

# N.C. lawmakers wear many hats

BY DEVIN ROONEY  
STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

The lawmakers in the N.C. General Assembly are important state leaders, but many also have day jobs, so the politicians have to keep up a challenging juggling act.

Of course, the way each legisla-

tor handles the challenges of the job differs.

Some lawmakers are retired, and most work out flexible business schedules.

Bill Holmes, spokesman for N.C. Rep. Joe Hackney, D-Orange, N.C. House majority leader, said in an e-mail that many lawmakers work

odd hours.

"Many members work jobs with flexible hours and they work unusual times, taking advantage of improving technology to communicate with others. Others just take a hiatus during session," he said.

Holmes added in the e-mail that Hackney works a few days a week at his law firm, and spends weekends and some evenings working at his family's cattle farm.

But when the lawmakers have to fulfill their legislative duties they spend most of their time in committee meetings, Holmes said in the e-mail.

"Sessions usually last, at most, for a couple of hours each day," he said in an e-mail.

"Most lawmakers spend the bulk of their time in committee meetings and meeting with advocates and constituents to discuss issues."

In order to prepare for legislative sessions, lawmakers usually talk to stakeholders and constituents.

Holmes said in an e-mail that lawmakers sometimes consult with other state officials.

"They also work with liaisons from different departments of state government to find out how a law would be applied or how it would change the way they do business," he said.

But they also consult with their staff. The duties of legislative staff are varied, Holmes said in an e-mail.

They gather information about the legal implications of bills and potential fiscal impact.

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BILL HOLMES, SPOKESMAN FOR REP. JOE HACKNEY

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In terms of keeping up with the districts they represent, lawmakers have various avenues of communication with their constituents.

Holmes said in an e-mail that many legislators write a weekly column distributed to constituents.

"They also track happenings in their communities through their newspapers and write letters of congratulations for special achievements," he added in an e-mail.

In order to maintain an awareness of what is important to their constituencies, lawmakers also spend time out and about in their districts.

"They often take on speaking engagements to update people at home and meet regularly with key decision makers from their communities, among other things," Holmes said in an e-mail.

Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

# Duke and UNC working together

Two campuses collaborate often

*"(The rivalry) is one of those inexplicable, almost defining experiences at Duke and UNC."*

BY DEVIN ROONEY  
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For many UNC students, just hearing the name "Duke University" elicits feelings of hatred, but the sports rivalry hasn't stopped collaboration between the two schools.

One of the most notable connections spanning the 9 miles on Tobacco Road is the Robertson Scholars Program.

The prestigious scholarship program gives full scholarships to students and funds a comprehensive four-year program.

During the summers, students travel as a way to supplement the experience of the school year, and the program foots the bill.

On top of the perks for scholarship winners, the program aims to benefit the larger communities at both campuses.

The program runs a shuttle that travels between the campuses during the academic year.

Keith Lawrence, Duke University spokesman, said the shuttle bus acts as a bridge.

"The bus ... brings us together," he said.

The program also funds projects that aim to build connections and benefit Duke and UNC.

The program funds the proj-

CHRIS HOPPER, ROBERTSON SCHOLAR

ects with one-year grants of up to \$5,000. All students, faculty and staff at both campuses are eligible for the grants.

Robertson Scholar Chris Hopper co-founded a magazine that covers issues pertinent to both campuses, with staff from both schools, called Rival Magazine.

When the magazine was first launching, Hopper said the rivalry between the two schools is an essential part of the college experience for students at both schools.

"(The rivalry) is one of those inexplicable, almost defining experiences at Duke and UNC," Hopper said.

Brint Markle, co-founder of the magazine, also said UNC and Duke are intertwined.

"Just because that separation exists, it's important to realize that they are more similar than different. Duke wouldn't be Duke without UNC."

Other collaborations between the schools are through the academic departments, such as the Latin American studies departments.

In 1990, the departments founded the Consortium in Latin American & Caribbean Studies at UNC-Chapel Hill and Duke University that aims to increase opportunities for students and professors, as well as raise public awareness.

The schools also coordinate the Duke-Carolina Student Basketball Marathon, which is a year-long fundraising effort which donates money to an organization that uses sports therapy to help children with life-threatening illnesses.

It culminates in a day-long basketball competition with teams from both schools.

Staff Writer Lily Kuo contributed reporting. Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

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