



Engineering and Technology department prepares for big changes in coming months

By CHI CHI ZHU

The NCSSM Engineering and Technology Department will be undergoing a series of changes in the coming months. In the past year, an

Engineering & Technology, Research Experience in Engineering, and Research in Engineering.

The introduction of the REngineering and Rex

about the addition of an introductory level Biomedical engineering course," said Ershela Sims, Dean of Engineering and Technology. "I am also excited about the new Rex Engineering and Web Development courses, as well as the new introductory level programming course, Foundations in Modern Computing, which is designed for students who do not have a background in programming, but are interested in learning to program."

These changes, while spurred onward by the addition of the graduation requirement, were in fact already planned. The addition of a broader range of courses is covered in the department's long range plan, a fluid plan that changes with factors like funding, school-wide priorities, and student demand but aims to create a more diverse engineering program at NCSSM.

Another change to the NCSSM community facilitated by Engineering and Technology is the upcoming renovations to the Rex Lab.

Currently, the Rex Lab is only used by Research Experience students for the Rex classes. Construction will begin this June to transform this lab into the Peter T.

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Courtesy of Zihui Yang

The REX Lab as it is before summer renovations.

Engineering and Technology course graduation requirement was added. This requirement becomes effective with the incoming Class of 2016 and is a requirement of one course.

In order to accommodate the increasing number of students taking engineering and computer science classes, the department has added several new courses to be offered starting next year, including Foundations in Modern Computing, Web Development, Biomedical Engineering, History of

Engineering courses are much anticipated by the staff and student body. Currently, students who want to do research or gain research experience in engineering have to do so through mentorship.

Including engineering as a part of the NCSSM's Research program will hopefully prove to be advantageous in the fostering of engineering interest and execution in engineering capabilities of students who choose to pursue these options.

"I'm personally excited

School garden raises controversy

By SIERRA DUNNE

During the third trimester I-Week, the members of the Anti-Lawnism Association (ALA) started their main project, the creation of NCSSM's first vegetable garden.

About ten students came out to help break the ground that will soon yield fresh vegetables for the student body.

The ALA has faced many issues while trying to plant this garden, especially with the location. They persevered, however, and finally settled for using land between Hunt and the PEC.

They were disappointed because it was not their desired location, but it was the only land that was available to them.

After the garden was constructed, many students expressed discontent with the garden and its location through Facebook.

Students argued that the garden was taking up space that is frequently used for frisbee, soccer, and other recreational purposes. Many were angry that the club did not ask the student body as a whole before

starting their project.

"Is the location where the club originally proposed to establish the garden? No. Yet the new location is at the heart of our campus where a community garden belongs. The ALA had no intention of

not deterred from moving forward with this project due to complaints, but rather are excited to teach students the importance of the garden and what it means to them.

"I think that a garden engenders an appreciation



Students break ground for new garden. Courtesy of Sierra Dunne

taking away space students use for frisbee," stated Instructor of Humanities Michael Mulvey, the sponsor of the club.

Even though the garden is small and will not yield a large harvest in the near future, it is meant to be a public statement of the importance of sustainability to NCSSM.

Members of the ALA are

for nature on a deeper level than little reminders to turn the lights off or recycle," says ALA member junior Conor Stuart-Roe.

"I also think that the garden has the potential to be a source of joy and community for the student body, although what we get out of it depends on what we put into it."

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Barber retires from NCSSM

program ran smoothly. She interacted with the students on a daily basis and made sure that they were engaged and having fun.

She also developed intimate relationships with the parents and was instrumental in making sure that they were informed at all times."

Barber's passion for research and the students in Step Up to STEM did not stop at the conclusion of the program.

Sims said Barber worked to bring the students back to campus for the annual NCSSM Research Symposium. In fact, most of the students came back for the symposium except for a few.

"She wanted them to share their research with members of the NCSSM community, since the program requires that they complete a project after the program, and she wanted to show them the caliber and type of research students at NCSSM conduct so that they can see what it is like and hopefully encourage them to apply to NCSSM and look for research opportunities in the future."

After her retirement, Barber will step down as director and act as program coordinator for Step Up to STEM. "I get sad every time Dr. Barber says that we have switched roles for Step Up to STEM, but I know that what she has started will continue to have sustained success," says Sims.

While Barber is very research-oriented and has shared her passion with the rest of the state, her care for NCSSM – the students, the faculty, and anyone else associated with the school – is second-to-none.

Michael Newbauer, Student Life Instructor on First Hunt and Director of Residence Life, has worked with Barber for fourteen years and says that she is an example for the NCSSM community.

"She has such a compassion for the school and for the students. She looks for the good in everybody and always honors the accomplishments and achievements of students and faculty alike."

Throughout her time at NCSSM, she has always made sure that students lived healthy lives and Newbauer said that it shows.

"She has a passion for health. She lives and breathes wellness. People actually think that she has a degree in wellness. Her innovative ideas about what is fun and healthy have brought the community together and it is what the community needed."

Barber does not simply stop at being just an advocate for healthy living and research. She also serves as a positive role model to students and staff alike.

Senior Marlisha Blakeney

is one of those students who has come to love Barber as a role model.

"Dr. Barber and I are pretty close. When I see her in the hallway, there's always more to our hellos than just a simple hello. We are super dramatic and excited when we approach each other."

Other than the dramatic greetings, Blakeney has always been able to depend on Barber when she has had a concern.

"She is willing to help me in every way possible. There have been plenty of times where I have felt hopeless and wanted to give up. Dr. Barber has always helped me, whether it be with her back rubs or her willingness to sit down and listen."

"She has made me feel better and more appreciative of my NCSSM experience. Without her help, I don't know what I would have done these past two years. I don't know who is taking her position in the upcoming years, but they will have a big seat to fill. Such a powerful woman can never really be replaced."

Even though the junior class has only had one year to interact with Barber, junior Charlie Cheema has gotten to know her as a great friend and mentor.

"I met her during Summer Bridge and she quickly became a great example. She made my transition into NCSSM smooth and easy and she made me feel comfortable in a new place with new people. She makes people feel like they are important and she is the most hardworking person that I have ever met. She cares about everyone and has one of the biggest hearts in the world."

Cheema is thankful for the impact that she has had on his life over the past school year.

Barber has sought to promote academic success, health and wellness, and scientific discovery throughout her entire life, whether it be in the research labs in Chapel Hill, the high school classroom in Mississippi, or her office in NCSSM's Bryan Lobby.

Her many accolades, including serving as chairperson of the National Consortium for Specialized Secondary Schools of Mathematics, Science and Technology and being honored with an NCSSM alumni-endowed "Joan Barber, Ph.D., Endowment for Underrepresented Minorities Student Success," are a testament to her personal character, her passion for students, her service to education, and her commitment to health and wellness.

She will be missed by many, and is, in the words of senior Marlisha Blakeney, "a role model, a mom to many, a leader for all, a hero, a fan, and a woman of great honor."