

## InTouch: UNC Employee Forum News

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*From the Chair...*

### ***Losing a Friend***

**Ernie Patterson**

**Chair, Employee Forum**

We all—staff, students and faculty—lost a good friend last week. When I received an email that Eve Carson had been murdered, at first I could not bring myself to believe it. Eve was so full of life and always willing to help others. It was hard to imagine that such a vibrant and caring person could be struck down that way.

Eve and members of her administration were attentive to the concerns of staff employees. Under her leadership, her administration has supported the Forum as we have dealt with a variety of issues in the last year. Most recently, Eve worked to help the Employee Forum receive support from the UNC administration for the Carolina Literacy Initiative, which will provide educational services for our employees who need to improve their literacy skills.

I can think of no more fitting tribute to Eve's life than for all of us to take a little time, look carefully at our individual lives, and see what we can do to become as willing to help others as she was.

Then, take the next step: Put your plan into action. Find at least one way to help your coworkers, your friends, others in the community—and go do it with the same outgoing and caring spirit about helping others that she showed.

A memorial service for Eve is planned for 4 p.m., Tuesday, March 18, in the Dean E. Smith Center, with doors opening at 3 p.m. I plan to attend, and I hope I will see all of you there, too.

*Staff Assembly Update*

### ***Boykin Says Article 16 "A Done Deal"***

Discussion of two different resolutions submitted in response to the 2008 Human Resources Task Force Report abruptly fell off the docket at the UNC Staff Assembly Executive Committee meeting held on February 28th.

On February 8th the UNC Board of Governors had formally approved the Report's recommendation to ask the NC State Legislature to amend the State Personnel Act by adding a sixteenth article to it. Article 16 would allow the University system to have its own semi-autonomous, "substantially equivalent" personnel system. In the process, control over key

aspects of most staff employees' working conditions would pass from the State to the University.

On the same day that the Board of Governors was giving its stamp of approval to this proposal, UNC Staff Assembly Chair J.C. Boykin submitted to the Assembly's Executive Committee a resolution endorsing the Report and its recommendations without qualification.

After careful consideration, on February 13th Staff Assembly Executive Committee member Chuck Brink, who had also served on the HR Task Force, submitted an alternative—and much more cautious—resolution. He submitted a revised version of it on February 24th.

The two resolutions from Boykin and from Brink were supposed to be discussed at the Assembly's Executive Committee meeting on February 28th. In view of the Chapel Hill Employee Forum's keen interest in the Report and its recommendations, Forum delegates were invited to sit in as observers.

These delegates report that instead of opening the floor for discussion of the Report and the two conflicting resolutions, Boykin abruptly cut off all dialogue. He declared that discussion was unnecessary because the passage of Article 16 was "a done deal." The UNC Board of Governors had already approved the Report, Boykin pointed out, and it was now in the hands of the legislative committee handling educational affairs.

In fact, Boykin said, there was no need for the entire Staff Assembly to "get bogged down on the HR topic" or to pass any resolutions on the subject, since five of its members had served on the Task Force.

"In effect," said one observer, "Boykin pretty much said that this ship has already sailed, it's all a done deal, and there's no need for any discussion or further input from staff."

At that point, according to observers, Brink requested that the Report and the resolutions be put on the agenda for the next full Staff Assembly meeting, which will be held in Asheville in May. Boykin was non-committal on this request but made a comment to the effect that the Staff Assembly needs to know that only certain people have "editorial rights."

The Staff Assembly is the year-old system-wide body of more than 60 staff employees whose goal is to "improve communications, understanding, and morale throughout the whole of our respective communities, and to increase efficiency and productivity in campus operations." According to the Assembly's by-laws, it seeks to do this, in part, by "fostering constant, open communication." Their website is <http://uncstaffassembly.northcarolina.edu/>.

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### ***Forum Explores 2008 HR Task Force Report Recommendations A Dialog with Ann Lemmon & Ardis Watkins***

On March 5, the Employee Forum hosted a dialog about the proposed changes to the State Personnel Act that have come out of the work of President Erskine Bowles' 2008 Human Resources Task Force. Two experts graciously agreed to provide information and answers for Forum delegates as they explored the explicit and implicit significance of the proposal.

The first expert was Ann Lemmon, the UNC system's Associate Vice President for Human Resources, who was a member of the Task Force's support staff. The second expert was Ardis Watkins, Director of the Legislative Affairs Division of the State Employees' Association of North Carolina (SEANC), who monitors all actions coming before the NC Legislature that might have an impact on State employees.

In one of the best Forum meetings ever, Lemmon and Watkins presented divergent views on what the existence of a semi-autonomous, "substantially equivalent" personnel system would mean for University staff employees.

**Because this information is so important for all employees,** the Forum is making a transcript of the dialog available

for download at <http://forum.unc.edu/documents/0308lemmonwatkins.htm>.

We encourage all of you to go to the site and take a quick look at some of the issues and answers that were presented that day.

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### ***What's Next?***

#### ***Time to Unpack the GPAC II Report***

In the February 2008 issue of the *InTouch* we told you that the second audit of the State Personnel System that was commissioned by the Government Performance Audit Committee (GPAC) had been completed, but officials were refusing to release it until it could be presented to the Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight Committee at a future meeting—which was then unscheduled.

That meeting was subsequently scheduled for February 20th, at which time the full text of the GPAC II Report, titled “Report on the State of Personnel Management and Career Banding in the State of North Carolina,” was posted to the Internet.

The Report can now be viewed and downloaded at <http://forum.unc.edu/documents/FinalReportGPAC.pdf>.

Interested readers with limited time to devote to reading the entire report might want to focus their attention on the Executive Summary (pages 4-18; also available at <http://forum.unc.edu/documents/ExecutiveSummaryGPAC.pdf>) and the table of proposed changes to NCGS 126--the legislation that governs state positions (pages 142-147).

The fate of the recommendations contained in the GPAC II Report is unclear, since the Report no longer has a group to champion it. The GPAC was a special, fixed-term committee whose commission expired at the end of 2007.

At the time this issue of the *InTouch* went to press, inquiries made to the Program Evaluation Division of the NC General Assembly, the current custodians of the Report, had failed to elicit a response. Similar inquiries to the offices of the co-chairs of the defunct committee (1) also failed to produce any information about the intended fate of GPAC II.

Given that the UNC Board of Governors is asking the Legislature for permission to set up a semi-autonomous personnel system, the information contained in the GPAC II Report about ways to improve and strengthen the existing State system could be vital for legislators to know before they are asked to make a decision that will largely remove tens of thousands of employees from direct State control.

The Forum hopes that the GPAC II Report will have a chance for a fair hearing before precipitous decisions are made in Raleigh. The People of the State of North Carolina, who paid for the Report, should really get their money's worth out of it.

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### **NOTES**

(1) Co-chairs of the Government Performance Audit Committee were: Sen. Daniel Clodfelter, Sen. Fletcher Hartsell, Jr., Rep. James Crawford, Jr., and Rep. Drew Saunders.

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### ***Higher Learning and Higher Profits: The Privatization of America's Research Universities***

[Ed. Note: The Forum is publicizing this event because the increasing corporatization of the University has and will continue to have a profound effect on working conditions for staff as well as faculty.]

"The question is, do we want our universities to focus on short-term, commercially viable research, or do we want them to continue doing research that is on the frontier that is going to lead to the next generation of technological breakthroughs?" — Jennifer Washburn

The North Carolina Conference of the American Association of University Professors is having its annual conference Friday, April 4 and Saturday, April 5 at University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. The UNC Chapter of the AAUP is co-sponsoring the event.

The conference kicks off with Jennifer Washburn's lecture at 7 p.m. Friday, April 4 at the FedEx Global Education Center on the UNC campus. The public is welcome to attend.

Washburn, a fellow at the New America Foundation, is the author of *University, Inc.: The Corporate Corruption of Higher Education* (Basic Books, 2005), which has received critical acclaim both inside and outside academia.

*University, Inc.*, explores the commercial transformation of American higher education over the last 25 years, and the effect this is having on disinterested research, education, and the free flow of public knowledge. She shows how market forces have taken over research universities, and how the interests of profit have harmed the public at large. Her research concretely demonstrates how the corporate influence on academic science has sacrificed a commitment to basic research.

Washburn's articles and opinion pieces have appeared in a range of publications, including *Discover*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Washington Post*, *The Nation*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Times*, *Mother Jones*, and the *Journal of Commerce*. In 2001, Washburn was the recipient of the National Association of Science Writers' Science-in-Society Journalism Award. Before joining New America, Washburn was a freelance journalist and a Fellow at the Open Society Institute.

The public is invited to a wine and hors d'oeuvre reception after her talk. It'll make the somber message go down much better.

But what is to be done?

We'll strategize in depth on that issue the next day. On Saturday, April 5, the NC-AAUP will be hosting a series of workshops at the Global FedEx building from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on corporate and foundation funding, on critical contingent faculty issues, and on the status of collective bargaining in North Carolina.

Faculty, academic professionals, and graduate students are most welcome to participate in the workshops, whether AAUP members or not. For more information on the workshop, go to <http://www.nc-aaup.org/>.

Directions to the FedEx Global Education Center:

[http://global.unc.edu/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=53&Itemid=60](http://global.unc.edu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=53&Itemid=60)

If you need a hotel, we have arranged a discount with the Hampton Inn:

<http://www.hamptoninn.com/en/hp/hotels/index.jhtml?ctyhocn=CPHEGHX>

The Hampton is just two miles from campus. Call, and mention you're with the NC-AAUP, and you'll receive a special room rate. 1740 Fordham Blvd. (15-501), Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA 27514 — 919-968-3000.

Bring your hotel room registration to the conference, and your registration to the conference will be free!

### ***Colorism Conference: Exploring Race, Skin Tone and Caste***

Does skin tone within one's race influence opportunities offered and success achieved in life?

That question and more will be explored in "Colorism, Caste, Class and Race," a free public conference March 28 at the Johnston Center for Undergraduate Excellence in Graham Memorial at UNC and March 31 at Duke University.

Sponsored by the UNC Institute of African-American Research and Duke's Research Network on Race and Ethnic Inequality, the symposium will feature authors and scholars from around the world.

Topics will include issues related to skin tone, caste, class, race and affirmative action in countries including India, Brazil and the United States.

"The relationship between skin shade preference and class distinction has been a well-known historical reality for many individuals in African-American communities," said Tomeiko Ashford-Carter, Ph.D., interim director of the Institute of African-American Research. "The unique component about this conference is that it will allow us to examine the legacy and varied formations of this issue in communities of color worldwide."

For the schedule, speakers, and registration, visit [www.unc.edu/iaar/](http://www.unc.edu/iaar/).

The event's keynote speaker, Dr. Juanita Merchant, a professor of internal medicine at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, will address the success of women and minorities in academia and the role of race and affirmative action.

The event marks the institute's 10th Annual International Scholars Conference.

The conference begins at 8:45 a.m. March 28 in the James M. Johnston Center for Undergraduate Excellence in the Graham Memorial Building, off East Franklin Street in Chapel Hill. On March 31, the program will move to Duke University's Rubenstein Hall, off Towerview Road in Durham.

**Web site:** <http://www.unc.edu/iaar/>

**UNC contact:** Tomeiko Ashford-Carter, (919) 962-6810, [tashford@email.unc.edu](mailto:tashford@email.unc.edu)

**Duke contact:** William "Sandy" Darity, (919) 613-7336, [william.darity@duke.edu](mailto:william.darity@duke.edu)

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### ***Free Tutoring for Staff Children***

Students come to UNC to take classes from teachers, not to get to know the support staff. So it is no wonder that the primary relationship fostered by the campus environment is the teacher-student bond.

That's why it is always pleasant to find students reaching out to staff anyway. And they do.

Student Worker Alliance for Tutoring (SWAT) is a student-run organization that provides free tutoring to UNC staff children in grades K-12. Their mission is to provide a way for Carolina students to give back to the UNC community through a tutoring service, while furthering a sense of solidarity between the staff and students.

If you have children who could use an academic boost, why not look into getting some help from some of North Carolina's brightest young adults—the students at UNC.

You can find out more about this service at the organization's website: <http://unchost.org/swat>.

Or you can contact Nikki Rumley, the Parent-Outreach coordinator, at (919)946-9760 or via email at [rum@email.unc.edu](mailto:rum@email.unc.edu), or Sarah Press, Chair, at [swat@email.unc.edu](mailto:swat@email.unc.edu).

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### ***In the Event of a Workplace Emergency...***

In mid-February, Chancellor James Moeser sent out an email to all faculty, students and staff at Carolina about the steps

the University is taking to communicate with everyone in the event of an emergency. His email focused on text message warnings and the University's new siren system, which will sound in a life-threatening situation.

However, text messaging is a 20-something phenomenon that is not as likely to be used by faculty and staff. Therefore, text messaging and sirens are not the only ways that the University community will be notified in the event of a workplace emergency.

Mike McFarland, Director of University Communications, has indicated that the University will use a combination of other means to share information, including:

- campus email and telephone voice mail
- the Adverse Weather and Emergency Phone Line, 843-1234, for recorded information
- postings on [alertcarolina.unc.edu](http://alertcarolina.unc.edu)
- the University Access Channel (Chapel Hill Time Warner Cable Channel 4)
- campus or local media

The advantage of focusing on text messaging as an early warning system, McFarland points out, is that it should be faster than sending out email messages, which can take up to two hours to be delivered campus-wide.

Similarly, although a voice mail message would be distributed quickly, it will not be obvious in a user's message queue until the user receives another call, which triggers the flashing message light on the telephone.

Because of the speed limitations of these other active notification modalities, McFarland encourages everyone to register their cell phone numbers with the University so that they can receive emergency alerts via text messaging.

McFarland reports that all staff, faculty and students will soon be receiving print materials covering some of this information. The University will be mailing a tri-fold brochure, an information poster and a reusable sticker to every single person on campus, as well as to parents of undergrads. These materials will have information on what to do in specific kinds of emergencies and where to call to give or get important information.

The posters, which will also be put up around campus, are available in a downloadable format right now on the Alert Carolina website at <http://alertcarolina.unc.edu/clients/1395/92874.pdf>.

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#### *Good Advice*

#### ***What to Do in Case of a Pandemic***

Most University employees come into contact every day with dozens of other employees and students. This means that in the event of a pandemic—a highly contagious illness that sweeps through the population—we will all be at risk for getting seriously ill.

The Centers for Disease Control estimates that a pandemic could make 25-30% of the entire U.S. population sick. Do you know what you'd need to do if you or someone in your family were one of those people?

The University has been making plans for how it would manage if a pandemic hit Chapel Hill—whether classes would be held, which offices would remain open, what parts of campus could be closed down with minimal operational impact, how critical functions (such as housing support of the student population, payroll services for employees, not to mention all health care related services) could be maintained as safely as possible....

University employees should have a similar plan for their households covering how to take care of sick family members, how to ensure a reliable short-term supply of food and water, and a list of what other supplies you might want to have on hand during a time when normal business activity could slow down to a crawl.

The Santa Clara Public Health Department has created a guide that can help you be more prepared. The *Home Care Guide: Providing Care at Home during Pandemic Flu* is available for free download at [http://www.pandemicpractices.org/files/187/187\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.pandemicpractices.org/files/187/187_handbook.pdf).

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*UNC Staff Making a Difference*

***Tom Arnel: Opening a Window onto the Soul of Carrboro & Chapel Hill***

During the week, Tom Arnel is a quiet man working behind the scenes at UNC's Davis Library to keep its extensive holdings cataloged and easy to find for the thousands of customers the library serves each year.

But on the weekends, Arnel gets a bit more talkative as the host of his own radio show, *The Placeholder*, which airs at 5 p.m. each Saturday on Carrboro's community radio station, WCOM (103.5 FM).

We sat down to talk with Tom about his work with radio.

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EF: Your website mentions that you first DJ'd at Appalachian State University's WASU 23 years ago. Back then you did a weekly jazz show. How did you get started?

TA: I was a broadcasting major at Appalachian. I've always been interested in the electronic media. I guess it's because I was a child of the TV age. So it was pretty natural for me to study broadcasting when I got to college.

EF: So how did you come to work at Davis Library?

Like a lot of students, I worked while I was in school—and I happened to work in the library. When I graduated, I kept on doing that for awhile. I had just about decided to go back to school and get a teaching certificate, when I got a job offer in catalog management at Chapel Hill. So I decided to take it and see what developed. Now here it is 22 years later, and I'm still at it!

EF: But you obviously didn't give up your interest in broadcasting.

TA: Not at all! I just turned it into a hobby that I dabble in. Nothing too serious. But it's led to some interesting opportunities.

For instance, several years ago I did utility work for Jefferson Pilot Teleproductions, which involved things like helping with the sound system for basketball games. As a result, I got to experience some really exciting ACC games up close. In fact, I was there for Dean Smith's last game at the Dean Center.

EF: So how did you come to be doing *The Placeholder Show* on a community radio station?

TA: A couple of years ago, when WCOM was in its infancy, I was offered the chance to help fill the airtime between two other shows. My little slot was a placeholder. Thinking that the show would only be temporary, that's what we decided to call it: *The Placeholder Show*.

But as time went on, the show became a staple of the station's programming, and my thing became to have guest DJs. So although the show is now permanent, the name still fits.

EF: When you were in college, your show focused on jazz. Is that still the case today? Are you still a jazz fan?

TA: Yes, I'm still a fan, but I've always had very broad musical tastes, and that's reflected in my show today. Each person has a musical niche. Mine is more eclectic and isn't limited to a specific style.

In fact, that's one of the reasons I like to invite guest DJs. They give listeners the chance to get different perspectives on

music and hear different kinds of music—not just what I like to play.

Also, by finding out what kinds of music different people like, you find out something about them as people. You get kind of a window into their soul. And that can be important to know, sometimes.

For instance, in the past, I've had candidates for the Carrboro Board of Aldermen as guests. And Judge Carl Fox and Sylvia Hatchell have guested.

EF: Judge Fox? How did you manage to get him to host the show?

TA: I knew him from my local gym and just asked.

EF: Can anyone do this? Or do you have a list of guest DJs that you're pursuing?

TA: I do have a short wish list. I've tried to get John Edwards to be on. I haven't been successful at that, yet. But in general, just about anyone can get their music on the air and host a show. Just ask me.

EF: For all those prospective guest DJs out there, tell us one more time about WCOM and The Placeholder Show.

TA: WCOM is what is known as a community radio station. This means that it's licensed to broadcast at a very low power—about 100 watts—so it covers a fairly small, community-sized area. In our case, our signal covers all of Carrboro about half of Chapel Hill. However, the show can be heard all over the world because it's also streamed live over the Internet. Just go to <http://www.communityradio.coop/Programs/placeholdershow.html>.

And if you're interested in sharing your music as a guest DJ, write me at [tarnel@email.unc.edu](mailto:tarnel@email.unc.edu) and we'll set you up in the studio.

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*Another Blast from the Past –  
Outsourcing in the Late 1990s*

In the late 1990's, General Administration conducted outsourcing studies throughout the University System. According to Chancellor Moeser and Leslie Winner, former Counsel for General Administration, the policies outlined in these memoranda were never officially adopted by the UNC System. The following are excerpts from selected memoranda of the period:

*1. From William O. McCoy, General Administration Vice-President Finance, memo of April 25, 1996, to Chief Finance Officers*

“In adopting the Study and forwarding it to the General Assembly, the Board of Governors has provided policy direction that the constituent institutions of the University should embark on formal reviews of areas which may save resources while providing equal or better quality through increased use of privatization.”

“Most of our institutions have as part of their continuing management used outsourcing as one tool with which to provide required levels of good or services at reduced costs.”

*2. From Richard Brown, ECU Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs, memo of May 16, 1996, to Henry Holmes, General Administration Assistant Vice-President Finance*

“One significant cost associated with outsourcing that is left out of the transition costs is the administrative expense the State of North Carolina will bear defending itself against a whole variety of legal, EEO, discrimination, workers' comp, and other civil charges by the employees who lose their jobs and are either not hired back by the contractor or hired back and later terminated.”



3. *From William O. McCoy, General Administration Vice-President Finance, memo of August 15, 1996, to Chief Finance Officers*

“Of course, it is prudent and good stewardship to consider all reasonable management initiatives to reduce costs, including work process re-engineering, innovation made possible by technology, organizational studies, analysis of programs and activities to find opportunities for reduction or elimination, as well as outsourcing.”

“It is clear that the Legislature expects the University to proceed with outsourcing opportunities. Perhaps more importantly, it is vital that we manage the University as efficiently as possible in order to be able to deploy and re-deploy resources as much as possible to high priority educational programs.”

“As good stewards, we need to minimize the need for tax dollars, and ensure that each is spent wisely and to maximum effect.”

“...if a service is outsourced, the incumbent employees should be offered a right of first refusal of the job with the new company.”

“...we should ensure that compensation packages including benefits for the outsourced work are comparable with others in the same geographical area for the same work.”

4. *From William O. McCoy, General Administration Vice-President Finance, memo of March 13, 1997, to Chief Finance Officers*

“The above consideration has resulted in extensive thought being devoted to a system-wide policy which embraces all of the following concepts:”

“Individual employees will not be covered [sic] to employment by a private contractor with a significantly reduced health care and benefits package unless that decision is one of their own choosing.”

5. *From Henry Holmes, General Administration Assistant Vice-President Finance, memo of October, 28, 1997, to Bruce Runberg, AVC Facilities Services*

“...please understand that our role is to provide policy and procedural guidance. The specifics that you wish to employ concerning the term of continuing employment, benefits, and pay for existing state employees who are retained by an outsourcing contractor should be in agreement with the stated policy which is intended to not disenfranchise state employees by virtue of outsourcing.”

***Odd Testimony in the Dental School Outsourcing Trial...?***

From testimony in the dental lab technicians' lawsuit against the Dental School. Mr. Robert Foy, Associate Dean for Financial Affairs, was questioned by Elizabeth Haddix, attorney for Jacqueline Maynard and Sharon House:

Q. Were your specific duties on the committee you've referred to also to provide the costs associated with both in-house and outside lab expenses?

A. No, not outside.

Q. Were you ever asked to look at the costs of outside lab work?

A. No. The committee discussed the average outside cost per unit.

Q. Tell me about those discussions.

A. Just an amount was mentioned kind of what the departments had experienced in using outside labs and then how a more competitive rate could be negotiated through volume discounting.

Q. But no more competitive rate has been negotiated, has it?

A. No. Actually I believe we were asked not to.

Q. Can you explain your answer?

A. I think the University requested we not do that.

Q. That you not try to get a better rate from a private lab?

A. Right.

Q. Do you know why?

A. No. I mean that's my recollection. You may check with somebody else, but that's what I've heard.

(From Volume I, 12/4/07, p. 199, lines 1 to 24.)

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*Survey Says...*

### ***Why We Work Here***

Expensive research done by fancy consulting firms has come out with the recommendation that (among other things) the University should have as independent an HR system as possible so that it can attract, retain and reward "a high performing workforce committed to the success of the University" (Note 1).

Well, the Forum has good news! According to our cheap and informal poll, many current employees are already rather passionate about their love for UNC and their commitment to its success.

Last month, the Forum asked readers to tell us why they chose to work at Carolina—and why they stay here. The pre-defined options that respondents could select focused on personal benefits (pay, career opportunities, commute times, etc.) or interpersonal reasons (family members work here, desire to work for a particular boss, etc.).

There was also space for readers to list other reasons. What struck us immediately, upon reading these open-ended answers, was how many people said they were attracted to the University because of its reputation, because of a love for Carolina, and because they wanted to be a part of what Carolina does.

"I am completely in love with the Carolina community," wrote one reader, "and I feel that I can make a positive impact through my job."

"I love the University and support it," said another. "It certainly is to me 'THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PEOPLE,' and I am thankful to be a part of this great institution."

"My interest, passion, and career is public health service," said a third respondent. "This is the best place to be for that kind of work—the work I do extends to every county and local health department in North Carolina, and I find that very rewarding and exciting."

One reader probably said it best when they wrote simply, "We make a difference through research to improve the lives of others."

What is just as remarkable, when you read through the open-ended responses, is the number of times that readers cited their co-workers as an important reason they remain working here.

“I love the people with whom I work and the atmosphere in my office,” wrote one.

“The people I work with every day – they make a real difference,” wrote another employee. “When I am tempted to work in other environments that pay more than twice what I make, I think of the people I work with and the people I work for across this state and it keeps me coming back.”

In general, here’s what more than 200 of you (Note 2) said in response to survey questions:

#### How long have you worked at Carolina?

About a quarter of Carolina’s staff workforce (26.4%, according to this survey) are “youngsters”—people who have worked for Carolina for 5 years or less. Of those, a bit more than one-third (38.6%) have been here for less than 2 years.

#### **Length of Service at UNC-Chapel Hill**

	<b>All Staff</b>	<b>SPA only</b>	<b>EPA-NF only</b>
Less than 2 yrs.	10.2%	9.8%	8.3%
2-5 yrs.	16.2%	15.0%	29.2%
5-10 yrs.	22.2%	24.3%	8.3%
11-20 yrs.	34.4%	35.3%	29.2%
21-30 yrs.	12.5%	12.8%	12.5%
30+ yrs.	4.6%	2.9%	12.5%

A little more than 1/3 of our respondents (34.4%) said they have been working at Carolina for 11 to 20 years, while 12.5% have been working here for 21 to 30 years, and a few—4.6%—for more than 30 years.

In this as in other questions on the survey, there are differences between SPA (subject to the State Personnel Act) and EPA-NF (exempt non-faculty, or at-will) employees that reflect the different position management philosophies embodied in the two classifications.

While not quite a quarter (24.8%) of SPA employees have worked here for 5 years or less, this is the case for more than a third (37.5%) of EPA-NF employees.

Interestingly, there are relatively few EPA-NF respondents who have worked at Carolina for between 5 and 10 years—only 8.3%. Since there was a hiring bump in EPA-NF positions within this time frame (Note 3), one would expect more of a bump in the longevity figures for this group as well...unless, since folks in this classification are at-will employees, the hiring bump was followed within a few years by a lay-off slump.

It appears that if an at-will employee can hold onto his or her job past the 10-year mark, however, their chances for remaining employed at Carolina improve. EPA-NF employees with between 11 and 20 years of service at the University constitute 29.2% of all employees in this classification—more nearly comparable to the levels of SPA employees, among whom 35.3% have similar longevity.

#### What drew you to want to work here?

As noted above, a number of employees said that they had been motivated to work here by a strong love for Carolina and an interest in being a part of something great. That said, more mundane considerations also play an important role in motivating people to seek employment at UNC.

The number one reason for working at Carolina that was reported by all respondents was job security as a State employee (54.6%). Next most important were finding a job that matched the respondent’s interests and skills (44.0%), health benefits (41.1%), closeness of UNC to the respondent’s residence at the time (37.2%), and retirement benefits (36.2%).

When responses are broken down into SPA and EPA-NF groups, the motivational picture

#### **What motivated you to want to work here?**

**All Staff    SPA only    EPA-NF only**

1	Job security	Job security	Skills & interests
2	Skills & interests	Health benefits	Other factors
3	Health benefits	Skills & interests	Close to home
		Retirement	Education & research as “products”
4	Close to home Retirement benefits	Close to home	Job security Pay Carolina alum
5	benefits		

that emerges is rather different. For SPA employees, job security remained #1 (59.3%), followed by health benefits (44.8%), finding a job that matched interests and skills (41.3%), retirement benefits (39.5%), and closeness of UNC to the respondent’s residence (38.4%).

At-will employees, having no job security, naturally were motivated by other considerations. Primary among them was finding a job that matched their interests and skills (66.7%), unspecified “other factors” (50.0%), closeness of UNC to home (33.3%), working where education and research are the “products” (25.0%), and, in a three-way tie for fifth most important, job security, pay, and having gone to school at Carolina and wanting to stay to work here (20.8%).

Pay has been strongly emphasized as a motivating factor in attracting the best employees by both President Erskine Bowles’ HR Task Force Report and the recently completed GPAC II Report. It is therefore somewhat surprising to realize that SPA employees were not primarily attracted to the University for that reason, although other compensation-related issues (namely health benefits and retirement) were cited as important motivators. For EPA-NF employees the sole compensation-related attraction tied for 5th in importance (a surprisingly low ranking), while retirement and health benefits did not even make the top five (or even, in this case, the top seven!) reasons.

When forced to choose a single reason for having wanted to work at Carolina, only two factors rose to the top. For all respondents combined, finding a good match between the individuals’ interests/skills and the job was paramount, with job security running a very close second. For SPA staff alone, job security as a State employee edged out interests and skills—but only by a few percentage points, while for at-will employees the match between interests and skills remained on top and no other factor came even close.

#### What keeps you working at Carolina?

It is one thing to come...and another thing to stay. Readers were asked to explain why they continued to work at UNC, and once again job security ranked as the primary reason (50.2%), followed by retirement benefits (46.9%), health benefits (41.4%), the closeness of UNC to a respondent’s home (37.2%) and the fit between the job and one’s interests and skills (34.8%).

What keeps you working here?			
	All Staff	SPA only	EPA-NF only
1	Job security Retirement	Job security Retirement	Skills & interests
2	benefits	benefits	Close to home
3	Health benefits	Health benefits	Pay
4	Close to home	Close to home	Health benefits
		Invested so much	
5	Skills & interests	time already	Retirement benefits Working conditions

Considered as distinct groups, both SPA and at-will staff mentioned health benefits, retirement benefits, and closeness to home as among their five most important reasons for continuing to work at Carolina. For SPA staff, the other two in that top five were job security—coming in at first place—and the fact that they have already invested so much time as career employees in State service (in fifth place).

At-will employees, on the other hand, cited the fit between their jobs and their skills and interests as the number one reason for staying. Although they also valued the retirement benefits they get from working at Carolina, in their ranking retirement tied for fifth place with an appreciation for over-all working conditions, whereas for SPA employees retirement benefits ranked second. And unlike SPA employees, for whom pay was not among the top five reasons, for EPA-NF employees pay was the third most important factor keeping them on the job.

When asked to choose the single most important reason they remain, SPA employees indicated that the time they had already invested in being career employees was the strongest single motivator, while for EPA-NF employees, it was the fit between skills/interests and their jobs.

Do you think you will leave Carolina before you retire?

**Do you think you'll leave before you retire?**

	All		EPA-NF
	Staff	SPA only	only
No, I don't plan to	51.9%	50.9%	54.2%
Yes, I definitely plan to	11.1%	11.0%	12.5%
I might...it just depends	37.0%	38.2%	33.3%

For all the differences between career and at-will staff employees in terms of why they came to work at UNC and why they remain here, there was surprisingly little difference between the two groups in terms of how many think they might leave.

Around half of all SPA and slightly more than half of all EPA-NF employees said that they had no plans to leave their jobs before they retire. Slightly more than 10% of each group have definite plans to leave before retirement, and while one-third of all at-will employees say it's possible that they'll leave early, a slightly greater fraction of career employees say the same thing.

Interestingly, while EPA-NF employees tended to cite reasons for leaving that focused on career development issues, the reason cited most often by SPA employees was pay. "I need more money," said one respondent.

Others mentioned the coming rigidities attendant on the adoption of the new timekeeping system, the eroding value of employment benefits combined with the rising cost of commuting, and the prospect of a new human resources system that is likely to continue the trend toward creating more at-will positions at the expense of protected career-status positions as factors that could lead them to throw in the towel.

But for most readers, the thing they saw as most likely to cause them to leave before they reached retirement was pay. Although they didn't come to Carolina for it and have not stayed so far because of it, pay could be what drives them away. It is, for some, a difficult balancing act.

"I feel underpaid and underappreciated in my department," said one respondent, "and if I were at any other school, I would have left years ago. It is my love and loyalty for Carolina that is keeping me here for now."

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**NOTES:**

- (1) 2008 HR Task Force Report, p, 3.
- (2) N = 216, consisting of 84.1% SPA, 11.6% EPA-NF, and 4.3% faculty and others. 70.5% were female, and 29.5% male.
- (3)

	Total Employees		%Change from 1995 level		%Change from previous year	
	EPA	EPA-NF	EPA	EPA-NF	EPA	EPA-NF
1995	5,519	618	0.00%	0.00%	0%	0.00%
1996	5,236	653	-5.13%	0.11%	-5.13%	0.11%
1997	5,581	674	1.23%	4.81%	6.10%	3.22%
1998	5,780	725	4.91%	11.87%	3.63%	7.53%
1999	5,996	784	8.61%	20.92%	3.56%	8.11%
2000	5,274	963	1.00%	53.24%	-7.04%	28.66%
2001	5,782	1,034	4.17%	59.51%	3.73%	4.13%
2002	5,915	1,157	7.18%	78.55%	2.30%	11.90%
2003	5,947	1,227	7.18%	89.35%	0.54%	6.02%
2004	6,005	1,314	8.81%	102.78%	0.98%	7.02%
2005	6,005	1,374	8.81%	112.04%	0.00%	4.57%
2006	6,104	1,501	10.65%	131.64%	1.65%	9.24%

Data from the Office of State Personnel & UNC-Chapel Hill Human Resources.

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#### *A Powerful Legacy*

#### ***The 2004 Chancellor's Task Force for a Better Workplace***

A changing of the guard always prompts a review of what has happened during the last watch. The announcement of Chancellor James Moeser's retirement has been no exception. When the Carolina community learned about his planned departure, the news was greeted by a series of encomiums, most lauding his ability to make UNC an attractive object of wealthy philanthropists' (and corporations') charitable attentions.

Another of Chancellor Moeser's notable achievements—perhaps more easily overlooked because it fell in the shadows cast by the blinding light of those great big dollar signs—was the 2003 creation of the Task Force for a Better Workplace.

Unlike some task forces that have focused on the institution and viewed staff as a resource to be handled, the charge of *this* Task Force was to focus on the people who work here and to make recommendations about actions Moeser could take to make working at UNC a more positive experience for them. It was an innovative and exciting effort to take staff employees seriously as an important part of what makes UNC great.

In 2004 the Chancellor's Task Force submitted its Report, which contained 34 concrete suggestions divided into short-range, medium-range and long-range priorities. Proposals for how to implement each one of those recommendations were due by May 2004 at the latest.

So what has become of those proposals? Some were realized almost immediately, others took a bit more time, and a few are still waiting to see the light of day—usually for very good reasons such as legislative inaction.

Just as the Chancellor's fundraising legacy would be tarnished if the donors he courted wound up defaulting on their pledges, so his staff relations legacy would be diminished if the important work begun with the 2003 Task Force were not carried forward.

As Chancellor Moeser winds up his leadership of Carolina and a new chancellor prepares to take his place, the Forum hopes that this very positive effort that held so much promise—and that has delivered so well on its promise—will not be forgotten. A formal Better Workplace Task Force review of the ensuing accomplishments (which are many) and the remaining gaps (only a few) would help to cement legacy of Chancellor James Moeser in fostering positive staff relations.

#### *Employee Forum Delegates*

#### ***A Vital Role: To Enlighten and Inform***

Do you know someone who's really engaged with their community?

Or someone who's always got an opinion about things that are happening on campus?

Or someone who is among the first to step up to help someone in your department?

**These are the kinds of people we need to serve on the Employee Forum next year.** If you—or someone you know—might be interested in helping your fellow staff employees, the time for nominations for this singular service to Carolina is NOW!

The Forum empowers staff workers at UNC-Chapel Hill by being a voice and an advocate for staff concerns. And what

we do, makes a difference:

"The Employee Forum fills a vital role for all staff and, indeed, for the University as a whole. As chancellor, I have found that the Forum enlightens and informs me, and through it I hear the collective voices of Carolina staff. That's why employee participation in the Forum is so important." -- Chancellor James Moeser

Most of the Forum's work is done in the context of several different sub-committees that do everything from overseeing the use of staff education benefits to monitoring matters of staff concern before the NC Legislature to making recommendations about improved ways to handle staff relations issues. (Ahem! And one committee handles communications—like this newsletter!)

Then, once a month, all Forum delegates meet together to share the fruits of their labors, debate ideas and policies, and formulate plans of action.

Contact us for more information or to make a nomination at:

- [forum\\_office@unc.edu](mailto:forum_office@unc.edu); or on the web at <http://forum.unc.edu>
- Employee Forum, CB# 3488, UNC-CH Campus
- 962-3779.

We look forward to serving with you!

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#### *For SPA-Exempt Employees*

#### ***Leave Reporting and Flexible Work Schedules under the New TIM System***

The Forum was recently contacted by SPA-Exempt employees concerned about flexible work schedules and leave reporting changes under the new TIM time tracking system that is being rolled out across the University. They had been informed by an upper-level manager that flexible work arrangements that used to be available for them would no longer be possible because of the requirements of the new time reporting system.

We contacted Kim Curtis, Project Manager for the implementation of the TIM system, to find out whether this is true. Will the TIM system impact not just the way staff time is reported, but even the way it can be worked? For example, because of the TIM system will SPA-Exempt employees have to take 2 hours of personal leave time if they leave early one day, even if they work 2 hours over their regular schedule on another day in the same week?

In short, the answer is no. Here is what Curtis said:

SPA-Exempt employees are defaulted to Standard Hours in the bi-weekly pay period. They don't have to record time via any means—time clock, timecard etc. They only need to enter leave hours used during the pay period. Since they are not eligible for Fair Labor Standards Act overtime, there is nothing in TIM that would be affected if they worked 2 hours over today and left 2 hours early tomorrow. TIM Administrators will audit SPA-Exempt employees to ensure they report the appropriate total number of hours worked or leave hours taken per work week.

So there is nothing in TIM that would prevent the employee from working a flexible schedule. The only rule that I know of is that all of this must be done in the same work period, which in my understanding has always been the case.

Of course, as usual, all flexible work arrangements must be approved by one's supervisor ahead of time whenever possible.

Curtis referred interested employees to the SPA Policy Manual for further clarification. The following link discusses timekeeping rules for SPA-Exempt employees—though the link may become inaccurate due to an impending Office of Human Resources restructuring: <http://hr.unc.edu/Data/SPA/paysystems/wage-hour/ot-exempt>

If the link does not work, refer instead to the Office of Human Resources website at <http://hr.unc.edu> and use the search engine (or the A to Z Index) to find “over-time exempt.” Another relevant search term is “flexible work schedules.”

Employees with further questions about flexible work hours can contact the Office of Human Resources at 843-2300.

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### ***Do You Get Your Mail?***

The Employee Forum has become aware that for a couple of years some employees at Carolina have not been getting some of the mass (paper) mailings that are sent out from time to time. Are you one of them?

The Forum has noticed a problem with the delivery of its delegate nomination forms and ballots. Investigation has led us to realize that some people don't get hot memos, but do get the *University Gazette*. Others may not get the *Gazette*, but do get hot memos. Some may not get either one.

If mass mail delivery problems seem to be happening to you or to anyone you know, please have them get in touch with Brenda Denzler—preferably via email at [denzler@email.unc.edu](mailto:denzler@email.unc.edu), but alternatively by phone at 966-8183—and give us your name and campus contact info.

We are working with Information Technology Services to try to figure out who has been affected by this problem and get it corrected. Thanks for your help!

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### ***New for 2009***

#### ***Floating Holiday to Replace Spring Break?***

When the Academic Calendar committee met during the first week of March, attendees were surprised to learn that a plan is on the table to eliminate the spring holiday for staff employees starting in 2009. Instead, the proposed plan is to give employees a “floating” holiday.

For some, this change could be a good thing. It will give them the ability to customize one paid holiday to suit their own needs. For others, it could be a problem, particularly if the new, more flexible schedule creates a demand for departmental services that would otherwise be absent, thus requiring staffing to cover the demand.

Spokespersons for the Office of Human Resources have said that this is only in the proposal stage and that staff input will be sought before any final decisions are made.

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### **Editorial Opinion**

#### **UNC Tomorrow Commission Report: Visionary or Status Quo?**

##### **Part 2: Urbanization**

by Steve Hutton, Epidemiology

Part 1 focused on K-12 and community college education.



<http://forum.unc.edu/InTouch/InTouch9-1.htm#fourteen>

From Part 1: *“To suggest that the solution to these major social problems depends on the University acquiring “management flexibility” via changes to the State Personnel Act is humorous, at the very least...Sometimes large social problems just happen, but often, particularly when they are persistent, some group is benefiting from their existence. Problems can’t be solved unless their source is understood, the solution is the correct one, sufficient resources are brought to bear, and opposition can be overcome. Most of the time, solutions won’t be implemented unless the elite of society agree to the solution.”*

One cold morning two years ago, while walking up Airport Road on my way to work, I was met by a young couple. They appeared to be about twenty years old. She was pregnant, seven months at least, and they held hands. They stopped me to ask a question. At first I didn’t understand because of his accent, which I took to be from the rural foothills or mountains of North Carolina. Then he clarified that they had just gotten off the bus and were looking for Tar Heel Temps.

Urbanization can be like a black hole, sucking lives and the life out of rural areas into the cities. Many of the social problems identified in the *UNC Tomorrow Commission Report* (1) have to do with the consequences of urbanization.

How are North Carolina’s rural areas doing?

- “Twenty-three counties [of 100] in North Carolina have poverty rates over 18 percent. All of these counties are rural, and 19 of them are located in the Coastal Plain region. Of the 23 counties that currently have poverty rates over 18 percent, 20 have persistent poverty. The rates in these counties have been above 18 percent since the U.S. started collecting data on poverty in 1960.” (2)
- “In North Carolina, as in the rest of the nation, individuals are more likely to be uninsured if they live in rural areas. The Sheps Center for Health Services Research estimates that in 2001 there were 693,649 uninsured people under 65 in rural North Carolina, compared to 581,501 in urban areas. In 34 rural counties, at least 20 percent of the population under age 65 was uninsured.” (3)
- 17% of rural residents are eligible for Medicaid, whereas less than 13% of urban residents are. (4)
- “The geographic availability of physicians and the distance to hospitals pose unique problems for North Carolina’s rural residents. Almost half of the state’s population lives in a county with just one hospital (60 counties) and there are 16 North Carolina counties without any hospital. Lack of access to obstetrical and pediatric care in rural areas is also a growing problem. According to the North Carolina Health Professions Data System, approximately one-quarter of North Carolina counties did not have a single gynecologist or obstetrician and 20 percent of counties did not have a pediatrician practicing in their county in 2005. (5)
- “In eastern North Carolina, four counties do not have a practicing dentist, and 28 counties have two or fewer.” (6)
- Use of illegal drugs is often accompanied by increases in sexually transmitted diseases. “Cocaine was first popular in North Carolina in large cities but then moved in rural communities. The rural counties most affected were along interstate highway 95 that connects Miami and New York.” (7)

- During a period of epidemic syphilis in the 1990s, the rate in rural or ‘nonmetropolitan’ counties surpassed that of metropolitan counties. (8)

The legislature and other North Carolina elites tend to look at rural problems as “development” problems. For development to occur, they believe, an area must have adequate infrastructure: highways, water, natural gas, electricity, internet, and a workforce educated to a level that meets the needs of businesses. They recognize that traditional manufacturing is waning and that a more highly educated workforce is needed to meet the needs of biotech research and manufacturing in which they have chosen to invest heavily, both monetarily and as a strategic public program. But as detailed in Part 1 of this series, they have resisted educational improvements in rural areas, a requisite step toward biotech training offered by higher educational institutions.

Many of the legislature’s development initiatives have not been successful. The Global TransPark in Kinston has been a boondoggle since first authorized by the legislature.(9) The *William S. Lee Act* was intended to provide greater incentives for new businesses locating in counties that are more economically distressed. (It’s been replaced by *Article 3J Tax Credits*.) Counties were categorized into five tiers (now just three), with Tier 1 being the most economically distressed. According to one report: “Since 1996, only 8.9 percent of Lee Act credits have been claimed by businesses in Tier 1 counties, while 60.6 percent have been claimed by businesses in Tier 5 counties. While less blatant in its favoritism to businesses located in prosperous counties, the One North Carolina Fund has also granted the largest percentage across tiers, 31.1 percent, to Tier 5 counties, while Tier 1 counties have received 13.1 percent of funds.” (10)

Rural life is often romanticized to its former period of small family-owned farms. The transition of the last 50 years has gone unnoticed by many urban dwellers. “From 1950 to 1990 in [just one rural NC county,] the number of farms decreased from 4,000 to 666, 17% of the number in 1950. The number of black farm owners or managers decreased from 1,310 to 73, 6% of the number in 1950. Most of the black former agricultural workers migrated to the central town of the respective county. There they encountered segregationist housing policies that relegated them to neighborhoods lacking the amenities of the white neighborhoods such as plumbing and waste collection.” (7)

As corporate farming, including industrial hog operations, succeeded family-owned farms, farm profits, which used to benefit the local population and economy, have been pocketed by a few local owners and managers and a large number of absentee investors. Air and water pollution from these and other industrial operations as well as runoff from upstream urban areas have diminished the environmental quality of rural life.

Rural populations have usually had less political influence due to low population density, a higher proportion of minorities, and a system of segregated delivery of public services and politics. However, this may be changing as the recent defeat of the OLF (Outlying Landing Field) near Little Washington demonstrates. In that case, the white populace drew upon the civil rights expertise of African-Americans to wage a joint campaign.

NAFTA also impacted many rural counties, where smaller manufacturers of textiles, furniture, and other products were located near county seats. Despite warnings from labor unions, NC voters returned to office Congressmen who became the key swing votes for NAFTA and a subsequent extension of presidential authority. In the end, these Congressmen sided with business owners rather than the vast majority of their constituents. The owners profited by moving operations to Mexico, leaving behind thousands of jobless North Carolinians. Ironically, this economic devastation expanded the area for targeted economic development under the legislature’s failed business incentives model.

On the positive side, state government agencies and universities have numerous programs intended to assist rural areas. Among these are the NC Area Health Education Centers, the NC Rural Economic Development Center, the NC Rural Health Research and Policy Analysis Program, the Department of Commerce’s 21st Century Communities Program, and the NC Cooperative Extension Offices, and selected projects of the Golden Leaf Foundation. But like fish swimming against the tide, these efforts are often poised against the current of broader governmental policies operating in precisely the opposite direction—policies governing education, health, housing, agriculture, land use, and the environment.

Society's elite benefit from the status quo of the current policies and are reluctant to change them, regardless of the harm to others. They must consider abandoning the current model of development through business incentives and explore micro-finance and micro-development techniques that are working in the Third World.

The notion that management flexibility over university system staff can make a difference in this sphere is misguided. What will make a difference is convincing the political elite that rural communities have given generations of their children to the cities and now is the time for urban dwellers to provide a return on that precious investment.

(To be continued—the prison-industrial complex; faculty reward structure)

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**NOTES**

(1) University of North Carolina Tomorrow Commission: Final Report, 2008.

[http://www.nctomorrow.org/content.php/reports\\_documents/commission/Final\\_Report.pdf](http://www.nctomorrow.org/content.php/reports_documents/commission/Final_Report.pdf)

(2) North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center, Inc.

[http://www.ncruralcenter.org/databank/trendpage\\_Poverty.asp](http://www.ncruralcenter.org/databank/trendpage_Poverty.asp)

(3) *Health Insurance in North Carolina: Growing crisis puts small businesses, rural workers at risk, 2004.*

<http://www.ncruralcenter.org/pubs/healthcarefindings.pdf>

(4) King, Jennifer, et al. *State Profiles of Medicaid and SCHIP in Rural and Urban Areas: Final Report No. 91*, August 2007, p. 5.

[http://www.shepscenter.unc.edu/research\\_programs/rural\\_program/FR91.pdf](http://www.shepscenter.unc.edu/research_programs/rural_program/FR91.pdf)

(5) *Health Profile of North Carolinians: 2007 Update*

<http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/pdf/HealthProfile2007.pdf>

(6) "Editorial: A landmark - ECU should celebrate new dental school," *The Daily Reflector*, February 25, 2008.

(7) "Thomas JC. "From Slavery to Incarceration: Social Forces Affecting the Epidemiology of Sexually Transmitted Diseases in the Rural South." *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*, 2006, 33(7S):S6-S10.

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(8) Thomas JC, Kulik A, Weiner D. "Syphilis in the South: Rural rates surpass urban rates in North Carolina." *Am J Public Health*, 1995; 85:1119-1122.

(9) "Audit: Global TransPark Authority may go bankrupt," *Triangle Business Journal*, January 2, 2008.

<http://triangle.bizjournals.com/triangle/stories/2007/12/31/daily11.html>

(10) "Comparing Tiers: Why North Carolina's Distressed Counties Need the Lion's Share of Economic Development Dollars," NC Budget & Tax Center, May 2004.

[http://www.ncjustice.org/assets/library/17\\_taxbrief05043.pdf](http://www.ncjustice.org/assets/library/17_taxbrief05043.pdf)

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