

Philanthropy Journal

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OF NORTH CAROLINA

Reform or revolution?

State braces for impact of charter schools

The state's new charter school program has the potential to significantly expand North Carolina's nonprofit sector. But it is too soon to tell whether the program will shake up or merely supplement the public school system.

By BARBARA SOLOW

North Carolina's new charter school program is being hailed as a

middle ground for education reformers from all points on the political spectrum.

The state's new charter school law - which allows creation of up to 100 "deregulated public schools" annually - has sparked the interest of groups ranging from churches and arts organizations to existing private schools.

The state Department of Public Instruction has logged 60 applications for charter schools in 32 of North Carolina's 100 counties (see

EDUCATION

accompanying list on page 9). Of those, 11 came from existing private schools and one was from an existing public school. The state Board of Education will finish reviewing the applications by March and the first schools could open in July.

Among the proposed new schools are a middle school in Raleigh that will use the planned Exploris children's museum as a teaching labora-

tory on global issues; the Right Step Academy in Pitt County that will offer a curriculum tailored for at "at-risk" and African-American students; and the Grandfather Academy in Avery County that will provide programs for abused and neglected children or those with special educational needs.

TAR HEEL EXPERIMENT

Unlike charter school laws in other states - which often have strict limits on chartering agencies - North

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In flux

Environment getting new leaders

With three state environmental leaders departing their jobs, North Carolina environmentalists wonder who will fill the gaps.

By STEPHANIE GREER

Three key players in the state's environmental movement are changing jobs, creating a shakeup that has environmentalists facing an uncertain political landscape. In one of the biggest surprises to environmentalists, lobbyist Bill Holman will be dropping the multiple clients he has represented in the legislature for 18 years to take a new government affairs position at The Nature Conservancy.



Bill Holman

ENVIRONMENT

In another move, Melinda Taylor has left her position as director of the North Carolina Environmental Defense Fund. Taylor moved to Texas because of a job opportunity there for her husband and has joined the staff of the Defense Fund's Texas branch.

Jane Preyer, deputy director of the group's North Carolina office, and Doug Rader, its senior scientist, are serving as interim co-directors.

And in yet another major move that had been rumored, Steve Levitas is leaving his post as deputy director of the state Department of the Environment, Health and Natural Resources. Levitas, who was Taylor's predecessor at the Environmental Defense Fund, will take a job in the Raleigh office of Greensboro-based law firm Brooks Pierce McLandon Humphrey and Leonard.

All three - Holman, Taylor and Levitas - have been powerful fixtures in the state's environmental movement, leaving many nonprofit leaders to wonder about its future direction.

Keith Burwell, executive director of the Environmental Federation of North Carolina, says that the moves by Levitas and Taylor came as no surprise. Levitas' departure in a chang-

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Steve Levitas

Fast break

Pro stars a tough catch for fundraisers

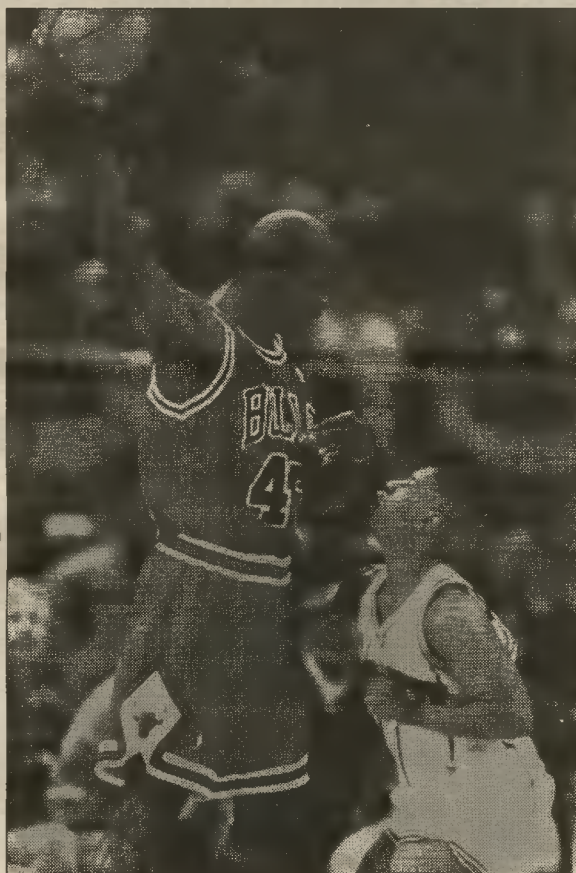
Many former North Carolina college athletes are turning pro - and while their careers may generate enormous riches, a sense of philanthropy to their old colleges doesn't often come as part of the deal, development leaders say.

By STEPHANIE GREER

When student athletes turn professional, they often make it big, and North Carolina colleges and universities have seen their fair share of football and basketball stars strike it rich.

The huge salaries that some of these stars command, however, have not generated a big payoff for the schools that launched them.

Just last October, for example, Chicago Bulls



UNC-CH alumnus Michael Jordan faces Muggsy Bogues, a Wake Forest University standout and a member of the Charlotte Hornets.

the Deacon Club at Wake Forest University. Griffin and development officers at UNC-CH and Duke University say giving from student athletes who turn pro follows no consistent pattern: Some athletes, they say, give generously, but many do not give at all.

"This is not the rule for all of them," Griffin says. "We have some that understand they were given an opportunity to get an education, take part in college athletics. [But] a lot of them feel like, 'I don't owe the university anything, I helped put people in the stands or the basketball facility.'"

Matt Kupec, vice chancellor for university advancement at UNC-CH - and a former star quarterback at the school - says it's unfair to focus on former student athletes.

"In defense of athletes, a lot of this money is new money," Kupec says. "These \$800 million contracts haven't been given over a long period. The pay scales have accelerated so much over the past few years, it's made athletes a target on the radar screen."

With salaries for professional stars skyrocketing in recent years, pro players often see more money in a few contract signings than most families see in their lifetimes.

Jordan this year signed the largest contract in the history of professional sports: a reported \$25 million for one season, which does not include his multitude of endorsement deals - such as Nike, Rayovac, Hanes - and proceeds from his new movie, "Space Jam."

Shaquille O'Neal of the L.A. Lakers - a product of Louisiana State University - comes the

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SPORTS

superstar Michael Jordan announced a \$1 million gift to the School of Social Work at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, his alma mater.

The school has produced a legion of pro basketball stars, such as James Worthy and Jerry Stackhouse, and pro football standouts, such as Lawrence Taylor and Natrone Means.

Yet Jordan's gift was the largest gift ever to the school by a pro athlete. Indeed, the largest gift previously had been \$100,000 to the School of Social Work by pro football player Harris Barton.

"I think that generally across the country, student athletes are not the most responsive group," says Cook Griffin, executive director of

Grammatical intent

Cone estate's millions hinge on punctuation

By STEPHANIE GREER

Greensboro

Martha A. Cone wanted to give \$30 million of her \$61 million estate to the Cemala Foundation, a Greensboro charity she established with her husband, Ceasar.

Her trust agreement and will,

however, made it unclear whether the foundation would receive the entire \$30 million before estate taxes - or whether \$8 million of that amount would be split between members of her family and the Internal Revenue Service.

Family members believed Mrs. Cone had wanted the foundation to

ESTATE PLANNING

get the entire \$30 million - even though their interpretation would cost them about \$4 million.

To be sure, they asked a court to interpret the language in the trust agreement.

In November, a judge agreed with the family: The grammar and punctuation in the agreement indicated that Mrs. Cone had wanted \$30 million to be distributed to the Cemala Foundation and \$13 million to her family - all before taxes.

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After two decades as President of the Winston-Salem Foundation, Henry Carter is retiring and will be replaced by the foundation's associate director for donor services.

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The American Express Charge Against Hunger campaign has netted close to \$800,000 for North Carolina nonprofits in the past three years.

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