light on one of the region’s largest and quickly changing industries.

“We found we were doing research that could improve the fisheries in North Carolina. The shrimp fisheries gave us a window into how the coast was developed,” he said.

“I’ve always intended to do a book that looked at its history, as well as its social and economic impacts.”

Drawing from historical accounts, ethnographic explorations and demographic and economic information, Maiolo created a work that captures the evolution of North Carolina’s shrimp industry over the past 70 years.

“I wrote this book for the fisherman and the people who live in those communities, how these people’s lives are stitched together through this industry,” he said. Maiolo found the industry has undergone significant changes, from water use regulations and licensing to competing in the marketplace with imported shrimp vendors from Asia.

Rather than looking at the shrinking industry solely from a commercial perspective, *Hard Times* focuses more on the people of the region’s shrinking communities and how external forces have shaped and affected their efforts to harvest shrimp.

“It’s a different struggle than it was back then,” Maiolo said. “The shrimper has to ask, ‘How can I adapt to technology and work rotation to maximize my harvest? How do I organize myself to stay on the water?’”

In addition to his duties as the chair of the then-combined department of anthropology, economics and sociology, Maiolo led the charge in exploring the aftermath of Hurricane Floyd. A team of ECU researchers went on to produce and edit *Facing Our Future: Hurricane Floyd and Recovery in the Coastal Plain* (2000).

Maiolo said proceeds for *Hard Times* will go toward paying for his out-of-pocket printing costs as well as for the Survey Research Laboratory and an ECU scholarship in his name.

For more information about the book, Maiolo can be reached by email at hardtimesandfloyd@cox.net.

Leading SIDS Reduction Efforts

Dr. Julius Mallette, senior associate dean at the ECU Brody School of Medicine and vice chair of the N.C. Healthy Start Foundation Board, was one of five program participants at the Oct. 19 N.C. Healthy Start Foundation Back to Sleep 10th Anniversary in Raleigh.

Mallette presented an overview of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in North Carolina, identifying a triple-risk model used to understand SIDS. According to the model, an infant is most at risk for SIDS when the following three components overlap: age between two and four months old, genetic predisposition, and environmental factors such as cigarette smoke exposure, room temperature, and sleep position.

Placing an infant on its back for sleeping is the best way to prevent SIDS, Mallette said.

Since the Back to Sleep Campaign began in 1994, he said, SIDS deaths continued on page 11

East Carolina University

Publications

Chapter by Cheryl McFadden (Education) and R. Joyner, “MSA graduates perceptions of their principal preparation program,” in C.J. Reed (Ed.), *Leadership for school improvement and accountability.* Also by McFadden, “Educational Leadership Programs Lag Behind Other College of Education Programs in Adopting Distance Education Strategies,” in the *Journal of Scholarship and Practice,* and “Prepared to Teach Online? Perspectives of Faculty in the University of North Carolina System,” in the *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration.*


Article by Beth Velde (Allied Health) with co-author, Practicum in Adapted Physical Activity.

Article by Okmyung Bin (Economics), “Effects of Flood Hazards on Property Values: Evidence Before and After Hurricane Floyd,” in *Land Economics.*

ProductReview by Jeff Coghill (Laupun Library) of *STAT*’s electronic database resource, in the *Journal of the Medical Library Association.*

Article by Medicine faculty Tae-Won Im, “Zoonotic Sinusitis: A Growing Concern,” in *Contemporary American Poetry.*

Book review by Sandra Sears (Education) with co-authors, “Measuring Undergraduate Hardness as an Indicator of Persistence to Graduation Within Four Years,” in *Best Practices for Access and Retention in Higher Education.*

Articles by Craig Becker (Health Education and Promotion) with co-authors, “Usability and effectiveness of a lifestyle self-management system,” in the *American Journal of Health Studies;* and “Promoting Behaviors of Older Adults Versus Young and Middle Aged Adults in Southwest America,” in *Educational Gerontology.*

Articles by Martha Chapin (Rehabilitation Studies), “Case management in private sector rehabilitation,” and “Community Resources,” in *Case Management for Rehabilitation Health Professionals* (2nd ed.).

Book by Beth Yelde (Allied Health) with co-author, Practicum in Adapted Physical Activity.


Authors, *Facing Our Future: Hurricane Floyd and Recovery in the Coastal Plain* (2000). Maiolo said proceeds for *Hard Times* will go toward paying for his out-of-pocket printing costs as well as for the Survey Research Laboratory and an ECU scholarship in his name.

For more information about the book, Maiolo can be reached by email at hardtimesandfloyd@cox.net.

A new book by retired sociology professor John Maiolo focuses on the people in the state’s shrimp industry. (Photo by Erica Plouffe)
Presentations


Poster Presentation by David Knox (Sociology) and Kristen McGinty, ECU Public Administration graduate student and former ECU sociology undergraduate major, "Elimidate II: An In Class Experience for Marriage Courses" at the National Council on Family Relations in Orlando, Florida.


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December 10, 2004

Campus Calendar

DECEMBER

SATURDAY  11
Fall 2004 Commencement, Williams Arena at Minges Coliseum. Concert, 9:30 a.m.; program, 10 a.m.

WEDNESDAY  15
ECU Concert Series, ECU Christmas Past, WTEB Radio, 7 p.m.

THURSDAY  16
Exams for Fall semester close.

FRIDAY  17
Salsa Dance, Willis Building. Lesson, 7:30 p.m.; dance, 8 – 11 p.m.

WEDNESDAY  22
ECU Concert Series, Holiday Concert, WTEB Radio, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY  24
Christmas holidays begin. East campus holiday through Dec. 29; West campus through Dec. 27.

WEDNESDAY  29
ECU Concert Series, Music for Winds, WTEB Radio, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY  31
New Year’s Day Holiday

JANUARY 2005

WEDNESDAY  5
ECU Concert Series, Romantic American Arts songs: Kramer, baritone, Keene, piano; WTEB Radio, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY  7
Spring semester 2005 classes begin.

SATURDAY  8
Contra Dance, Willis Building. Dinner, 6 p.m.; concert, 7 p.m.; lesson, 7:30 p.m.; dance 8 – 10:30 p.m.

Skip Holtz Named Head Football Coach

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Skip and his wife, Jennifer, are the parents of three children: Louis Leo (Trey) Holtz III (10); Chad Fitzgerald Holtz (8); and Hailey Elizabeth Holtz (6).

WEDNESDAY  19
ECU Concert Series, Joanna Bath, violin; Charles Bath, piano. WTEB Radio, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY  21
Salsa Dance, Willis Building. Lesson, 5:30 p.m.; dance, 8 – 11 p.m.

SATURDAY  22
S. Rudolph Alexander Performing Arts Series, Opera Verdi Europa, Aida. Wright Auditorium, 8 p.m.

Foreign Policy Great Decisions Program, running for eight consecutive Saturdays, Rivers West, 10 a.m. - noon. Free for full-time students and teachers with $15 book purchase. For other participants, $49 includes textbook.

WEDNESDAY  26
ECU Concert Series, Symphonic Band, WTEB Radio, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY  28
Contra Dance, Willis Building. Lesson, 7:30 p.m.; dance, 8 – 10:30 p.m.

School of Music Concert Series, John Ferrari, percussion.

SATURDAY  29
Family Fare Series, Dance Asia, Wright Auditorium, 2 p.m.

SUNDAY  30
Travel-Adventure Film, In Search of Shangri-La, Hendrix, 3 p.m.

Exhibitions

Tarheel Elections, Special Collections, Joyner Library (through Feb. 4).

Fourth Photography Image Biennial, Gray Gallery (Jan. 21 - Feb. 20).

Leading SIDS Reduction Efforts

continued from page 9

nationwide have been cut by 50 percent. Still, North Carolina’s SIDS rate is consistently higher than the national average, with approximately 100 deaths occurring from SIDS each year.

Additional efforts to reduce the state’s rate of SIDS, announced at the anniversary event, were plans to address safe sleep practices and parental education in hospital nursery settings.

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a variety of duties as assistant head coach under his father, the legendary Lou Holtz.

Holtz came to South Carolina after a successful five-year stint as head coach at the University of Connecticut. While at Connecticut, he led the Huskies to their best season in school history in 1998 and was recognized as one of the top young coaching talents in the country.

Born March 12, 1964, in Willimantic, Conn., Holtz spent the first two years of his life at UConn while his father served as the top football assistant on the Huskie staff. He attended Holy Cross Junior College in South Bend, Ind., for two years before transferring to Notre Dame in 1984. Holtz earned his bachelor’s degree in business management in 1986 and was a football letterwinner for the Irish in 1986, appearing in all 11 games as a special teams member and backup flanker.

East Carolina Center Moussa Badiane and guard Japhet McNeil celebrate the ECU basketball team’s win over Toledo Dec. 2 in Minges Coliseum. The score was 73-71. (Photo by Marc J. Kawanishi)

East Carolina University
On Campus

Holiday Gift Idea

Just in time for holiday giving, the Country Doctor Museum 2005 Calendar is now available. Featuring the artwork of ECU photographer Forrest Croce, this publication captures the enduring vitality of the museum’s historical collections. Each month showcases unique medical artifacts and scenes of the museum that will appeal to anyone with a medical or history interest. The dynamic detail of the museum’s apothecary shop, medicinal herb garden, and Civil-War era surgical instruments are just a few of the images that appear from month to month.

The calendar is available now at the reference desk of Laupus Library, Brody Medical Sciences Building, for $11.50, including shipping if required. It is also available at the Country Doctor Museum in Bailey, off Highway 264 between Wilson and Raleigh.

For more information, call the Country Doctor Museum, at 255-4165.

Coaches Sought for ECU Lacrosse

The ECU Men’s Lacrosse team is seeking coaching assistance on a full- or part-time basis. The team practices three days per week and plays a 10-game schedule in the spring.

Extensive lacrosse experience is not a requirement, and anyone interested is encouraged to inquire. Help will be appreciated in any capacity, even just one day a week.

There is no compensation, however all travel expenses and participation insurance are covered.

The team competes in the South Eastern Lacrosse Conference, a member of U.S. Lacrosse, Men’s Division - Intercollegiate Associates (MDIA). ECU is in the northern division, with N.C. State, Wake Forest, Clemson and Virginia Tech. Other spring games include competitions with Auburn, Georgia, Pittsburgh, Connecticut and Elon. There is a conference tournament and national championship in April and May.

For information, contact Christopher Gauland, head coach, at gauckland@ mail.ecu.edu or call 830-1000.

Programs Help Combat Childhood Obesity

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The N.C. Health and Wellness Trust Fund also awarded ECU a contract for $105,000 to help develop content for a childhood obesity web site. The web site is part of a $3 million obesity awareness campaign funded by Blue Cross Blue Shield of N.C. The goal of the awareness campaign is to motivate local leaders to institute personal, community and organizational change through local action. The campaign will encourage local leaders to explore a “best practices” web site, developed in collaboration with faculty of the ECU Pediatric Healthy Weight Research and Treatment Center and the Department of Family Medicine.

These projects complement two grants recently awarded to Pitt County Memorial Hospital and Pitt County Schools. The Duke Endowment awarded the Community Health Programs at Pitt County Memorial Hospital first year funding of $523,384 to develop a model case management program for overweight children over a three year period. The Pediatric Healthy Weight Case Management Program, directed by Catherine Dew Nelson and Jim Cox, will provide case management services for overweight children who have serious health complications due to their weight. The program will ensure overweight children receive coordinated health care, so they can lead longer, healthier lives. The program will also develop local standards for screening and management of overweight children. Area health providers will receive training on the standards to facilitate early identification and treatment for at-risk and overweight children. A social marketing campaign to increase awareness of childhood obesity is also planned.

The N.C. Health and Wellness Trust Fund awarded Pitt County Schools $449,000 to address childhood obesity in the schools over the next three years. As one of the 20 school- and community-based FitTogether grantees, Pitt County Schools is implementing a variety of nutrition and physical activity programs county-wide. The school system will use grant funds to purchase equipment and supplies for physical activity and nutrition education within K-5 classrooms, provide training and incentives for staff, and supply materials for enhancing public awareness and gaining support from parents and the community.

Pitt County is a leader in implementing healthy food choices for students in the school cafeterias and vending machines. Due to its leadership, it has been selected as one of eight pilot counties to test the implementation of the recently released “Eat Smart: North Carolina’s Recommended Standards for All Foods Available in School.”

These initiatives demonstrate the commitment of local health care providers, school administrators and researchers to finding ways to prevent and reduce childhood obesity in eastern North Carolina. Because these projects are interrelated, it also demonstrates the power of collaboration, which has been fueled by Pitt Partners for Health, a local Healthy Carolinians Task Force that facilitates collaborative responses to compelling health problems.

Although even more efforts are needed to help our children lead healthier lives, these grants and programs are helping to build a brighter future for overweight children in Pitt County.

In Memoriam

Helen Arbutus Schadler, mother of Fred Schadler (College of Business) and mother-in-law of Linda Schadler (Medicine) died Sept. 25th.

Charles Jeffrey Korace, professor and founding director of Radiation Biology and Oncology, died Sept. 29 at the age of 63.

East Carolina University