

Students start new theses site

BY NICOLE NORFLEET
STAFF WRITER

After dozens of sleepless nights and countless cups of coffee, many seniors will submit their undergraduate theses this spring.

And to ensure that their work will not be done in vain, two Dartmouth College graduates have created an online archive to circulate research throughout the worldwide academic community.

The newly created UGRResearch database is the brainchild of Peter Noteboom and Jeff Iacono, who say they didn't want undergraduate theses to rot in the basement of college libraries after hours of hard work.

"(Noteboom) had written a thesis and was kind of shocked to learn that after he spent all this time writing a thesis, that it was going to be lost in the school's library," Iacono said.

After the pair graduated last year, they launched their Web site, UGRResearch.org, to help students spread their ideas in the Internet's open forum.

"It's a waste of time to do the same research twice," Iacono said.

Students can upload their papers into the online collection and download others' for free. They also can search the database for papers by school, keyword or category, and they can post tips about the best ways to gather research.

"We think it's a good idea," said Parker Lewis, who heads the marketing campaign for UGRResearch. "No other Web site is doing what we are doing."

While many of the online entries are submitted by Dartmouth students, Iacono said the site has more than 40 or 50 international users.

But the site organizers still are wrangling with concerns that post-

VISIT THE WEB SITE
Info: UGRResearch.org

ing papers so freely on the Web will lead to plagiarism.

"I would be worried if I was a student and I submitted my paper there," said Suchi Mohanty, a librarian at UNC's Undergraduate Library. "I would be concerned that people would take parts of my paper."

Many different online sites already exist which encourage plagiarism of this kind by selling research papers by the page.

"It's more of a showcase than a place to download a paper for 'x' amount of dollars," Lewis said of the database.

Professors can e-mail UGRResearch to access the downloading activity of a student suspected of plagiarizing.

While Mohanty said she thinks UGRResearch was a good idea, she is concerned about how, as a non-profit site, UGRResearch could operate on just monetary donations.

"Donations are unreliable," she said. "You never know how much is coming in and how much will be coming in the future."

UNC's library system pays thousands of dollars for subscriptions to different information databases because of the cost of copyrighting and digitizing files, Mohanty said. Undergraduate honors theses, graduate dissertations and graduate master's theses are accessible online.

As UGRResearch expands, Lewis said he hopes that funding will come from campus library subscriptions.

At the moment a sizeable chunk of the site's maintenance cost is funded from Lewis, Iacono and Noteboom's own pockets.

Contact the A&E Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

Family showcases artwork

Artists embrace Ackland crowd

BY ADAM WRIGHT
STAFF WRITER

The Ackland Art Museum offered a free public lecture Monday night from one very artistic family.

Though not quite the Jacksons, Betye Saar and two of her three daughters, Lezley Saar and Alison Saar, have been recognized for their artistic achievement. The trio spoke at the Hanes Art Center as part of their ongoing exhibit, "Family Legacies."

Patrons packed the center for a chance to hear the women, whose first exhibit together has been on display at the Ackland since December.

Collectively spanning more than 40 years, the family's creative legacy was a discussion point with students and community members.

Moderator Kirsten Mullen, a longtime aide at the Ackland, spent about 45 minutes interviewing the women on topics such as artistic inspiration, spirituality and black heritage before opening the floor to questions.

Coming from black, Irish and American Indian lineage, Betye Saar's work has proved provocative in breaking racial stereotypes through her mixed media pieces.

"I consider my work to be metaphysical, political and nostalgic," she told Mullen.

That mind-set quickly rubbed off on her daughters, whose work is equally charged with attacks on modern political and racial thought.

"She was definitely a mentor," said Alison Saar.

Lezley Saar continued the thought, saying what an inspiration her mother was upon graduating high school.

"She encouraged me to do some-



DTH/BRANDON SMITH

Alison Saar (from left) stands with her mother, Betye Saar, and sister Lezley Saar in front of their collaborative art project "Transitions in Black and White." The piece is dedicated to the memory of the family patriarch, Richard Saar.

thing creative everyday, which is an excellent piece of advice," she said.

When asked about the fear of stepping out of the shadow of her mother's work and facing possible criticism from her maternal idol, Alison Saar laughed.

"She's a mother first when it comes to our work," she said. "She's too soft to be a real critic."

Betye Saar said the opportunity to have an exhibit with her daughters was both comforting and enlightening.

"I see connections between our materials, connections between our political concerns and connections between our shared members," she said. "We can relate to

each other."

What could be considered the exhibit's most important piece is a manifestation of that connection.

"Traditions in Black and White" is a rare collaboration between the three artists that celebrates the life of Richard Saar, the sisters' father who died last year.

The family initially sketched out the piece together and then separated to allow each member her artistic freedom.

The Ackland display is the first time the family members have seen their work in its final stage, and visitors to the exhibit are encouraged to write memories of those who have died on a ribbon encircling the piece.

VIEW THE EXHIBIT

Time: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Wed. to Sat.; 1p.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday
Date: Through March 26
Location: Ackland Art Museum
Info: www.ackland.org

"As a memorial to our father, we also invite other people to create a memorial to their lost loved ones," said Alison Saar.

More than just a family business, the Saars consider art to be the bond running in their blood. "It's the link of art that keeps us together," said Betye Saar.

Contact the A&E Editor at artsdesk@unc.edu.

Famed Jewish writer to give speech today

BY BETH DOZIER
STAFF WRITER

For those who eat sushi on the Sabbath and enjoy both dreidels and dreads — or for 20-somethings in need of inspiration — Jennifer Bleyer has a message.

The 30-year-old Columbia University graduate and founding editor of Heeb Magazine will speak about launching an original publication and the emergence of Jewish hipster culture at 7 p.m. today in the Union Cabaret. Bleyer also will speak about making the most of young adulthood at the Hillel-sponsored event.

Bleyer, who now writes for The New York Times, launched Heeb magazine at age 25. The quarterly magazine, which promotes Jewish hipster culture, was a quite a project for her at the time.

Bleyer said she wants to encourage college students to undertake big endeavors in their youth.

"I talk to college students about using your 20s for taking big risks like that," she said. "It's a good time to take a big risk if you have some wacky idea and see what happens."

Known for its irreverent humor and unique look at young Jewish identity in popular culture, Bleyer said Heeb "appeals to the Jew in everyone" and lets its Jewish readers fuse and forge their own identities.

"It started the idea that you can be young and American and all other things that are part of your identity," she said.

Although Bleyer said that some members of the Jewish community were upset by what they saw as Heeb's irreverence, she said that people now view it as unifying.

"It's sort of recognized as this thing

ATTEND THE SPEECH

Time: 7 p.m.
Date: Today
Location: Union Cabaret
Info: www.nchillel.org

that sort of awoke a giant within the Jewish world," she said. "All of a sudden, this thing spoke to them — to young, Jewish hipster culture."

"All these people kind of came out of the woodwork," she said. "It's still looked at with some skepticism within Jewish institutions, but largely it's looked at as a unifying thing."

Bleyer said her experiences defining her own Jewish identity inspired Heeb.

"I had been a punk-rock teenager and had lived in New York for many years and was part of this underground culture," she said.

"I thought that there were a lot of Jews that wanted to be connected," Bleyer said the magazine asks questions and makes a statement.

"What does it mean to be Jewish?" she asked in an interview Sunday. "What does this entail? The kind of things we don't talk about we talk about. What is it like to have a crazy grandma living in Miami?"

Although Bleyer left Heeb in 2002 and now works for a mainstream publication, saying that she "didn't want to be a Jewish media mogul forever," she said she wants to encourage college students to follow her example and explore creative possibilities after graduation.

"Take risks while you're young," she said, "before you have kids and a mortgage."

Contact the A&E Editor at artsdesk@unc.edu.

Medicaid, education joust for funds

N.C. continues to favor K-12 spending

BY STEPHEN MOORE
STAFF WRITER

For the first time states across the country are averaging greater spending for Medicaid than elementary and secondary education, according to a report released this month.

But North Carolina, contrary to national trends, continues to allocate more for K-12 education — \$6.6 billion this fiscal year — more than twice as much as for Medicaid.

The gap is decreasing, however. With the overall budget planned to increase by approximately \$268 million in 2006-07, more than \$240 million extra is expected to go toward Medicaid spending with more than \$28 million dropped from primary and secondary education.

"The (N.C.) General Assembly is targeting other programs," said Paul LeSieur, director of school business services for public schools in North Carolina. "Medicaid is a big bearer of it."

This move will further decrease the percentage of the state budget designated for K-12 education, which this year fell below 40 percent for the first time, LeSieur said.

Nationwide, states on average spent about 21.9 percent on Medicaid as opposed to 21.5 percent on K-12 education for the 2004 fiscal year, according to the State Coverage Initiatives report.

Medicaid was expected to grow

by 8.8 percent during the 2005 fiscal year.

But a greater percentage set for education could greatly reduce the need for Medicaid, said Sen. Jeanne Lucas, D-Durham, co-chairwoman of the Senate education and higher education committee.

"We feel that if you support education, that people will be able to gain a livelihood and take care of themselves," Lucas said.

During the last few years Medicaid spending has grown between roughly 8 percentage points to 10 percentage points each year, said Sen. William Purcell, D-Scotland, co-chairman of the Senate health care committee.

"There are a lot of programs in Medicaid," he said. "The real reason that Medicaid is going up is because the cost of health care has gone up."

"If you could get a handle on the cost of health care, you could get a handle on the cost of Medicaid."

The problem does not rest solely on the shoulders of the state legislature but calls for a greater effort from the federal government, said Sen. Charles Albertson, D-Duplin.

"It's a national problem that we have got to address and try to get a handle on," he said. "There's got to be some major reforms in the Medicaid department."

The initiatives report was a definite point of interest, said Senate Minority Leader Phil Berger, R-

Rockingham.

"It would surprise me that states spent more on Medicaid in state dollars than states on public education," he said. "It would not surprise me that the Medicaid part increased faster."

As far as North Carolina is concerned, greater spending on educa-

tion than Medicaid is not likely to go away in the near future, Berger added.

"I would think that would continue to be the case for as far in the future as I can see."

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