

No more waiting, stop hate crimes now



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Maybe the flower children of the '60s had a point with all their talk of peace

and love.

Recent events show we still have much to learn about these topics.

An 11-foot cross was stolen from a church in Arroyo Grande, Calif. sometime in late February. Weeks later, the cross appeared outside the home of a black family, only it was on fire.

The FBI was called in to investigate the case and it is being treated as a hate crime. Unfortunately, it's not an isolated incident.

Just last year, a cross was burned outside the home of a biracial family in Fletcher, N.C. The perpetrators were two juvenile boys.

According to the FBI's Hate Crime Statistics report, there were 71 reported hate crimes in North Carolina in 2009. Nine of those crimes occurred in Buncombe County.

The FBI defines hate crimes as any crime motivated by the offender's bias against a victim's race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin or disability.

Cross-burnings are only one example of hate crimes, one with a very serious history. The act of burning a cross dates back decades and is largely associated with the Ku Klux Klan. They burned the cross as a means of intimidation.

So, why is an act of hate that should have ended years ago still surfacing? Probably for the same reason any hate crime still occurs. People just cannot seem to look past labels or stereotypes.

It seems people are discriminated against for almost anything: race, sexual orientation, gender, religion. It's a never-ending list of reasons. Why hate someone simply based on his or her background, culture or skin color? What do we get out of hating someone for superficial reasons?

We get wars. We get violence. We get grief. We get fear. We get nothing.

Hate crimes and discrimination pass these twisted values to future generations who can pass it on to their future generations. It's a destructive chain without a clear ending.

Children are taught at a young age to share, to play nice, to say thank you and yes ma'am. Is it so hard to teach them to accept? Is it easier to teach them to hate so the chain continues?

We spend years fighting for peace in the Middle East. We offer aid and support to bring peace to Egypt and Libya and other countries under the tyranny of a dictator. When do we fight to bring peace here?

We could start by looking past stereotypes formed generations ago.

We could start by standing up against emblems of fear that should not even exist. We could start by spreading tolerance, not hate.

John Mayer sang, "We keep waiting on the world to change."

But why are we waiting?

Persistence needed to get summer job

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It's that time of the year again. The sun is shining, school is coming to

a close and students are scrambling to find a summer job.

Only this time may be more urgent than ever.

With the summer of 2010 ingrained in the minds of many high school and college students, the summer of 2011 appears to be just as bleak.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, only 48.9 percent of youth ages 16 to 24 were employed last summer, the lowest since 1948.

A year later, the economy does not appear to show any signs of improvement as budget cuts to government agencies across the country are expected to negatively impact the teen job market.

Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc., a Chicago consulting firm, predicts the number of summer jobs offered by the city of Chicago will decrease by 22 percent this year.

Obviously we can't use the city of Chicago as a representative for every city in the United States, but students should not assume that there will be plenty of

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Everett Shuford

UNCA junior, computer science

jobs available in Asheville.

While driving around the city last weekend, I noticed gas prices hovering around \$3.50 a gallon. Graphs from 2010 show this is 80 cents more than last summer.

So, if transportation costs are rising and public jobs receiving less funding, what hope is there for us this summer?

Luckily there is hope, but only for those who work the hardest to find a job.

The first step is to start early. Employers realize that and are beginning the process now to prepare for summer employment instead of putting it off until later.

Students need to keep up with employers and start seeking a job now and not when the summer begins.

Employers will want to hire the most aggressive and determined candidate out there.

While Challenger, Gray & Christmas reported teens are likely to conduct 90 percent of their job searching online, there will still be plenty of opportunities out there for companies that don't rely on Craigslist.

"As tough as the economy may be, students shouldn't use that as an excuse to not try harder to seek a job," said **Everett Shuford, a UNC Asheville junior and computer science student.**

Last summer, Shuford got a job at Wal-Mart, where he is still employed. He said he believes the best way to get a job this summer is to build a personal relationship with the employer.

The second step, as Shuford demonstrated, is to establish a relationship with the manager.

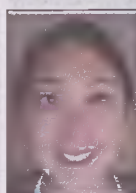
Dropping an application off with the cashier is the equivalent of sending it in an email.

If you ask to speak with the manager and physically hand him or her an application, he or she will have a face and a better understanding of you than what they will get from a cyber application.

"Employers will read tons of names on applications, but they will be a lot more likely to hire a face that goes along with it,"

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False rape convictions of Norfolk Four illuminate flaws in court system



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John Grisham is a liar.

The crime thriller author

said the screenplay he is writing about the Norfolk Four is not about profit or making money.

The case that inspired his screenplay will hopefully remind Americans about the persistent flaws in the criminal justice system.

The Norfolk Four were convicted of the 1997 rape and murder of 18-year-old Michelle Moore-Bosko.

The U.S. Navy veterans served up to 11 years in prison even though no DNA or physi-

cal evidence linked them to the crime.

America's justice system clearly warrants significant changes if false confessions can successfully serve as the only basis for conviction.

The Innocence Project, a nonprofit devoted to assisting wrongly convicted people and reforming the criminal justice system, reported that false con-

fessions or admissions contributed to 25 percent of wrongful convictions. Biological evidence is only involved in 5 to 10 percent of criminal cases in the United States, according to the organization.

The Norfolk Four, who received conditional pardons and were released from jail last September, said detectives threatened their well-being and

coerced them to obtain false confessions.

Sociologist and interrogation expert Richard Ofshe reported that Robert Glenn Ford, the chief investigator in the case, used psychologically coercive methods to obtain false confessions from the Norfolk Four.

To get the men to implicate

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