

## Early College: A day in the life

By Meredith Jones  
STAFF WRITER

From the perspective of high school underclassmen, the divide between the Early College at Guilford (ECG) and Guilford College seems nearly impenetrable.

I recall clearly the few conversations I had with college students before becoming an upperclassman and thus able to take courses at the college level.

The first occurred outside the Grill, during our 45-minute lunch period. Several of my friends were making the most of our scant time by slipping Mentos after Mentos into a bottle of Coke. An older girl slouched next to us, smoking a cigarette.

"So you guys are Early College, huh?" she asked.

I nodded, surprised at this newfound contact. My friends snickered as the soda began to fizz.

She looked me up and down. "So are you guys, like, geniuses?" she asked. Behind me, the Coke bottle exploded, showering both of us with tiny fizzing drops.

"No," I said.

We're not geniuses. At least, most of us aren't. We run the gamut of intelligence; in my time at Early College I've seen as many different definitions of "smart" as there are students. Back-row slackers display casual brilliance, physics naturals flunk their history assignments, and several of the ordinary stalwarts earn straight A's through sheer dedication rather than academic flair.

We vary wildly in appearance, too, but those who can pass for college students generally try their best to do so.

Some of us have a whole passel of college friends; others attempt to be as invisible as possible.

In the past, ECG students have dated college students, some without telling them, others with full disclosure. How far one sinks into the college life is a personal decision, colored by appearance, grades, maturity, and other factors.

This is a major concern for faculty. As a



Early college students attend class in one of the portables near Frank.

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seven-year-old experiment put in place by former superintendent Terry Grier, other school systems look to us for signs of trouble, gauging whether or not we are successful, well-adjusted guinea pigs.

So far, the experiment has turned out stellar results. For an input of enthusiastic, overachieving high school students, one receives ... enthusiastic, overachieving college students.

ECG has ranked both 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> on Newsweek Magazine's annual list of the top 100 high schools in the nation, and was 17<sup>th</sup> on U.S. News and World Report's "Best high schools of 2009." The 2007 graduating class garnered \$5,410,680 in scholarships and awards. A 100 percent graduation rate has been maintained since the inception of the school.

Most of the class offers statistics along these lines when asked. But much of the time, others want to know about the day-to-day experience of being an Early College student. Attempting to explain this is similar to trying to describe Mozart to the deaf.

For one thing, the ECG experience alters drastically over four years. Underclassmen remain in the modular classrooms located outside the Frank Family Science Center, taking four years of high school credit in a challenging two-year period.

Upperclassmen, however, receive dual lives along with our dual enrollment. Like Britney, not a girl, not yet a woman, we are often unsure how to classify ourselves.

"It depends on the day," said one Early College junior, who preferred to remain anonymous. "(In general) I feel more like a college student, because we have a lot more freedom than most high school students."

Out of all the ECG students I contacted, not a single one wanted their name printed. It says something about how sensitive identity becomes when it can determine how smoothly your academic career goes.

In the classroom, and often outside of it, most of us prefer anonymity.

"If they don't know I'm Early College, they do (treat me like a college student). When they first find out, they might start acting condescending," said the student.

I played the no-name game, too, for a while. Today, I'd rather not go through the whole song-and-dance.

It irritates me that so many find their views drastically changed once they discover that I'm a high school student, as though it is a personal affront that I've disrupted their neat categories.

I'd much rather your opinion of me be based on who I am, rather than who you believe me to be.

## Google map outs donors to Proposition 8

By Mary Bubar  
STAFF WRITER

A Google map is now at the center of a politically charged argument pitting Proposition 8 supporters against gay rights activists.

Prop 8 won by a narrow margin in November and eliminated the right for same-sex couples to marry in California.

Glide your mouse over the pinpoints on the map and you can find not only supporters who contributed more than \$100 to Prop 8, but also their addresses and employers.

Thanks to Google technology, you can use the satellite feature and zoom in on the layout of campaign donors' land and access the quickest route through their neighborhoods.

After combing this map, activists encouraged by gay rights Web sites have been harassing individuals who have donated to the Prop 8 campaign. Death threats, physical violence, vandalism and harassing phone calls have been reported.

A lawsuit advocated by the Pro-Prop 8

group Protect Marriage has been filed in a Sacramento Federal District court asking for a preliminary injunction of the state election law requiring folks that donate more than \$100 to reveal their personal information.

Though donor records have been in the public domain for years, this new application of technology makes it too easy for anyone with a grudge to seek and destroy those they do not agree with.

One victim of this vigilante justice came home to find his neighborhood littered with fliers advertising him as a bigot.

Another casualty of the list is Richard Raddon, who resigned as director of the Los Angeles Film Festival, which is sponsored by Film Independent, an organization whose explicit mission is to promote diversity in film.

Raddon is a member of the Mormon Church that actively campaigned for donations to pass Prop 8. His devotion to his church cost him his job.

Outrage over seemingly hypocritical CEO's like Raddon and outed donor Alan

Stock, head of Cinemark theatres, which promoted films like "Brokeback Mountain" and "Milk" is justifiable. What a terrible irony that executives who promote gay causes lead such ambivalent lives.

But violence is not the answer and when you intrude on someone else's rights, it does not make you or your cause virtuous.

While Raddon and Stock's organizations may deserve to be boycotted for their sizeable donations, individuals that back causes with smaller donations should not be included in the reign of terror.

"The cost of transparency cannot be discouragement of people's participation in the process," said James Bopp Jr., the lawyer who filed the lawsuit of behalf of Protect Marriage. "The highest value in the First Amendment is speech, and some amorphous idea about transparency cannot be used to subvert those rights."

Google provides the tool that enhances discouragement. Influencing people is one thing, but bullying them is unacceptable and against the law.

## A step toward universal healthcare?

By Jasmine Ashton  
STAFF WRITER

It's second semester senior year and I'm starting to feel the pang of a mild panic attack every time someone asks me, "What do you plan on doing after you graduate?"

What scares me even more than the fact that I'm honestly not really sure what I want to do after I graduate, is the fact that for the past 21 years I've always felt secure knowing that I can count on Dad's health insurance plan to protect me if I'm ever sick or injured.

That which has been a steady constant in my life, come May, will no longer be there to take care of me. So on top of figuring out what I'm doing with the rest of my life, I need to make plans that will provide me with health insurance.

Responding to the many young people like myself who are or will soon be without health insurance, New York Governor David A. Patterson will propose that private employers be required to offer health insurance for workers' dependents ages 19 to 29.

According to The New York Times, if passed this would expand healthcare coverage to 800,000 uninsured New Yorkers, 19-29. It would provide 31 percent of New York's uninsured, most of whom fall within this age bracket, to remain on their parents' insurance until they are able to find a job that offers healthcare benefits.

"I pay \$60 a month for an insurance plan with no dental, no eye care, and no co-pay," said '08 graduate Tyler Mobley, who currently works two jobs, neither of which pays for his healthcare. "My healthcare doesn't even kick in unless my medical costs are above \$2,700. Even then my insurance will only cover 80 percent."

People come to the US from other countries because the level of healthcare here is state-of-the-art—if they have the means to afford it. In a country with the best medical technology, hospitals, and physicians in the world, 46.6 million had no health insurance in 2005.

Many young adults go without health insurance due to cost and their relative good health. However, this group of uninsured also goes without primary care, creating the risk that developing health problems will go undetected.

The U.S. has become motivated by the interests of the insurance companies rather than the people; maybe it's time that we consider taking a hint from our democratic socialist neighbors and begin moving towards universal healthcare. Gov. Patterson's proposal would certainly be a step in the right direction.

"It's in that time, between 19 and 29, when young people begin to stabilize themselves financially," said Mobley. "So you either pay too much for a really crappy plan or pay nothing and break your leg and find yourself in debt for the rest of your life."

I'm sure there are many out there who are in the same boat as me: about to graduate from college and wondering where to go next. But in a country where for many preventive healthcare is not an option and people are unable to go to the doctor until it's too late, America could learn a lesson from ambitious New York and begin expanding our healthcare opportunities on a national level.