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State report faults Durham County jail in teen's suicide

(AP) - An investigation by North Carolina authorities shows that guards at a county jail failed to properly check on a teen shortly before she hanged herself.

The News & Observer of Raleigh, citing the state Department of Health and Human Services, reports that Durham County jail officers failed to check on Uniece Fennell, 17, regularly and did not report a tip from another inmate that the girl was a threat to herself.

The girl was found hanged March 23. The Office of the Medical Examiner ruled Fennell's death a suicide. She had been in jail since last July on a murder charge in connection with a drive-by shooting.

New Durham jail director Col. Anthony Prignano said he has implemented new policies to make sure officers are checking on inmates in accordance with state regulations. The new policies also prohibit officers from deciding on their own whether an inmate should be on suicide watch.

State regulations require that inmates be checked at least twice an hour. The report by the state said a review of the day before her death shows that schedule was not followed.

The electronic record of checks during the 31 hours around her death show that during two of those hours, there were no checks at all while during four other hours, only one check per hour was conducted.

Had the teen been on suicide watch, state regulations call for four checks per hour. Prignano said disciplinary steps have been taken, but he would not provide details. He said the discipline did not involve firing, suspensions or demotions, which would be included in the public record.

Report: No easy alternative for UNC Center for Civil Rights

By Martha Waggoner

RALEIGH. (AP) - A committee studying alternative paths for the UNC Center for Civil Rights has found no options that would allow the center to continue the full breadth of its work while also satisfying opponents.

A new report offers five ways to revamp the center, founded in 2001 by African-American attorney Julius Chambers.

The report says only the alternative of renaming the center after Chambers and defining its educational role more precisely allows the center to continue the work it does now. The report notes that's not likely to satisfy critics.

Critics don't like that a center associated with the law school at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill sues other government entities. A committee of the UNC Board of Governors is expected to consider the center's future later this month.

Register To Vote



Shaw President Tashni-Ann Dubroy

Tashni-Ann Dubroy, Ph.D. resigns as President, CEO of Shaw University

RALEIGH - The Shaw University Board of Trustees has announced that President Tashni-Ann Dubroy is resigning to assume the position of Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at Howard University.

Shaw officials thanked Dr. Dubroy for her tireless service and positioning of the university as one of Raleigh's valuable resources for higher learning and entrepreneurial development.

"We sincerely thank Dr. Dubroy for a remarkable tenure of service to Shaw University," said Board Chairman Dr. Joe Bell. "We are proud of her energetic, inclusive and refreshing leadership and the manner in which she led our institution to surpass goals in student enrollment, fundraising and cost control. We wish her all the best in the next phase of her professional journey."

Appointed in May 2015, Dr. Dubroy helped to revitalize campus operations, budget performance and enrollment. She is credited with the university's first enrollment increase in six years, and the closing of a \$4 million fundraising gap, including \$630,000 - the single largest total ever raised in an alumni event.

Dr. Dubroy's emphasis on fiscal conservatism and process optimization helped the university to develop several key campus initiatives, including the termination of the three-year salary reduction program, investments in long-deferred facility projects, and the establishment of recruitment bolstering initiatives.

She is also responsible for the university's expanded presence in downtown Raleigh and within the Research Triangle Park corporate community. An accomplished entrepreneur, Dubroy spearheaded the recent opening of the Shaw University Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center in partnership with the Carolina Small Business Development Fund to expand small business development and economic empowerment throughout Raleigh.



Walltown

Community

Holds

Annual

Reunion

See page 8 for photos and story.



Emails show some support for Louisiana's Confederate statues

By R.J. RICO
Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) - One by one, the four Confederate-era monuments came down in New Orleans, removed because of outrage by those who saw reminders of slavery and white supremacy chiseled in their stone faces. But at least one Louisiana lawmaker who argued earlier this year against protecting such statues found her inbox flooded with emails overwhelmingly in support of the monuments staying put.

More than 100 emails were obtained by The Associated Press through a public records request. They showed that opposition to the removal of Louisiana's statues ranged from short and cordial pleas to long, angry messages about wiping away history. The messages were sent in April and May as New Orleans removed monuments that long paid homage to Confederate President Jefferson Davis, Gen. Robert E. Lee and others.

Confederate statues, flags and plaques have faced new scrutiny since a white supremacist - who previously brandished Confederate battle flags in photographs - killed nine African-Americans in a South Carolina church in 2015. Around the South, authorities debate whether such symbols represent racism or an honorable heritage.

State Rep. Patricia Smith, a black Baton Rouge Democrat, received 105 emails alone, almost all favoring a proposal by her Republican colleague Thomas Carmody that would have erected obstacles to tearing down such monuments.

The AP agreed to receive a sampling of just one lawmaker's inbox, Smith's, after a House clerk's search of all representatives' inboxes yielded more than 1 million potentially relevant messages on the issue. Smith had spoken passionately about the emails on the House floor, arguing Carmody's measure had caused "the worm" of racism to emerge.

"Our history is our history and we should not allow elected officials to pick and choose what parts of history get destroyed or get revered," one email said. Another declared: "Cannibalizing cultural memory is not progress."

Many of the emails were sent to dozens of lawmakers; few just to Smith alone. None used profanity or slurs, though Smith said she deleted some objectionable messages.

As for the rest, she read some, responded to a few, but largely ignored them. "From last year, my mind was made up," Smith said, referring to a similar bill she had voted against in 2016. "I was never going to vote for that bill."

Carmody's bill would have banned removal of any monument or plaque on public property commemorating a historic military figure or event - unless local voters approved its removal in an election.

Smith's emails largely echoed arguments constituents made when Carmody's measure died in a Senate committee on a 4-2 vote against, two weeks after the House approved the bill 65-31. The House vote May 15 prompted every African-American representative to storm out of the chamber in protest.

Those who supported Carmody's bill said ripping away monuments was akin to "erasing history." The proposal would not have applied retroactively to the New Orleans removals, but could have it difficult for other Louisiana cities wishing to follow suit.

Smith, 71, said the bill's proponents - rather than being protectors of history - were minimizing past slavery and racism in the South.

"They feel like racism didn't exist," she said, recounting how one white woman told her in a hearing to "get over" slavery.

Several email writers argued that out-of-state Marxists, anarchists and anti-Fascists were largely behind moves to remove New Orleans' statues.

"If you do not vote to support our state's historic landmarks then you are siding with these Neo Communist Anti American Anarchists against the will of 73 percent of the citizens of Louisiana," said one email blast to nearly every House lawmaker, citing a 2016 LSU Reilly Center for Media and Public Affairs poll.