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BOLO Case Ends With Guilty Plea

Jesus Alvarez Ramos, the man accused of two campus assaults, faces five years of court-supervised probation.

By JAMILA VERNON
Staff Writer

After eight months in jail, the man accused of attacking two women on UNC's campus in August pleaded guilty despite his continued denial of having committed the crimes.

Jesus Alvarez Ramos entered a guilty plea Tuesday based on an agreement that stipulated he would be released immediately due to time already served.

Under the agreement, Alvarez Ramos pleaded guilty to two counts each of attempted second-degree kidnapping and assault on a female, said Kayley Taber, assistant district attorney for Orange County.

"He was given the option of getting out of jail yesterday or waiting for a trial," said Amos Tyndall, assistant public defender for Alvarez Ramos.

"Who knows when this case would have gone to trial. He would risk being convicted."

Instead of having to serve the sentenced 16 months to 20 months in prison, Orange County Superior Judge Wade Barber suspended it to five years of supervised probation, Tyndall said.

Alvarez Ramos still denies having attacked the two women.

"It wasn't him," Tyndall said. The first attack took place Aug. 15 when a UNC sophomore and two of her friends were walking near Cameron Avenue.

The three split up as the victim began walking home. The victim testified that the assailant threw her on the ground between Caldwell Hall and Grimes Residence Hall and attempted to sexually assault her.

Two days later on Aug. 17, a woman was assaulted between the Carolina Coffee Shop and the Hanes Art Center. The man threatened her with a knife and attempted to jump on top of her.

Both victims recalled details of the

Sorensen Takes Name Off Chancellor List

By ALEXANDRA MOLAIRE
Assistant University Editor

University of Alabama President Andrew Sorensen, a strong contender to become UNC's ninth chancellor, yanked his name off the list Wednesday.

In a press release, Sorensen stated that mounting inquiries about his status in the search prompted him to make an official announcement.

He stated, "While I consider it a great honor to have been nominated for the post, I have asked that my name be withdrawn from consideration."

Sorensen, the third candidate to pub-

licly drop out of the search since December, was not speaking to reporters Wednesday. Committee Chairman Richard Stevens could also not be reached for comment.

Sorensen's exit marks another snag in the seven-month search, which is supposed to conclude by Commencement. Committee members have remained tight-lipped during the closed search, even with media leaks that forced other candidates out of the running.

Jeffrey Hout, dean of the UNC School of Medicine, and Linda Christ, executive vice chancellor and provost at the University of California-Berkeley

both dropped out of the running in December after their names were leaked to local press.

The Chancellor Search Committee met Tuesday, prompting speculation that Sorensen's withdrawal was possibly spurred by a committee change of heart to no



University of Alabama President Andrew Sorensen officially withdrew his name from the list of candidates.

longer consider him for the post.

An editor at the UA campus newspaper, the Crimson White, said Sorensen backed out to protect his reputation.

"The feeling here is that it's a face-saving measure," said Matt Yoakum, administrative affairs editor for the paper. "This was kind of a way for him to bow out gracefully."

He said UA administrators respected his decision to take interest in the position but wanted him to remain at the university. "But they didn't want him to go, partly because he's been a good president and partly because changing chancellors is a very difficult thing to go

through," Yoakum said.

UA Director of Media Relations Cathy Andreen said the fact that Sorensen was a possible candidate for UNC chancellor raised concerns among the UA community.

"Some of the faculty and students here were going to wonder if he was going to stay or not."

Sorensen came to UA from the University of Florida, where he served from 1990 as provost and vice president for academic affairs.

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.

LEADING THE PACK

The road to college life and the job market has become fiercely competitive, forcing students to run the rat race.

By ANNE FAWCETT
Staff Writer

Fifty years ago, high school seniors had a variety of options after graduation. Some young men enlisted to fight in Korea. Others knew they could make a good living by joining the family business, while a few decided to try their luck in college.

Thirty years ago, a young man's Vietnam draft number determined his future more immediately than his education.

Today, the United States is enjoying its longest period of peacetime prosperity since World War II. But with the economic boom has come an increased demand for a college education.

Over the last decade, competition for higher education has become intense as increasingly larger numbers of high school seniors apply for the same quantity of college admissions slots. Record numbers of high school students registered for the Scholastic Assessment Test in 1999 as part of the college admissions process. Driven by growth in minority test-takers, the number of students taking the exam has increased by nearly 200,000 in 10 years.

This swell of new applicants has forced admissions counselors to raise their standards

from years past. Students have responded by grooming themselves to be attractive from every angle.

"(Applicants) are members of every club and go to every conference to make themselves desirable," said Martha Roseman, associate dean of academic advising at Johns Hopkins University. "Schools look for leaders, so students show leadership. Being a good student academically just isn't enough."

But with this intense competition comes intense stress, said Linda Sax, coordinator of the University of California-Los Angeles' Cooperative Institutional Research Program, a survey distributed each fall to freshmen nationally.

Sax said the 1999 survey showed incoming freshmen were the most overwhelmed of any students since the program's origin in the mid-1980s. She attributed their stress to the college admissions process.

"Students are applying to more colleges than ever before, and they're faced with increased competition to get into the best schools," Sax said. "They spread themselves so thin by doing so many activities that they're getting overwhelmed."

Their competitive spirit carried over to post-college plans in 1999, as record numbers of freshmen placed their educational goals higher than a bachelor of science degree or a bachelor of arts degree.

In 1985, 31.6 percent of college freshmen planned for a master's degree to be their highest level of education. The same year, 9.2 percent hoped to complete their doctorate. This year's survey showed 40.1 percent of freshmen are working toward a master's degree and 14.2 percent are aiming for doctoral studies.

Sax said the increases reflected practical matters rather than interest in education.

"Students feel they need to have at least a master's (degree) to get a job in a certain field," Sax said. "It's not a desire to learn more, but to be marketable."

This focus on students selling themselves marks a generational gap for many families. UNC senior Danae Ringelmann said her father felt sorry for today's students.

"He sees it as a fast track," Ringelmann said. "There's pressure to get as many letters after your name as possible to be successful."

But many students find they can take detours along the way.

Ringelmann has chosen a more gradual career course. She has majored in American studies at UNC while taking premedical requirements on the side. Eventually she would like to mesh her interests, perhaps in the business world.

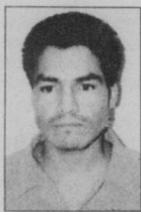
Her job after graduation will send her off to gain practical knowledge. Come September, she'll enter the work force at the investment banking firm J.P. Morgan & Co.

"I'm going to give myself two years to see what I've got lined up, then I'll go from there," she said.

Despite the increased pressure felt by incoming freshmen, Ringelmann is part of a growing number of graduating seniors evaluating the job market and putting the degree race on hold.

These students opt to forgo graduate and

See COMPETITION, Page 2



Suspect Jesus Alvarez Ramos could be deported to Mexico within the next two days.



ILLUSTRATION BY JAMES PHARR



UNC Employee Sues Hospital

By HARMONY JOHNSON
AND GEOFF WESSEL
Staff Writers

UNC Hospitals could be held responsible for alleged prejudiced hiring practices after hearings for a discrimination lawsuit conclude next week.

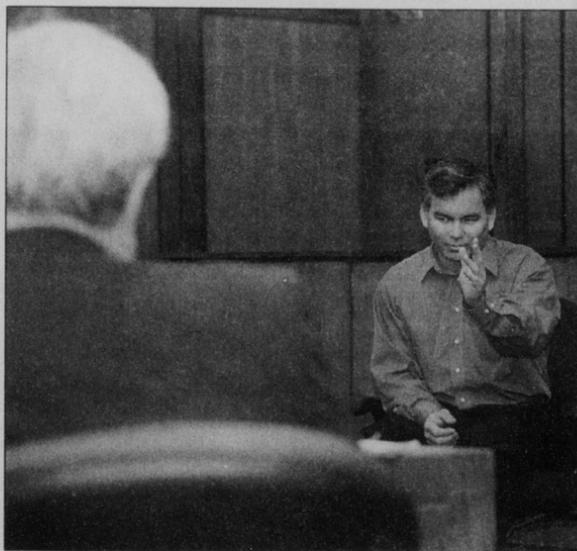
In the second day of preliminary hearings, five hospital employees testified Wednesday for a discrimination lawsuit filed in October by employee Robin Smith.

Smith is suing UNC Hospitals for race, sex and age discrimination after being denied a promotion last June. Smith, a 44-year-old black woman, was employed at the hospital as a level II medical laboratory technologist in the histopathology department.

Smith still holds her position within the histopathology department, which deals with the study of tissue samples.

A hospital employee for more than 23 years, Smith applied for a level III med-tech position in June.

Despite being the senior applicant, she was turned down in favor of Bert Basabe, a 39-year-old white man who



DTH/JEFF POULAND

Howard Parker answers questions during a hearing involving Robin Smith, who is suing UNC Hospitals for discrimination.

Congress Kills Proposal To Amend Drug Policy

By KATY NELSON
Staff Writer

Student Congress asserted its independence from the Board of Trustees by shooting down BOT-initiated clarifications of UNC drug policy by a 5-14 vote.

The Committee on Student Conduct's proposed drug policy revisions for the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance would have expanded the scope of drug possession violations. But opponents said the changes were redundant with the current drug code and were only proposed to pacify the BOT's concerns.

The committee's plan would have made "possession of any object containing any remnants or residue of illegal drugs" a chargeable offense.

The committee also proposed to update the policy by clarifying the definition of possession. It stated that the "possession shall mean the actual physical possession of any illegal substance, or the ability to exercise control or dominion over any illegal substance."

Changes to the code were proposed after the BOT acted on UNC-Chapel Hill's relatively low numbers of drug violations compared to other UNC-system schools. Last year, UNC-system schools had the following drug violation totals: UNC-CH, 16; Appalachian State University, 116; East Carolina University, 58; and N.C. State University, 54.

Administrators were concerned that UNC-CH's drug policy failed to address all behavior involved with drug use, including use of paraphernalia.

Speaker Mark Kleinschmidt, who voted against the bill Tuesday, limited debate time to 30 minutes for each side by certifying the debate as a contested issue, a rarity in Student Congress.

Congresswoman Alexandra Bell said that because possession was already illegal, the bill's clarifications were not necessary except to satisfy the BOT's initial concerns. "This bill didn't change anything. It's an ineffectual bill to show the

See POLICY, Page 2

INSIDE Thursday



An Irish Spring

With the advent of Riverdance, Celtic music entered mainstream America, but artists still hold a unique identity tied to tradition. Bands have surfaced in Chapel Hill as well. See Page 5.

Day Glow

To raise pedestrian safety, a committee wants to add neon-yellow and green pedestrian walking signs as well as more police officers on the streets to ticket people that don't stop at crosswalks. See Page 2.

Today's Weather

Sunny;
High 70s.
Friday: Sunny;
Low 70s.

If I smashed the traditions it was because I knew no traditions.

Maude Adams