

# THE BLUE BANNER



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## NEWS BRIEFS

Kristen Ruggeri

News Reporter

### UNCA

Campus police dispatcher Michael Gray, a UNCA alum, died Sept. 8. Freshman Russell Thomas died Sept. 15. Student Government Association held a remembrance ceremony for the second anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks and lit 1,000 candles on the quad.

### CAMPUS CRIME

UNCA campus police received four theft reports and recovered two stolen vehicles since Aug. 15. Officers found a 33-year-old, non-student parked in a campus lot with a female companion. Police found brass knuckles, a night stick and a loaded gun in the car. Officers arrested the man for possession of weapons on school property. Officers also arrested a student on Aug. 22 for possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia. Public Safety took one student to the county jail for drunk and disorderly conduct, underage consumption and obstruction of an officer.

### ASHEVILLE

Asheville city council approved an option-to-purchase agreement with the Grove Park Inn in a 6-1 vote Sept. 16. The plans propose development in Pack Square and City Plaza. The agreement would establish use and design parameters as well as the sale price of the area adjacent to College, Market and Spruce streets. Plans include construction of 15-story buildings consisting of residential units, offices, retail stores and parking decks.

### NORTH CAROLINA

Vice President Dick Cheney spoke at a fundraiser for Rep. Robin Hayes on Sept. 12 at the Charlotte Convention Center. Cheney urged North Carolinians to re-appoint Hayes to the U.S. House in the 2004 elections, saying Hayes recently stood up for North Carolina during manufacturing job losses.

### UNITED STATES

In a Sept. 10 speech at the FBI's training academy in Quantico, Va., President George W. Bush urged Congress to further expand police powers by adding death as a penalty for more crimes and making it easier for agents to seize records. "Congress should give law enforcement officials the same tools they have to fight terror that they have to fight other crime," said Bush, according to Newsday.com.

## UNCA names new director of Africana studies

Suzanne Aubel

News Reporter

Afaf Omer has been named the new Africana studies program director for UNCA.

"She's imminently qualified in terms of her credentials," said John Wood, assistant professor of sociology and interim director of the program. "She's done work in Sudan. She's done work with African-American women. She is familiar with the field of Africana studies."

Wood was a member of the search committee that sought a replacement for the program's previous director, Omer's husband Elmoiz

Abunura.

"There was a commitment on the part of the search committee to find people who were knowledgeable in both Africa and diaspora issues," said Wood. "The combination is rare. Afaf met that combination."

Wood will serve as the program's interim director for the year because Omer is currently working as a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Qatar. She will spend the academic year there teaching courses in women's reproductive health and women's studies in addition to conducting her own research, according to the UNCA Web site.

"I'm a place holder," said Wood. "What I'm responsible for is being

**"Africana studies is a discipline not simply on the continent, but to all the things that come out of Africa."**

John Wood  
assistant professor of sociology

a focal point so students who are interested in Africana studies have somebody to come to and ask about the program and ask how they can get involved in it. I'm also responsible for getting some activities going so that Africana studies has a

visible presence on campus and there are opportunities for people to get on board."

Omer, a native of Sudan, has worked at UNCA since 1995 and has both her master's degree and doctorate in sociology from the University of Michigan. She teaches courses at UNCA in population and environment, development, Middle Eastern studies, African studies and gender, and is considered an expert in the field of population studies, according to the UNCA Web site.

"From what I've heard, I know she has extensive experience in the Middle East and she has a strong background in women's rights,"

said Emily Carter, a senior Spanish major with a double minor in international studies and Africana studies.

The Africana studies program at UNCA falls under the interdisciplinary studies category, which also includes, among other things, women's studies, humanities and religious studies. It is available only as a minor, and requires 21 hours for completion.

"Africana studies is a discipline not simply on the continent and the culture and the issues related to the continent itself, but to all

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JAY ADKINS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The much anticipated Reuter Center, a \$4.3 million construction project, officially wrapped up June 6.

## Campus dedicates Reuter Center

Erin Bereit

News Reporter

UNCA held a dedication ceremony for the Reuter Center, which houses the North Carolina Center for Creative Retirement (NCCCR), Sept. 13. UNC-system President Molly Broad and UNCA Chancellor Jim Mullen spoke.

"The Reuter Center has given us a permanent home that we can count on," said Dr. Ron Manheimer, director of the NCCCR. "We now have adequate space to do all the different types of programs that we want to be able to do."

"A Home to Call Their Own" has been the program's theme since the NCCCR construction committee began planning the Reuter Center about five years ago, according to the UNCA construction Web site. "It took us five years to raise the

money and build the building," said Alice Walker, co-chair of the NCCCR fund-raising committee. "Our members donated a lot of money and we had wonderful grants from the Janirve Foundation."

Irving J. Reuter, whom the building is named for, left his estate to establish the foundation that contributed significant funds for the building.

Construction of the building began Feb. 8, 2002, after raising the funds. June 6, 2003 marked the completion date for the 19,000 square foot Reuter Center, according to the UNCA construction Web site.

Stephen Baxley, director of the construction committee, commended the members of the NCCCR for their ability to successfully raise the funds for the Reuter Center.

"I think the architects did a good

job of giving us an attractive building on the site," said Baxley. "I think the users should be applauded for being able to go out and raise the funds to do something like that." NCCCR members raised approximately \$4.3 million to construct the Reuter Center and are satisfied with what the building will provide for the program, according to Manheimer. "It's provided us with more social space for people to meet informally and meet other people," said Manheimer. "Before this, we had classrooms and that was it. There was no place to gather, no place to meet people."

The NCCCR's purpose is the promotion of learning, leadership and community service opportunities for retirement-aged individuals. There are approximately 1,100 lo-

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## Financial aid office alters scholarship policy on off-campus housing

Hilary McVicker

News Reporter

UNCA students have had issues with financial aid despite adequate communication.

Tasha Daniels, a senior with a double major in political science and sustainable development, relies on a Francine Delaney scholarship to cover tuition, room and board.

"My biggest problem is that no one said anything to me all summer, even though I had called," said Daniels. "Apparently, the tuition allotment wasn't enough, and they had been covering it from my room and board. They never told me this."

According to Daniels, she encountered several problems regardless of efforts to keep in regular communication with the financial aid office.

"All summer long, my account balance was zero," said Daniels.

On the Friday before classes began, Daniels called the financial aid office and they confirmed that a refund would be available for her the next week, according to Daniels.

"But then on Monday, they told me that not only would I not get my refund, I ended up owing \$400," said Daniels. "So I had to go through the hassle of wondering 'what am I going to do?' That was just incredibly stressful during the first week of school."

The statewide budget crisis has not touched the money available for financial aid, according to Beth Bartlett, UNCA's associate director of financial aid.



MICHAEL KING/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Beth Bartlett, associate director of financial aid, at work.

"We haven't lost anything. At this point in time, student funding is the last thing to be affected, said Bartlett.

UNCA awarded \$12.2 million in federal, state and other funds to students during the 2001-02 school year.

"The state education assistance authority works very hard to maintain those funds for North Carolina students," said Bartlett.

This semester, Daniels had the opportunity to live off campus. When she called the financial aid office, they told her that she would still receive money for her room

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## Academic affairs merges with student services

Erin Bereit

News Reporter

University staff reorganized career services, academics and service learning to form the UNCA Center for Career Development and Community Partnerships (CCD/CP).

"It gives us a certain amount of momentum to make some things happen that has been more difficult to make happen in the past," said

Keith Ray, director of the new CCD/CP. "One of those is to clear up lines of communication, continue building stronger partnerships with faculty and to continue to extend our reach out into the community."

UNCA made the move as part of a current trend in higher education and to accomplish more for students, faculty and the community.

The re-organized program hopes to serve as a central location for all

career and academic concerns. Faculty and community members may assist students seeking help with career or educational concerns.

The CCD/CP combines individual efforts of programs like the Key Center for Service Learning, the Career Center, Support Program, Pre-Med, Pre-Health Advising, and the new Alumni Mentoring to accomplish more.

In the past these programs functioned alone. Since coming together

as one single unit, members of the programs feel that they are capable of achieving even more with help from one another.

"What we do in the Key Center is so involved with the community," said Lloyd Weinberg, associate director of CCD/CP. "Working with other organizations that are also involved with the community, like the Career Center,

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JAY ADKINS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Career Center services include job appraisals and internship searches.