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EYE CANDY

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N.C. sold itself to Google for warehouses

Last year North Carolina's state government offered Google a tax break for up to \$260 million over 30 years. In return those politicians increased property values.

Not of property in North Carolina — but in Mountain View, Calif. And many outstanding tech companies, from Motricity to SAP, located in the Triangle are offering handouts to California companies instead of supporting native businesses and educational opportunities.

For \$260 million, North Carolina is not receiving one ounce of engineering might or investment by Google to establish entrepreneurial centers for technological, engineering or business development. The headquarters of the company isn't relocating. Google isn't even promising to hire a single computer science graduate to work on the next big product, service or advertising innovation in Lenoir, where the massive server farms will be built. For \$260 million, you'll be receiving warehouses.

Granted, these aren't any old warehouses. These warehouses house servers that store the Internet activities of anyone who uses Google products, as well as cached copies of the Internet. In language politicians might comprehend, this is the sewage which flows through the series of tubes.

Google could place these servers anywhere. They placed them in North Carolina because politicians made land and labor cheaper than what can be found in China, India and Bangladesh. Though the manufacturing might of North Carolina is certainly on the decline, the state government is prolonging the economic hardship of rural areas by replacing jobs in tobacco warehouses with jobs in server warehouses.

Server maintenance isn't technologically challenging; a Best Buy Geek Squad member possesses the requisite expertise. About 200 employees will run these servers. \$260 million distributed to 200 employees over 30 years would result in an annual salary of about \$43,500, while Google plans to pay just more than \$48,000. Not exactly a bargain, particularly considering this handout is going to a corporation based in another state.

Leaders who hand \$260 million to one of the nation's most profitable companies and in return receive no guarantees of investment beyond warehouses are suckers. And they just made labor in North Carolina cheaper than most developing nations.

Don't blame Google. It's an amazing company that produces innovative products that benefit people. They make my life — and yours — more efficient. They hire the smartest folks and consistently outmaneuver other outstanding companies filled with incredibly talented and intelligent people.

North Carolina is home to a flourishing tech community and continued investment by the state in education will further the development of strong, locally based companies. By getting into the business of diverting local tax revenue to foreign corporations, the state government eliminates opportunities to foster the local economy to gains for Google.

And those gains mean an ability to hire more employees to high-paying engineering jobs. Jobs that aren't going to Lenoir, but to Mountain View. Jobs that result in more engineers looking for homes, and rising property values in Mountain View.

Creating a culture of entrepreneurship and technological excellence is the only way to actually enter the modern economy — you can't buy your way in with government handouts.

Unfortunately such a strategy isn't as immediate and politically beneficial as paying off Google to show up with their primary-colored logo.

EDITORIAL CARTOON By Don Wright, Palm Beach Post



To infinity and beyond

State should go above NCLB standards, improve tests

North Carolinians' memories of public education are likely marred by one particular test — the writing test. But just because it wasn't the best assessment of writing skills doesn't mean the state should do away with the test altogether.

The Blue Ribbon Commission on Testing and Accountability, a group created by the state board of education to review standardized testing in the state's schools, recently recommended that all standardized tests not necessary for graduation be eliminated.

The state hopes to make other tests more in-depth, going beyond the federal requirements set by No Child Left Behind.

We're thrilled that the state is taking initiative to exceed the broad regulation of NCLB and spend more time on bettering the education of students; however, inadequate tests should be improved, not eliminated.

These tests, which Stephanie

Knott, assistant to the superintendent for community relations for Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, called "a mile wide and an inch deep," certainly should get a face-lift.

The commission said that students should be tested on more contemporary material and that tests shouldn't be used to punish low scores, but instead be used diagnostically.

Some tests that the commission suggested be abolished include the fourth, seventh and 10th grade writing tests. Many of the state's standardized tests are not ideal measures of competency, either because of the approach or the grading methods. However, the exams can and should be improved.

The writing test must look for more than mere adequacy of the five-paragraph model and should examine instead that students can successfully write a persuasive essay, even

if not in the proper form.

The greater problem with revamping the N.C. testing methods, however, is the NCLB monster looming over every public school classroom in America.

The program began with the best of intentions to bring all public schools up to a passing achievement level and ensure that no children fall between the cracks in the system.

Instead of helping, however, this underfunded program is making the education process more difficult for some schools and students.

Fortunately, the state board of education has realized that adhering to NCLB isn't bettering the education of N.C. students.

To the benefit of all kids in the N.C. public education system, the state is centering its efforts on education rather than punishing schools for low test scores, finally accomplishing what NCLB should have.

It's called 'Tobacco' Road

Anti-smoking report doesn't fairly examine N.C.

Nobody likes to get a failing grade. Sometimes, however, things aren't as bad as they initially seem.

North Carolina received an F on the American Lung Association's 2007 report on anti-smoking initiatives.

While the report points out some areas in which our state could improve, the bias of the American Lung Association and the needs of our state must be considered in analyzing it.

The report graded states in four areas: spending on tobacco prevention and control, cigarette tax, smoke-free air and youth access. North Carolina received a C in youth access and failed the rest.

Ironically enough, the state's highest grade is the one that is

the most important to improve.

While everyone has the right to make his own decision regarding whether to smoke, steps to keep children from starting the habit are vitally important — especially since tobacco is illegal for minors to buy.

Prevention and control are also areas that the state should and could improve. While North Carolina does still rely on tobacco as a major part of the economy, if a large number of state residents start using it and suffer the detrimental health effects, the state will end up footing the hospital bills.

Some other areas of the report have an anti-tobacco-state slant that one would expect from the American Lung Association.

North Carolina has the sev-

enth-lowest cigarette tax in the country, at 35 cents per pack.

But there's good reason for that. The state would be signing its own economic death warrant if it heavily taxed one of its major products.

N.C. smoke-free laws also are fine as they are. The state banned smoking in state government buildings and public schools but not private buildings.

That's the way it should be. Private business owners should decide for themselves if banning smoking is good for business and let the free market dictate the outcome.

While certainly not the beacon of anti-smoking legislation, the state isn't as bad about addressing smoking as the latest report would make it seem.

Identifying an anonymous source

In the last few weeks of production, the Daily Tar Heel has twice featured something that had not been seen inside its pages either this year or last: anonymous sources.

The first of these came in the Dec. 3, 2007, front-page story "Reed leaves mixed review." In this article an anonymous faculty member weighed in on the departure of a former computer science professor and administrator, Dan Reed. The professor commented on the supposed controversy surrounding the fact that Reed never taught a class while at UNC.

The other was on Jan. 9, in a page-6 article about a support group for those with untreatable sexually transmitted illnesses ("STI discussion group to address misconceptions"). In this instance a graduate student with herpes was quoted anonymously speaking about the need for the group.

According to DTH Policies, writers cannot use anonymous sources unless, "1) there is no alternative method of obtaining the information 2) and said information is important enough to abandon our core ideal of always identifying any piece of information or any quote (as) not self-generated." The editor-in-chief decides when these criteria are met.

This policy is designed to prevent anonymous sources from



ANDREW JONES
PUBLIC EDITOR

appearing in the paper, except in rare circumstances. Using anonymous sources calls into question the accuracy and credibility of an article and the paper; readers should view any article using these sources suspiciously.

In the Reed article, the criteria for using an anonymous source were not met. The faculty member in the article was quoted as saying, "UNC had a lot of publicity about (Reed) coming, and in the early press releases, the teaching was really played up ... Everyone was led to believe that we were getting this really great teacher."

The professor's quote was helpful in explaining why students might have been upset that Reed didn't teach any classes at UNC, but quoting him anonymously made it seem as though he was being critical of Reed, something his words did not seem to bear out.

The quote was not valuable enough to the story to have been used without attribution.

The decision to grant anonymity to the graduate student in the STI support group article was, however, the correct one.

This anonymous student had been responsible for asking Campus Health Services to create the group, and her quote further explained that need. Allowing the quote to run without a name attached respected her privacy. Nothing would have been gained from knowing her identity.

Given the scope of the news that the DTH generally covers, anonymous sources are not necessary for its reporting, and reporters should be able to collect the necessary information "on the record."

When this isn't an option the paper should make sure to provide enough information about the source to allow readers to determine his credibility.

In the Reed article, for example, citing the source as a "faculty member" was inadequate. This could have described an art professor commenting on a computer science issue. The article should also include why a source requested anonymity, giving readers insight to his motives.

By citing nearly all of its sources of information, and providing as much of a description as possible when it doesn't, the paper will best serve its readers in disclosing where their news is coming from.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"I've talked to a lot of girls — with (Mitt) Romney, I think it's the way he looks."

TYLER SMITH, MERCER UNIVERSITY STUDENT, ON S.C. PRIMARY

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To read the full-length versions
VISIT <http://dailytarheelpublic.wordpress.com>
Post your own response to a letter, editorial or story online.
VISIT www.dailytarheel.com/feedback

Mobile command center is a waste of our money

TO THE EDITOR:

I could scarcely believe it when I read that the Department of Public Safety had created their own mobile command center ("Retrofitting P2P ready for action," Jan. 18).

What need could they possibly have for such a thing? The likelihood of a shooting is statistically slim, and I certainly don't foresee any major terrorist attacks or hostage situations on our idyllic campus.

I don't even believe that Mohammed Taheri-Azar's drive through the Pit justifies such expense. Besides, how would the DPS ever fit an old P2P bus into the Pit anyway? It's not practical.

Their name would suggest that the Department of Public Safety is committed to the most basic principle of "protect and serve."

The thought of the "aggressive tools," as DPS spokesman (Randy) Young put it, being employed anywhere near our campus is not reassuring, but frightening. What real justification exists for a mobile command center?

Hopefully the DPS doesn't have delusions of grandeur like their French counterpart over two centuries ago. It almost seems as if the DPS is antsy for more action that the typical peace officer sees.

I guess dispersing parking tickets and yelling at me for forgetting to wear a helmet isn't thrilling enough.

They absolutely "needed" a bus with big screen LCDs, DirecTV and Internet access. The only thing more ridiculous than this command center is that we as students have paid for it.

When you see the command center rolling by, I hope you picture the 1,300,000 blue books that its price could have bought.

Tom VanAntwerp
Sophomore
Business Administration

Rogers Road community deserves fair treatment

TO THE EDITOR:

It's about time something was done for the people of the Rogers Road community ("County waste plans faulted," Jan. 18). Rev. (Robert) Campbell spoke in one of my classes last semester, and this situation is much worse than people realize.

The landfill has contaminated most wells in the area (the water is so bad it has been reported to cause skin reactions), yet residents are denied basic services such as city water and sewage. On top of all this, they have no bus service.

The town says it's too expensive to extend these services to Rogers Road, and residents have even been told that they will become acclimated to the pollution. Disgusting.

The University community (which accounts for about a third of the waste that goes to the landfill) should realize that even if measures are taken to improve the situation at Rogers Road, our huge volume of waste is still going to be shipped out and dumped on other vulnerable communities if we don't reduce consumption.

Kay Loeven
Sophomore
Studio Art, Anthropology

SPEAK OUT

WRITING GUIDELINES:

- Please type: Handwritten letters will not be accepted.
- Sign and date: No more than two people should sign letters.
- Students: Include your year, major and phone number.
- Faculty/staff: Include your department and phone number.
- Edit: The DTH edits for space, clarity, accuracy and vulgarity. Limit letters to 250 words.

SUBMISSION:

- Drop-off: at our office at Suite 2409 in the Student Union.
- E-mail: to editdesk@unc.edu
- Send: to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, N.C., 27515.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Columns, cartoons and letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Daily Tar Heel or its staff. Editorials are the opinions solely of The Daily Tar Heel editorial board. The board consists of eight board members, the associate opinion editor, the opinion editor and the editor. The 2007-08 editor decided not to vote on the board.

Dean Smith's effigy was not hung because of race

TO THE EDITOR:

Your 1965 entry in the timeline for "Chapel Hill and UNC ready King celebrations," (Jan. 18) regarding Dean Smith's effigy is wholly incorrect and draws a totally inaccurate inference in promoting your civil rights history.

Coach Smith was hung in effigy by disgruntled students for losing to Wake Forest.

Your Nov. 6, 2007 story, "Wooden's Witness," details the circumstances regarding the current peril to the tree where the event happened.

Coach Smith later became a champion of civil rights as you correctly noted, but to imply that the Wooden Gym sports incident was racially motivated is to be both historically and morally dishonest.

Sadly, since the November story, absolutely nothing has been done by Facilities Services to correct or ameliorate the construction conditions around this historic green campus landmark which may ultimately perish as a result of senseless neglect.

F. Marion Redd
Class of 1967

Don't cry over blue books and online degree audit

TO THE EDITOR:

I'm honestly taken aback at such complaining lately in the DTH. Every day there is another article or two with some new thing that UNC does that is just terrible.

There is a good reason for most of the things they do. They limited printing because we were wasting tons of it. They took away free bluebooks and scannons because people waste them! Get over it.

Do you really think they are trying to make money by charging a few cents for each? They just don't want people to not take five, put them in their desk at home, crumple them up and throw them away.

And in regards to "Dazed and confused," (Jan. 17) ... come on. It's not that dramatic that they took away the online degree audit. You know the classes that you've taken, and it clearly states what you need to graduate in the Undergraduate Bulletin, which can be found in the bookstore, as well as online.

Stop complaining so much and just look it up for yourself. I'm a double major in Biology and Spanish and have known from my first year here what classes I need to take. Take a few hours and look it up.

We all got into Carolina. I think we should be intelligent enough to figure it all out.

Now that's not to say that you shouldn't double-check that stuff every once in a while with an adviser, but honestly, in my experience, I tend to know more than they do.

Marianne Lennon
Junior
Biology, Spanish

The Daily Tar Heel

Established 1893,
114 years
of editorial freedom

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