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State welcomes education lottery

By David Hodges
STAFF WRITER

Residents across the state received their first taste of the North Carolina Education Lottery last week, with first-day sales reaching an estimated \$8 million, according to the NCEL hotline.

Lottery officials expect the program to generate at least \$400 million for education programs by the end of the fiscal year.

The first scratch-off tickets went on sale March 30, making North Carolina the final state along the East Coast to incorporate state-sponsored gambling, according to a NCEL news release.

Four different games were available to customers, with prizes ranging from \$1 to \$100,000. A number-drawing game will be available later in the year, according to the lottery hotline.

Many retailers in Asheville are participating in the lottery, with more expected to receive tickets soon. Most already notice the effect of the lottery on their business.

"Our sales have gone up all around the store," said Alan Austin, manager of the Kountry Line BP on Hendersonville Road. "It seems like the lottery has helped our sales on everything."

Most retailers, expecting an increase in business will hire additional employees to better manage the flow of customers.

"We hired some new people, and I have an extra person working on every shift now," Austin said.

While retailers had high expectations, they are still surprised about how many tickets they sold.

"We have sold a lot more tickets than I thought we would," Austin said. "People have been trading tickets for tickets a lot, too."

Big winners appeared across the state in the lottery's first day. The first grand prize winner, Richard Garland of Newton, N.C., purchased a winning Carolina Cash ticket in Conover and received a check for \$100,000. James Greene, Army sergeant from Fort Bragg, also won a grand prize of \$10,000 after purchasing a winning ticket in Fayetteville. Locally, winnings have been smaller, according to the lottery hotline.

"I know that we have sold a \$250 winner," said Ashli Dennis, employee of Exxon and 51 Grill. "I have seen a lot of smaller ones,



BRIAN DAVIS - PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Black Mountain resident Ashli Dennis, purchases a North Carolina Education Lottery ticket from employee Charles Gamble, 20, at the Exxon on Merrimon Avenue. The first scratch-off tickets went on sale March 30 with first day sales reaching an estimated \$8 million.

"Our sales have gone up all around the store. It seems the lottery has helped our sales on everything."

ALAN AUSTIN
Kountry Line BP manager

though. A lot of \$10 and \$25 winners have come back."

Retailers are still unsure about whether the success will continue or if the excitement will fade. "It's still a little too early to tell if it will help in the long run, but our sales since the first day have been really good," Austin said.

The General Assembly established the North Carolina State Lottery in August 2005 after a long debate about the need for state-sponsored gambling in North Carolina. Governor Mike Easley, strong supporter of educational

funding, promoted the lottery throughout its inception, according to the lottery news release.

"The lottery issue is not going away," Easley said in his 2005 State of the State address. "Only the money for the education lottery is going away, from our state to the states every single day." The lottery legislation requires that 35 percent of total annual revenues benefit education programs. This includes scholarships for students qualifying to receive federal Pell Grants, reduction of class size ratios in early grades, pre-kindergarten programs and school construction, according to the lottery news release.

Public primary, secondary and high schools receive the greatest portion of benefits, with only approximately 10 percent of revenue expected to fund college scholarships.

Colleges and universities expect

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BILL STYRES
associate vice-chancellor
for business and finance

to receive no direct funding from the lottery revenue, as benefits will go directly to college-bound students, according to the lottery news release.

"We do not expect to receive any funding at UNCA from the lottery itself," said Bill Styres, associate vice-chancellor for business and finance. "We will only benefit from students receiving scholarships who choose to come here."

While the lottery does not direct-

ly benefit UNCA, some students feel that the program gives benefits to students receiving these scholarships by allowing them to choose what school they wish to attend.

"I don't think that it's a bad thing that the schools don't get the money directly," said Tara Gillispie, a student at Asheville-Buncombe Technical College, who plans to attend UNCA in the fall. "If I was getting a scholarship, I would rather be able to choose where I went to school than having to choose what school I went to based on if they could give me a scholarship."

The lottery is expected to benefit many lower-income students throughout the state.

"If the lottery brings in as much as is expected, about \$40 million is expected to go to scholarships statewide," Styres said.

NCUR returns to UNCA

By Paige Reinhard
STAFF WRITER

Students from all over the country get a chance to show off their work at the 20th anniversary of the National Conference of Undergraduate Research starting today at UNCA.

"Students are turning a corner from being in a regular classroom experience learning this material, showing your knowledge on tests, writing papers, to being a producer of knowledge, a creator of knowledge," said Mark Harvey, associate psychology professor and chair of NCUR.

UNCA organized and hosted the first NCUR in 1986.

"UNCA has been and continues to be a leader in undergraduate research," Harvey said. "There's just a tradition of having a strong undergraduate research program, and this is a chance for us to demonstrate that."

This year NCUR will host 1,919 presentations with representatives from around 280 schools, according to Holly Beveridge, NCUR event planner.

"There are probably about 2,300 students presenting those 1,900 abstracts because some of them have two or three presenters on the same piece," Beveridge said.

NCUR is an important opportunity for students to take advantage of, according to Harvey.

"One, the practical reason, it's a resume-builder for students," Harvey said. "It's something distinctive that a student can do that can set them apart from other applicants for jobs or graduate schools."

NCUR provides college students a rare chance to showcase their work, according to Beveridge.

"It's not very often that undergraduates get to present their research," Beveridge said. "Most of the conferences out there are for graduates."

UNCA students who are presenting have a chance to get a lot out of the conference, according to Harvey.

"I hope that they find out that they can hang tough with the best students in the country," Harvey said. "I guess the No. 1 thing is that they find that it's a confidence booster. They do good work, that they communicate it well and that their work can be respected in the broad academic community."

Not only is it important for students to present, but for students who are not presenting to attend, according to Harvey.

"So that they can see for themselves, especially the freshman and the sophomores, what kind of work they may do in the time to come in their college experience," Harvey said.

Presentations by the students may be the main draw of the conference, but it isn't the only one. Presentations by professional scholars are planned as part of the conference as well.

Author Ilan Stavans, conceptual artist Mel Chin and chemist Geraldine Richmond are scheduled to give plenary addresses, according to the UNCA Web site.

Student presentations and plenary addresses are free and open to the public.

NCUR the 20th anniversary of NCUR at UNCA is fitting, according to Harvey.

"We very much not only support the whole undergraduate research movement, as it's been recently called, but we've been doing it for a long time," Harvey said. "We know a few things about it, and we do it well."

UNCA 'best value' among public colleges

By Anna Lee
STAFF WRITER

A new publication by the Princeton Review lists UNCA in the top 10 "Best Value Public Colleges" in the nation.

"Our low tuition costs and academics are just phenomenal, so I'm not surprised," said Tarik Glenn, senior management student and Student Government Association president. "I'm just glad that publication and others recognize us for what we do."

Ratings like these may make UNCA more competitive in the future, according to Scot Schaeffer, director of admissions and financial aid.

"It raises the awareness of the university, which helps us in our recruiting process," Schaeffer said. "It helps us get the best and the brightest students to apply to our institution."

When asked if there could be a downside to becoming a more competitive school, Schaeffer said North Carolina residents might see one.

"We want to stay the size that we are," Schaeffer said. "It just

becomes more competitive to get in, and the drawback is, for North Carolinians, they might be upset that they're not getting in."

The ranking is a measure of what students get for their tuition costs, not just of UNCA's low price when compared to other schools, according to Schaeffer.

"It's really taking a look at the whole package that the university provides for a student: The academic experience, the social experience, financial aid just the cost to even come to school here," Schaeffer said. "It takes a look at everything, and we're very pleased for that."

North Carolina State University in Raleigh also ranked on the top 10 list. It came in second, whereas UNCA ranked third.

"I think it says a lot about the institution's quality," Schaeffer said. "It also says a lot about how the state of North Carolina feels about trying to make higher education and keep it affordable for all students from the state of North Carolina."

"Our low tuition costs and academics are just phenomenal, so I'm not surprised."

TARIK GLENN
senior management student
and SGA president

UNCA is of a good price for some out-of-state students, according to Schaeffer.

"The public higher education system across the state of North Carolina is very affordable for out-of-state students," Schaeffer said. "There are some public institutions where even for their own in-state constituencies, are much higher than the cost that our students pay here, so we are a good value even for someone who's coming from out-of-state."

Junior literature student Dana Henry said North Carolina public schools are a better option for her than in her home state of

Pennsylvania. "It's even cheaper than (Pennsylvania State University)," Henry said about UNCA.

Kristal Hess, sophomore multimedia arts and sciences student, said UNCA has good value.

"It's got really small class sizes, so you can get individual attention," Hess said. "We have nice programs, and we have all kinds of different clubs and activities, so there's always something to do. When it comes down to it, I think it's a pretty decent value."

Henry said she also likes that UNCA is small and liberal arts-based.

"They have more decent public institutions in North Carolina than in Pennsylvania," Henry said. "In Pennsylvania, there's only one, Penn. State, and it's huge and in the middle of nowhere."

Sometimes we take the perks of attending a small school for granted, according to Henry.

Henry said a friend at the

University of Pennsylvania (a private school) complained to her that lecture halls were so crowded she had to sit on the floor if she was late to class. Rather than sit on the floor wearing a skirt, she would skip class if she was not wearing pants.

"I have never had an experience like that at UNCA," Henry said.

Hess is not pleased with UNCA's policies, though.

"I would like decent parking, and the fact that they're building a building over there in the commuter parking lot and three-fourths of our campus is commuter doesn't help matters," Hess said.

Nonetheless, UNCA will take advantage of the ranking, according to Schaeffer.

"We will make sure that people know about this, and the university will definitely reap some benefits both in the state of North Carolina and the whole country, as students are looking for quality institutions at a good value," Schaeffer said.