

## BURST PIPES EXTEND SCHOOL YEAR

Antoine Rascoe  
Staff Reporter

Not fair! Is the way many students at Elizabeth City State University feel about the extension of the academic year. The traditional date for the university to release its students for summer vacation is May 10, but this year the university has added another week to the academic year because of the city-wide water leak which caused serious losses in the city's water supply, in February.

"A recommendation came from the Student Government Association who wanted an extra week added at the end of the semester rather than spring break be taken away and it was endorsed by the faculty and staff," said Dr. Mahoney Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs.

"After the initial decision had been made the SGA was asked how we felt about the decision and we felt as long as the spring break was preserved then the extension sounded like a good plan," said Damion Lewis, former presiding SGA President.

The university presented the idea to UNC-Chapel Hill for approval and the council felt that the university should certainly make up the five days missed. "Students should receive the amount of days in which they paid for which is 16 weeks in a semester is the way Chapel Hill feels on the extension," said Dr. Mahoney. Students on the campus feel that they have no say in when to make up the days missed. "Students pay \$8,000 dollars to attend the school and have hardly any activities. The students should at least have some say so about our education," said

Jeffrey Cofield a junior who majors in music business.

Some students feel penalized for the school year's extension into their summer vacation for what was a natural disaster. "To the upper classmen it may weigh more heavily because they have already made commitments to employers, to work at summer jobs or do internships. Now they have to rearrange their schedule and ask the employers to do the same," said Marquita Perkins a freshman special education major.

For students who live far from the ECSU campus, who may have to change pre-arranged flight reservations, the extension of the academic year may serve as a financial blow and hinder summer employment.

"It is bad business to schedule a certain date to work with a potential internship employer and then have to turn around and tell the employer that those dates of availability were insufficient," stated Marcus Williams a junior accounting major who has to travel home to Atlanta, Georgia.

April 21, being the Monday after Easter, traditionally has been a holiday for students, but because of the water leak, the day went as routine. This was implemented in an effort to shorten the amount of days added to the end of the semester.

"Easter Monday is not a staff holiday and to hold classes would not cost the university extra money. It was also an opportunity to minimize the number of days at the end of the year," said Dr. Mahoney.

## JOURNALISTS KILLED IN IRAQ

Kristal McClendon  
Contributor

Who has the most dangerous job in the world? Many say police, firefighters, or maybe deep-sea commercial fisherman. The truth is that in this heated time of war, a great number of journalists are facing mortal danger.

Mike Kelly, Washington Post columnist and Atlantic Monthly Editor, was killed on Thursday March 27 in Iraq near Baghdad. Kelly was the first American journalist killed in Iraq since the war began. Kelly, 46 served as an editor at the New Republic and the National Journal before becoming an editor at Atlantic Monthly. Kelly won a national magazine award for the first coverage of the Gulf War and later wrote a book about that conflict, *Martyrs' Day*.

Two British journalists, Terry Lloyd and Gaby Rado, were killed during a bomb attack on the southern outskirts of Baghdad. Australian journalist, Paul Moran, was also killed. Another American journalist/reporter for NBC died in Iraq.

David Bloom, 39 died April 6 of an apparent blood clot in his lungs. He was in a camp outside of Baghdad with the U.S. Army's 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry, the division with which he was an embedded reporter. He had no known health problems, said NBC.

Bob Wright, NBC's chairman and chief executive officer said, "In times like these, a journalist's contribution to his country is measured in terms of illustrious commitment and sacrifice.... There was no one more devoted to his calling than David Bloom."

"He was an extraordinary man," said NBC News president Neal Shapiro. During the first week of the Iraqi war Bloom was constantly on the television screen reporting for NBC and MSNBC. NBC anchors regularly referred to him as being at the "tip of the spear" while accompanying U.S. military forces making their way through Iraq to Baghdad.

## BEWARE STUDENT TRAVELERS

Jeremy Jennings  
Contributor

A few weekends ago, when the sun first began to peek through the winter gloom, a few friends and I decided to take an afternoon trip down to the Outer Banks. It was still too cold for swimming in the ocean, but we did enjoy the hot tub and pool at a local resort. My girlfriend and I took a late night walk down the beach and eventually rejoined our friends for a very late dinner at Pizza Hut. Everyone was having a great time, but it was getting late, so we decided to head home. A good friend and his girlfriend rode in the backseat. My girl rode next to me.

I turned the music up and sat back to enjoy a midnight ride through Eastern North Carolina. As we drove over the Kitty Hawk Bridge, a police car sped up behind me and turned on those awkwardly beautiful blue lights.

Once we finished crossing the bridge, I pulled into a driveway and placed my hands on the steering wheel, not wanting the cop to get nervous.

"Do you know why I pulled you over?" the officer asked as his flashlight blinded each of us in turn.

"No sir, we're just..."

"I clocked you going 70 in a 50-mile-per-hour zone," he said, chopping my words off before I could finish.

He was a Kitty Hawk Police officer, now actually out of his jurisdiction since we were in Currituck.

"You know I can take you to jail for going 15 miles over the limit."

I've been in a few incidents involving the police, and usually just being honest and polite is the best thing to do.

"Sir, I'm not sure how fast I was going, but I really don't think I was

going that fast," I said with my sincerest expression.

"License and registration," he said as he shined his flashlight around the interior of my car.

This of course meant I was getting a new ticket to add to my collection. I handed over my information and slumped in my seat as I thought about what had happened. I remembered seeing a police cruiser just before the bridge, and unconsciously tapping the breaks and checking my speed. My car has the neat feature of projecting its speed in digital numbers on the windshield in front of the driver. Thinking back to when I tapped the brakes, I remembered the number 61 in green reflected off the windshield.

The officer returned, bringing the pink paper of his trade along with him.

"I cut you a break tonight. I only wrote you up for 65, but it shows right here I clocked you going 70," he said pointing at the number.

"Sir, I really don't think I was going that fast. Could I see the radar just so I'd know for myself?"

"No, I've already cleared the radar," the officer said, the glare from his flashlight hiding any facial expressions. "Drive safe."

Dear friends, please learn from my mistakes. When traveling this spring remember that a group of college kids late at night always appears suspicious to a cop.

Even if you are the only car on the road, be careful to follow traffic laws when in a strange town. Whatever you do, never travel with anything illegal. Police officers today can pull you over for any reason whatsoever, even made up ones.

## AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND YOU

Damion Lewis  
Staff Reporter

Affirmative Action, what is it? Does it affect you? These and many other questions have risen since the Michigan case on affirmative action garnered national attention and mass media coverage. The decision on the case threatens to overturn an established system that has and continues to give women, ethnic minorities and disabled people equal opportunities in employment and education. On the other hand it could do something that the United States prides itself on, create true equality. Begging another question, who is right? Those who wish to keep affirmative action or those wishing to dismiss it.

Stemming from the decision in the case of University of California v. Bakke wherein the court "struck down" quota systems but left some room for race to be a factor in university admissions, the Michigan case seemingly highlights a situation that has been culminating for 25 years. Plaintiffs, who were not allowed admission into the University of Michigan, argue that the promotion of diversity does not justify preferential treatment to minorities (i.e. Affirmative Action, a policy established to redress past discrimination by ensuring equal opportu-

nity, as in education and employment). The case has ignited others who feel that they too may have been bitten by the wrong end of Affirmative Action.

For students at Elizabeth City State University, a historically Black University, there does exist a mixed sentiment amongst students and administrators about how they feel about this issue.

"I actually don't think that affirmative action is fair, because I would like to be hired based on my own qualifications and merit. Affirmative action gives you the job, but were you really qualified, do you really have what it takes to perform the job?" says Catina Alston, a rising senior at ECSU.

Looking directly at Ms. Alston's quote, she and others who feel the same way, do have just cause. According to the American Association for Affirmative Action, "affirmative action must be taken by covered employers to recruit and advance qualified minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and covered veterans. Affirmative actions include training programs, outreach efforts, and other positive steps. These procedures should be incorporated into the company's written personnel policies. Employers with written affirmative action programs must implement them, keep them on file and update them annually."

Taking this into account, affirmative action does, in a sense, give people opportunities simply for being. For example being a female in a field where women are sparse, or a minority in a company that employs few. As Ms. Alston questioned earlier, do the previous statements justify one as more qualified than the other.

"Affirmative action can be an asset and a hindrance to American society. For minorities and women it can help them get a job they normally may not get, but on the same token it can cause a well qualified Caucasian or majority representative to not get a job," says Rashonda Wester, junior class President at ECSU.

As an asset, affirmative action has been responsible for bridging the gap that existed between minorities and the majority in obtaining particular jobs and admission into many top tier graduate and undergraduate programs in order to create a more diverse student body. Stories reported by national media regiments have revealed policies at the University of Michigan and others that award extra credit to minority applicants, thus making it more likely that a black, Hispanic or Native American will edge out a white applicant who has similar test scores, grades or other at-

tributes.

"I am confident in myself and my capabilities, and I am really not swayed one way or the other concerning the decision on affirmative action. If I were growing up in the 1950's I would feel a need for affirmative action, but in 2003 I believe that the closed minded system of the past has all but disappeared allowing my credentials to more than stand on their own," says Rhonda Holmes, a graduating senior at ECSU.

Perhaps as a nation, affirmative action has served its purpose, creating equality in a time when equality seemed nothing more than a bitter dream; however, does that mean that affirmative action is no longer needed, has time really created a system of checks and balances that is not tainted by stains of racial perceptions or prejudices. The nation can say that no longer are there universities or companies that are void of ethnic minorities or women.

No matter what the court decides concerning the case on affirmative action, the United States will greatly be affected no matter what the answer is. Will your perception of its need change then, or will you remain adamant in your current decision? Affirmative action, savior of equality or assailant of injustice, you decide.