

THE DECREE

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NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE, ROCKY MOUNT, NORTH CAROLINA 27804

NCWC Welcomes 18 New Internationals, Total Enrollment Rises

By Kristi Lucas
Decree Staff Writer

First-year enrollment is slowly rising in the traditional day program at NC Wesleyan.

The college has enrolled 37 more first-year students than it did in fall 2011 by taking a more aggressive approach to recruiting. Incoming students include 225 freshmen (18 from overseas) and 41 transfers. Although Bill Allen, vice president of Enrollment, was hoping for a bigger turnout, he insists that all 266 new Bishops are "phenomenal students."

NC Wesleyan's recruiting counselors are motivated to work harder, and willing to work late shifts again to see a greater improvement in enrollment next year, Allen said. "They were especially assertive with the phone, making between 250-300 calls each week," he noted.

The new school website also helped to draw in the 37 additional students. Its aim was to interest potential students to learn more about the college and its programs.

Allen said that the recruiting office is being more proactive with travel, to

increase representation on campus from other areas of the country. More than half of the incoming students are from North Carolina, specifically Eastern Carolina, while Virginia is the second most represented area. "We're hoping to see gains in New Jersey and South Carolina in the coming years. We also want to see continued growth in all the areas we recruit," said Allen, who believes NC Wesleyan has potential to recruit athletes from the Northeast who are looking to attend college in the South.

Wesleyan has added its name into search fields of the ACT and SAT tests in more areas of the country. Students taking either test can send their scores to four different colleges free of charge. By adding NC Wesleyan as a search option, the college hopes potential students will be more willing to apply since there is no cost barrier, Allen explained.

Not much has changed with the gender gap on campus. Football is major factor for the 70 percent male-dominant population, with over 100 players on the team.

In a recent interview, Allen said it was too early to report the average high school



Dustin Midgett, Lucrezia De Pascalis and Kimberly Oriol, seen here working on an English 111 project, are members of NC Wesleyan's class of 2016. Midgett and Oriol are North Carolina natives, while De Pascalis is from Turin, Italy. Photo by G. Wallace

GPA and SAT scores of the new students. That information will be forthcoming.

Wesleyan has seen improvement in the representation of international countries, making diversity an even greater strength. The college has gained students from Mexico, Panama, Italy, and Jamaica, to give it a total of 24 represented countries. Sweden, Nepal, and Germany have the greatest representation on campus, with

five students from each country.

The Bishop athletic coaching staff performs part of international recruiting. For example, Frankie Taal, head coach of the men's soccer team, traveled to Iceland to recruit players. He also plans to travel to Brazil in mid-December.

Additionally, the college hired an alumnus to go to Germany on a recruiting trip. The student visited college fairs in Hamburg and Munich last fall to spread word of North Carolina Wesleyan.

In early November, President Gray and Allen will travel to China as part of an effort to form a relationship between the country and the city of Rocky Mount. "The trip is part of a

larger cultural and learning exchange," mentioned Allen. Gray and Allen will potentially meet with 10-12 very large high schools in Beijing, Shanghai, Hainan Island, and Hangzhou.

"The group leading this program will be able to help us recruit new students as the years progress," Allen said. "I think once we get a name established at some of the schools, we'll see potential for quite a great deal of communication between China and our region and North Carolina Wesleyan College."

To improve enrollment in the coming years, the enrollment office must focus on NC Wesleyan's strengths, which, according to Allen, include the ability for students to participate and make a difference. He added that with a small campus environment, students have the opportunity for leadership and the opportunity to experience their likes and dislikes.

Allen believes another significant strength is the Freshmen Advantage program, in which North Carolina Wesleyan College enrolls freshmen who show potential despite having SAT or GPA scores below the required level. Thirty-nine freshmen are currently part of the program, which requires that they seek additional advising and attend study halls throughout their first semester.

"I believe there are people out there who want the small school environment," Allen said.

Advice Offered for Wesleyan's Newest Students

By Casey Burd
Decree Staff Writer

For incoming freshmen, the explosion of new experiences can either be very exciting or they can be very intimidating—or a little of both. Leaving home for the first time. Doing assignments without parents nagging. Being entirely self-sufficient. It can all be liberating but it can also be stressful.

Being away at college means that you're the sole decision maker when it comes to all of the choices you will face. It means you have to be willing to make sacrifices. It means learning to adapt. It means you actually have to make an effort. Being away at college means that you alone are in charge of your success...or lack thereof.

If you are a first-year student, you might still be getting used to all of the changes you have faced so far. Maybe you are incredibly stressed out. But all of your new-found responsibilities do not have to be stressful. They can be thrilling. After all, you are now an adult with much more freedom. As long as you are always prepared, you should not be scared of freedom. It's possible to have the time of your life in college and still stay on top of your academics. So whether you're stressed or thrilled, there are some guidelines that will allow you to have the best possible year.

As a college student, it's up to you whether you go to class or not. Laine Hicks, a starter for the NCWC women's soccer team, has had her share of absences over the years. She knows what effect that multiple absences can have on your grades. "Unless you have a parent-like roommate, no one is going to be there forcing you to get up, get ready and take on the day," she said. "You actually have to get yourself up. Even on the days when

you feel too lazy just to roll out of bed."

Of course waking up isn't always fun but according to Hicks, it is necessary. She believes that Wesleyan is unique for its small population, saying, "At huge universities, there are large numbers of students assembled in each class so their professors don't have time to take attendance. But here, some classrooms have as few as four students in the class, so our professors definitely have time." Like a lot of twenty-year-olds, Hicks enjoys her sleep; but, for her, it's just something you have got to be responsible about, even if you're tired. "Just go to class," she advises. "One extra hour of sleep every now and then is not worth losing a letter grade in college. You can always take a nap later."

Courtney Jamieson graduated from NCWC this past spring. Attending Wesleyan for the past four years—being a soccer player, captain of the lacrosse team, an academically gifted student as well as a friend to many—has certainly earned her enough experience to give reliable advice and that she does. Jamieson thought for a moment before deciding what her most important piece of advice could be. "It's all about balance," she began. "Just don't make everything all play and no work. But don't make it all work with no time for a little play." Jamieson believes that there is a responsible balance between the two. "Don't stress too much; it's not healthy," she said. "Take a break every now and then to enjoy yourself. But don't get so caught up in partying and having fun that you forget to do your school work."

One student who certainly doesn't forget to do her school work is Ashley Marks. She is a senior who, you could say, has been through everything there is to experience here. How has she managed to thrive the entire time while maintaining above-average grades, playing multiple sports and still being able to hang out with friends? Marks knows how important it is to stay on task and how much damage can be done by letting yourself get behind.

"But above all else," she stated, "the most important thing to remember is to keep your head up when you receive a bad grade." She went on to say that it is virtually impossible to go through college without at least one disappointing grade. "Making it through college is just like any other life goal," she said. "There are bound to be obstacles. If you want to reach your goal, you can't waste your time overthinking your mistakes." However, she doesn't think you should completely forget about those mistakes. "Of course you should learn from them but once you've

realized what you did wrong, fix it and move on," she advised.

Being able to recover from a disappointing grade isn't always easy but it makes you a better student in the long run. Similar to Marks, Chelsea Colucci thinks this to be true. But she would say that reflecting on your performance is the most vital part in recovering from a bad grade. "Say you receive a disappointing mark on a test," she said. "You can't go back in time and change it. But you can ask yourself a few questions so you can be better prepared for the next test." So what questions should you ask yourself? Colucci suggests, "Did I study? How did I study? What study method could've been more effective?" Then she says that if you ask yourself questions such as these and you're able to reflect on yourself, you are actually bettering yourself. "When you reflect, you realize what you did wrong," she explained. "And when you realize what you did wrong, you figure out what to do right for next time."

According to Jake Swartout, a third-year student and pitcher for Wesleyan's baseball team, communication is the key to success. "If you don't understand something, don't let it sit there and struggle to understand," he said. "Ask someone to explain it."

Swartout insists that seeking help isn't a sign of weakness. Instead, he would say it displays your desire to better yourself. Aside from asking for help, he offers another example of communication lessening the stress on your shoulders. "Make sure you maintain solid communication with your professors," he said. "If you actually make an effort to communicate with them, you build this sort of relationship with them. You earn their respect." And if you have the respect of your professors, "You'd be surprised how understanding they can be," Swartout stated. "If you have to miss class for some reason, let them know. And that's when their understanding is beneficial," he noted.

If you are currently a freshman, you know that venturing off to college is a huge life change. With all life changes, there is bound to be some stress. Obviously these are merely a few suggestions but they are worth remembering. It doesn't take too much effort to go to class, reflect on your mistakes then move on, communicate with teachers and your classmates, and maintain a balance between your schoolwork and your social life. And if you keep these tips in mind, you might rid yourself of some stress. Some things you will have to learn from your own experiences but the best advice from others comes from those who have already been through it. So take advantage of these simple yet useful tips and begin your journey down the road to success.

Richardson Takes Reins of NCWC's Elite Tennis Program

Worth Richardson, a 2006 graduate of rival Christopher Newport University, has succeeded Dominic Modise after his successful run as coach of Wesleyan's tennis program.

Modise left the college to take the head coaching position of the women's team at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

On Richardson's appointment, Athletic Director John Thompson called him "a bright, energetic coach," adding, "we look forward to working with him to further the great success of our programs."

A native of Culpeper, Virginia, Richardson comes to Wesleyan with six years of experience, the first five as assistant men's coach at his alma mater. Last year, he served as associate tennis coach of the men's and women's teams at Bucknell University, a Division I program in central Pennsylvania.

As a collegiate athlete, Richardson won a USA South Conference title with the Captains, and in 2006 he was named to the all-conference and all-tournament teams.

The Decree conducted a recent email interview with Coach Richardson on the outlook of the men's and women's teams.

Q. How would you describe your coaching philosophy?

A. If I had to use one statement to express my coaching philosophy, it would be "Discipline is not the enemy of enthusiasm." You can work hard and force yourself to do the right thing, but laugh and have fun doing it.

Q. In what specific ways will it help that you played in the USA South Conference?

A. It certainly helps being familiar with many of the wonderful people involved with tennis in our conference. Having the ability to tell players you have a conference championship as both a player and a coach goes a long way toward getting players to buy into your system as well.

Q. What are your two teams doing this fall?

A. The women are playing in the USTA/ITA Regional at Mary Washington which is the biggest individual tournament of the year. As best I can tell, this is the first time in years the women have competed there and they could do quite well. The men have a very busy and challenging fall season with tournaments at Mary Washington and Elon before heading down to Emory for their USTA/ITA Regional. Several of the men's players are also traveling to ITF Futures tournament across the country and play-

ing in what is the equivalent of Single A Minor League tennis.

Q. You were named the new coach several months ago, in June. How has your late appointment affected recruiting for this year?

A. Unfortunately, there was nothing in the pipeline on the men's side and unbeknownst to me, several of the top players like Rinat Khussainov were looking into transferring. This led to a stressful summer but we were able to retain most of the players and recruit a great young man from Russia. Katie Beeman is a freshman on the women's side and is showing much promise. Both the men and women have strong teams that could win the conference, but I am actively recruiting players to come in the spring as well.

Q. Wesleyan has flourished in large part due to the international recruits. Why is this the case? And do you intend to maintain the same level of recruiting overseas?

A. Tennis is played in virtually every country around the world. There is an amazing wealth of talent out there. I intend to recruit both internationally and domestically, looking for the best players possible on both the men's and women's side. However, it is easier to recruit top male players to a Division III school as there is far less scholarship money available at Division I and Division II schools. Women's teams get 8 scholarships while men only get 4.5—and there are far more women's programs than men's as well.

Q. Which athletes from both teams left after Coach Modise's departure?

A. There has certainly been a lot of turnover. On the women's side, Shelly Hart and Bibhuti Baral transferred, while Kristin Seidel graduates in December. On the men's side, Rummyantsev, Lemongo, Prata, and Filonov have all used their eligibility or graduated, while Selander and Khussainov transferred. About the transfers, my only concern is that these young men and women are missing out on a great experience—perhaps all would be happier here than where they are now. But nonetheless we wish them the absolute best. While losing a lot of players may be alarming to many, I remain confident and impressed with the players currently on the roster. We're capable of accomplishing many great things this season.

Q. Which of your top six have returned to each team?

A. On the women's side returning starters include Yvonne Kamegene, Samia Kacher, Tori Jones, and Bristy

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Dr. Marjon Ames, assistant professor of history, and Dr. Andrew Stern, assistant professor of religious studies, have joined the NCWC full-time faculty. See story on pg 4. Photo by G. Wallace