

# THE BLUE BANNER



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## Police Chief gains new title

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One person oversees all university police, emergency management, transportation and parking at UNC Asheville – Police Chief Eric Boyce, who became assistant vice chancellor for public safety before the start of the fall term.

**Bill Haggard, vice chancellor for student affairs**, created the new position based on the amount of responsibility Boyce carried as chief.

“I did a comparison of Chief Boyce’s areas of responsibility with other police chiefs in the UNC system and I found that his areas of responsibility are the largest,” Haggard said.

Boyce joined UNCA as police chief in August 2010 following 12 years at North Carolina School of the Arts Police Department. He supervises more than 20 staff members responsible for public safety, property security, environmental safety, transportation services and parking.

Salary for the new position totals \$98,700, which is on par with the median annual salary for a police chief in the United States.

Boyce has increased training for police officers and dispatchers, including preparedness for disasters and active shooters. Haggard said this was one of Boyce’s greatest accomplishments as police chief.

“We have run real life, full scale exercises. We

SEE CHIEF ON PAGE 2

## Tibetan monks visit campus



Photo by James Neal - Contributor

Tibetan monks work to create their sand mandala in Highsmith Student Union.

## Monks offer students new philosophies

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Two monks wrapped in maroon robes took seats in Highsmith Student Union’s third floor lounge, smiling despite the chaos around them.

Their clothing was identical down to their eyeglasses, save for the gold-colored tunic beneath their robe.

The smaller of the pair, **Thubten Loden**, a geshe, sat prepared to translate for his companion, **Lobsang Gyatso**, chantmaster for the group of Tibetan monks constructing a sand mandala two floors below.

A day prior, Loden delivered a speech on death and dying, comparing Western culture’s avoidance of the topic against the open discussion of death in Tibet.

He spoke slowly, often repeating himself, on how death should be something you prepare for daily and treat as an inevitable fact of life.

Tibetan Buddhists view dying as a beginning, not an end. Death is part of a cycle where what matters is how you treat other people. Compassion was frequently mentioned in the geshe’s speeches during the Drepung Loseling monastery’s residency at UNC Asheville.

Despite extensive damage to important monasteries during the Chinese occupation of Tibet and restrictions on the few monks still within their homeland, Drepung monastery continues to operate in exile.

“During the cultural revolutions, more than 6,000 monasteries were destroyed,” Loden said,

before expanding on the objectives of the Mystical Arts of Tibet tour. “The first is to promote peace and harmony in this world, with the unique Tibetan tradition of nonviolence and compassion. The second is to make awareness of the situation facing Tibetans and their culture. Its existence is threatened, and we think it is a loss for the whole of humanity. The third one is, we are trying to preserve our ancient culture in India, in exile. For that, whatever proceeds we gain from the tour, we use for the education and healthcare of the monks in training in exile.”

Even while discussing the near-complete eradication of Tibetan culture within Tibet, Loden remained visibly composed, laughing when asked how the tour had affected

the monks’ daily activities. Within India, during non-holidays, the monks spend the majority of their day in prayer, studying or debating Buddhist philosophy. These activities are affected by the time restraints of traveling.

The traveling monks only debate during demonstrations, and limit prayers and meditations to short sessions when the group drives or spends time together.

Still, Loden said the monks find time to offer libations to what he referred to as dharma protectors, ensuring the success of their activities, and to perform the nyensen invocation, calling on positive forces prior to their shows.

“The first type of chant is a way to prepare the space through sound,”  
SEE MONKSON PAGE 2

## Student death sparks dialogue

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Nick Igou, junior and mass communications student at UNC Asheville, died the weekend of Oct. 24 in his off campus apartment.

“I met Nick at the beginning of my newswriting class, so only a few months, but in that time he proved himself to be insightful, analytical and just a sweet kid,” said **Brandon Bouchillon**, visiting assistant professor from Tyler, Texas.

Those who had the pleasure to know Igou, like Bouchillon, knew him as respectful, prompt and always ready to learn.

“We wore the same glasses. We built on that. We had shared experiences. He was a great student and I know I only knew him for a few months, but it’s a big shame to the whole world,” Bouchillon said.

Bouchillon gave an assignment to his class: pick a broad national trend and localize it to UNCA, then humanize it using local sources.

Igou made the choice to write his paper on depression on college campuses and how it can go undetected, according to his peers.

The story focused on emotional disorders and depression in the United States. Igou spoke to people on campus who dealt with these problems and how to find ways to fix these issues.

Depression on college campuses is very common, according to university officials.

“Depression is a result of stress. The college environment is stressful in a variety of ways. If you look at the factors that impact the performance of college students, stress is the number one thing and it has been for years. Depression is pretty prevalent on college campuses and the ages 18 to 24 are when a lot of mental health issues come out,” said **Jay Cutspec**, director of health and counseling.

Cutspec said he did not know Igou, although he did meet him when Igou came to interview Cutspec  
SEE DEATH ON PAGE 2

## Working students face minimum wage struggle

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Working students struggle to stay ahead with a shrinking minimum wage.

The real value of minimum wage decreased by one-third since its peak in 1968.

According to the National Employment Law Project’s website, if the federal minimum wage kept up with inflation rates during the past 40 years, it would currently be \$10.90 per hour.

“It obviously needs to

be raised, it’s just been too long,” said **Michael Moss**, a health and wellness student from Greensboro. “As a student getting helped out and working minimum wage, I’m doing OK, but there’s a lot of people supporting families on those wages and have to work two jobs. I think it’s unreasonable for someone to have to work more than 40 hours a week to support themselves on a basic level.”

North Carolina’s minimum wage remains the same as the federal mini-

mum wage of \$7.25. Just Economics of Western North Carolina reported the living wage, or the minimum amount an employee must earn to afford basic necessities without assistance, for Buncombe County is \$11.85.

The difference between the living wage and the actual minimum wage recently sparked protests and strikes across the country.

On Sept. 4, fast food workers in 150 cities participated in a nationwide strike, demanding a pay increase of more than 100

percent, from \$7.25 to \$15, according to the movement’s website.

**Sarah Westendorf**, a senior art history student from Chapel Hill, said the increase should depend on where a worker lives.

“I think studies should be done to see what the living wage is and to see if it can be met in each part of the country,” Westendorf said.

**Will Peterson**, a junior from Wilmington, said he thinks raising the wage to \$15 is too much. He said the amount of work a fast

food employee is responsible for is not worth that amount.

Those opposed to raising the minimum wage cite rising unemployment as a negative outcome. According to a study by the Economic Policy Institute, raising the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$10.10 during the next two years would increase the gross domestic product by about \$22 billion and create approximately 85,000 new jobs.

The Obama administration recently attempted to  
SEE WAGE ON PAGE 2