

Chancellor

From page 2

"Looking at that campus that was tucked away in this little corner of Massachusetts, students all across the state began to see it as their first choice," Grant said. "That felt really great, beginning to see support from the community, because those are things that sustain a place over a long period of time."

Grant said she received her doctorate in public affairs from Brandeis University in 2000. In 2002, she returned to her alma mater of MCLA as president during one of the college's integral periods of growth and improvement. She retained this position until accepting an offer as chancellor from UNCA, according to the press release.

"The educational opportunities I had there, similar to what I see students having here, really set me on a strong foundation and a pathway that said 'anything can really be possible,'" Grant said. "Don't ever underestimate what you can do or how you can imagine your own future. Don't ever let anybody set limits for you."

Grant was no stranger to UNCA, visiting several times through her work with the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges, of which UNCA is a leader institution with executive offices located on campus, Grant said.

"I was never thinking then that someday maybe I will be chancellor here," Grant said. "I was really admiring the work of this institution and the individuals who were part of it."

According to Chancellor Grant, her first semester as leader of the university was a learning experience filled with familiarizing herself with the community and understanding the geography of the state.

"I definitely feel like I have more of a foundation under me than when I arrived back in January," she said.

Grant said she hopes to strengthen the relationship between the school and the community during her time as chan-

cellor.

"One of the things that struck me so much is we are in this great city, and if you are downtown, sometimes you don't know there is a great university right up the street," Grant said.

Plans to meet with university officials, faculty, staff and students this school year are next on Grant's itinerary to create a master plan and strategy map for the next few years at the university.

"This is an institution with a strong foundation," Grant said. "The work we all have to do ahead of us is to build on that strong foundation and to make sure we are also understanding the change in landscape of higher education."

Although UNCA and the city of Asheville have welcomed Grant with open arms, she still misses her family, friends and the Red Sox the most.

"This may sound nutty, but I miss some of those really good, snowy days that you get in Massachusetts and in New England," Grant said.

Jim Canavan, Grants' husband, and their dog, Sweeney, accompanied her for the relocation. The couple lives on campus in the Brumit Pisgah House and celebrated their 28th wedding anniversary Sept. 12.

Sweeney is an Australian labradoodle mix bred for therapy and companion work, Grant said.

"He is very intuitive, gentle and is just a real sweet dog," Grant said. "He would like to think he rules the house. He's a pretty social guy and is good comic relief."

The chancellor said she has noticed an existing relationship between students, faculty and alumni at the university.

"It is very encouraging because that means we have a great foundation. In my short time here, I have seen our faculty, our staff and our students out there in the community in a number of different ways, from artists, theatre, music, to students doing volunteer work,



Photo by Timbi Shepherd - Editor-in-Chief

Banner Staff take a ride on the Amazing Cycle. #selfie

civic engagement, to our faculty doing work in the k-12 system or community organizations," Grant said. "That feels really empowering and feels like the right place for us to be going."

History student Liz Torres said she recognizes Chancellor Grant's frequent presence at campus events.

"She is always offering to come to different events and she is putting a real emphasis on diversifying campus as well as connecting us with the community and making it feel like a college town kind of atmosphere," Torres said.

Julian Gonzalez, UNCA theater student, said he admired Grant's involvement with students, characterized by her attempt Monday to break the record for biggest selfie.

"I think the way she did the selfie showed she is trying to be relatable to us as students," Gonzalez said.

Theater majors constructed the podium that will be used by Grant and fellow speakers at the installation ceremony Saturday,

according to Gonzalez. He will represent Everyday People Imitating Christ during the event.

The university is currently hosting a week-long celebration this week to commemorate the chancellor's installation on Saturday, coinciding with family weekend.

Feeling overwhelmed yet humbled by the recognition, Grant said this week is not solely about her, but more about the university coming together.

"I am sure it will be emotional, because this community has put a lot of energy into it and I deeply appreciate it," Grant said. "I am one part of it. The rest of the week is about this university, to be able to say this is who we are, this is where we've been, and this is where we're going."

The installation ceremony begins at 10 a.m. Saturday with Les Purce, president of The Evergreen State College, delivering the installation address, Luke Bukowski, director of communication and marketing and co-chair of the Installation

Logistics Committee said. A picnic on the quad will immediately follow.

"The choice of week was very intentional as it places the installation celebration within the context of both Founders Day and family weekend, both very important dates for UNC Asheville," Bukowski said. "The goal was to include a variety of events to really showcase the wonderful work of UNC Asheville's faculty, staff, students, and alumni and to celebrate this next chapter in the university's story."

Grant said she is happy overall with her life-altering decision, relocating her life 14 hours from Massachusetts to North Carolina.

"I feel more like a local because I no longer have to use my GPS all the time. I know where I am driving most days," Grant said. "This feels like a good place I can call home. Every corner you turn around, there's a really cool place to go and explore."