Athletics receives second largest gift in their history

Dr. Nancy Vacc

Dr. Nancy Vacc, former UNCG professor, has made a planned gift in the amount of $725,000 to establish the Vacc Women’s Golf Scholarship Endowment for the women’s golf program. As the second largest overall gift and the largest planned gift ever received by UNCG Athletics, the Vacc Women’s Golf Endowment will provide the value of a full out of state scholarship for Women’s Golf on an annual basis.

Women’s golf has a rich history at UNCG and participation in the sport dates back to before the university had an officially recognized intercollegiate athletics department. Notable players from the past include former LPGA players Marge Burns, Jenny Gleason, World Golf Hall of Fame inductee Carol Mann, H.B. MacArthur, and Becky Morgan, among others.

Vacc has a long history of supporting UNCG. In 2004, she gave, in memory of her late husband Dr. Nicholas Vacc, the Bell Tower at Anniversary Plaza as well as funds for landscaping the area. The area is now known as the Vacc Bell Tower and Plaza on the south end of College Avenue.

Dr. Nancy Vacc, after completing her doctorate in curriculum and teaching at UNCG, joined the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in 1987. She received the UNCG School of Education Teaching Excellence Award in 1998. Her husband, Nicholas, taught at UNCG for 23 years and served as head of the Department of Counseling and Educational Development from 1986 to 1996.

“UNCG was such a special place for Nicholas and me,” said Dr. Nancy Vacc. “I am pleased to be able to provide support for future generations of wonderful student-athletes who play the game of golf at UNCG.”

Other funds at the university in the name of this generous couple are the Nancy Nesbitt Vacc Doctoral Fellowship in Elementary Education, the Nicholas A. and Nancy N. Vacc Distinguished Professorship, and the Nicholas A. Vacc Doctoral Fellowship in Counselor Education.

Full story at UNCG Athletics.

By Matt McCollester
Photo of Dr. Vacc in December 2015, by Martin W. Kane

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Attracting bees and butterflies, at UNCG pollinator gardens
A collaboration among UNCG Grounds, a class of biology students led by professor Ann Somers, and agrochemical company Syngenta, pollinator gardens are blooming in their first season on campus.

The gardens, which house an eclectic mix of flora and fauna, are five in total: four in Peabody Park and one on the edge of the Aycock parking lot, next to the UNCG Baseball stadium. The pollinator mix, which is specifically designed for North Carolina, offers both perennials and annuals that attract honey bees, bumble bees, moths and numerous bird varieties.

While the students are on summer break, Building and Environmental Supervisor of UNCG Grounds Peter Ashe looks over the gardens. He said that the gardens will become more lush as they continue to mature in the coming years.

“The perennials take a couple growing seasons to establish and shoot flowers,” said Ashe. “This first season they’re establishing a root system. In the next two or three years they’re going to get some blossoming. You’re fighting the weeds, you’re fighting drought sometimes you’re fighting the weather -- It’s not easy, it’s a challenge.”

Somers, who led the service learning wildlife course that planted the gardens, said that foresight and an understanding that actions of environmental stewardship today have a positive impact for the future is part of the learning process.

“It’s not all about the moment. Bringing wildlife back is a long process,” said Somers. “What the students in 2015 understood is that the work we did would really come to fruition in 2017.”

Both Somers and Ashe believe that naturalizing the grounds is an act of environmental stewardship. Somers said she imagines that in thirty years the campus norm could be pollinators, rather than sterile non-nectar producing plants.

The pollinators allow a community of plants and animals to thrive, a partnership not unlike that shared between grounds, students and faculty.

Wondering about some of the flowering plants you see in these gardens? To help you in identifying them, here are the seeds they used.

Swamp milkweed  
Butterfly milkweed  
New England aster  
Purple coneflower  
Swamp sunflower  
Autumn sneezeweed  
Gayfeather  
Bergamot  
Spotted beebalm  
Hairy beardstem  
Virginia mountain mint  
Gray goldenrod  
Ohio spiderwort  
New York ironweed  
Golden Alexander  
Aster, China single mix  
Baby’s breath, annual  
Black-eyed Susan (this is native)  
Bluebell, California  
Candytuft, annual  
Catchfly
Riding high at therapy camp

At first glance, UNCG’s Horsepower Experience looks like any other horseback riding camp, but it’s much more.

Over the past 13 summers, graduate students in UNCG’s Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) program have spent two weeks at HORSEPOWER Therapeutic Learning Center in Colfax.

They use horses to provide therapy to individuals with communication disorders alongside various physical, emotional and developmental needs. This year, for the first time, Horsepower Experience focused on language fluency.

“It’s a boutique skill we’re able to offer CSD graduate students,” said Perry Flynn, UNCG clinical educator.

Research shows that the motion of riding a horse can stimulate children, and they are more likely to talk to or about a horse than they would in a traditional therapy environment.

The graduate students worked one-on-one with preschool and school age children who struggle with stuttering and articulation, as well as expressive and receptive language. As campers learned about, cared for and rode horses, CSD students asked them leading questions to engage them in conversation.

“That was great talking,” Flynn said to one camper. “Can you say that again with smooth speech?”

Michelle Forrest, a graduate student, asked another child questions about a puzzle he was working on as he awaited his turn to ride.

Once all the campers were in the ring, they verbally repeated each step as they worked their way through an obstacle course.

Flynn and fellow faculty member Lisa McDonald lead the camp, which offers 30 hours of free, individualized therapy to participants. It also counts as a clinical practicum experience for the CSD students.

Claire Cuthrell was paired with a nonverbal 3-year-old during the two-week camp. It was Cuthrell’s first experience with hippotherapy, something that’s always intrigued her.
“I can see huge improvements on a day-to-day basis (in the campers),” she said.

Full story at UNCG Now

By Jeanie McDowell
Photograph by Martin W. Kane

###

Dr. Shanna Eller and UNCG’s vision for sustained aesthetics

Photographs of magnolia, amaryllis, ferns and hellebores serve as a multi-paned window onto campus from Dr. Shanna Eller’s office.

Eller, who assumed the sustainability coordinator role in the Office of Sustainability in March, noted that attention to aesthetics in UNCG’s sustainability program makes it unique from others.

“Nearly every sustainability program is focused on three things: social justice, the environment and economics,” said Eller. “But UNCG also recognizes aesthetics to be a part of the sustainable campus. There are a lot of three-leaf clovers out there; UNCG is a four-leaf clover.”

Having been the sustainability director at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California, and, before that, the director of community environmental services at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon, Eller brings years of experience to the sustainability program. One of her big tasks as sustainability coordinator, she says, is to further enact the university’s Climate Action Plan. The university adopted the Climate Action Plan, a sustainability-to-do list, in 2013.

The Climate Action Plan is designed to limit UNCG environmental footprint. Eller sees making UNCG a more sustainable campus as having implications for the greater city and nation, as well.

“Universities are like mini-cities,” said Eller. “They’re mini-cities with a vision for the future. And I think the university has an opportunity that other businesses don’t have because we do just that, train people for the future. It’s a place where we think big.”

Learn more at the Office of Sustainability website or read through UNCG’s Climate Action Plan.

By Daniel Wirtheim

###

Paul Chelimo will race in Rio Olympics

UNCG alumnus Paul Chelimo made history Saturday night as he became the first Spartan all-time to qualify for the Olympics by finishing third overall in the 5,000-meter race in the U.S. Olympic Trials.
Chelimo will be part of the U.S.A. National Team in the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Chelimo ran an aggressive race in the 5,000-meter final at Hayward Field in Eugene, Ore., holding off a late push for the final Olympic spot by 0.06 seconds as the top three qualified. He was never lower than fourth place through the duration of the race.

Chelimo has been featured on the UNCG web site and in UNCG Magazine a number of times in the past five years.

A native of Kenya, Chelimo is now a U.S. citizen after being part of the Army’s World Class Athlete Project. He was a two-time national runner-up in the 5,000-meters in the NCAA Outdoor Track Championships and is the most decorated track athlete in UNCG history. He also was a three-time Southern Conference Cross Country Champion and was a six-time All-America recipient during his career.

He graduated December 2014 in Public Health with a concentration in Community Health Education.

The News & Record reports that “the first round of the 5,000 meters at Rio is scheduled for 9:05 a.m. EDT Aug. 17, with the final at 8:30 p.m. EDT Aug. 20.”

By Matt McCollester, with additional information

See photo gallery of Saturday’s qualifying race.

###

State Health Plan update

Human Resources sent this update to employees:

The State Health Plan’s Board of Trustees approved the following changes for the 2017 benefit year.

- All members will be placed into the Traditional 70/30 Plan and must take action during Open Enrollment to select a different plan.
- The Traditional 70/30 Plan will include a base premium that can be reduced to $0, if members complete the tobacco attestation premium credit.
- Annual deductibles for the Enhanced 80/20 and Traditional 70/30 plans will increase. Click here for more detail.

Plan premiums have not been finalized, and will be announced once the state budget has passed.

Open Enrollment will take place October 1-31, 2016. Materials regarding Open Enrollment will be sent to members later this summer.

Please feel free to contact the HR Benefits Office with questions at 336-334-5009.

###

UNCG’s baseball beauty

It’s not the first time UNCG’s Baseball Stadium’s charm has gotten national notice. Just the latest.
UNCG’s Baseball Stadium came in at No. 45 on a top 50 rating this month, on the Baseball Journey web site. It rated the “College Baseball Ballpark Experience.”

They obviously had a good one at UNCG. It is a great place to catch some baseball action. “There is plenty of room to stretch out, relax and enjoy the game,” it notes.

It rated just higher than NC State’s stadium (46) and the University of Miami (Fla.) stadium (47), both in the ACC. See the ratings here.

By Mike Harris

###

July at UNCG Dining

Faculty and staff have dining options on campus this month. Click on this link to view this month's hours via PDF.

Further details regarding open retail locations are below.

- Chick-Fil-A is open from 7:30 am - 3 pm Monday through Friday, serving breakfast from 7:30 am-10:30 am and lunch from 10:30 am - 3 pm.
- The Elliott University Center Food Court also serves a variety of Grab-N-Go sandwiches, salads, chips, yogurt and fruit every day.
- Salsarita’s runs its lunch menu from 10:30 am - 3 pm Monday through Friday.
- Marketplace Convenience Store in the EUC is open from 10 am - 4 pm Monday through Friday offering a variety of Grab-N-Go items.
- Subway Café located off of Gate City Blvd in Highland Residence Hall will be open from 11:30 am - 7 pm Monday through Thursday throughout the month of July. It's also open Friday 7/8.

###

August 1 opening date

The Leonard J. Kaplan Center for Wellness is scheduled to open on August 1, 2016. As the Department of Recreation & Wellness prepares for the opening of the Leonard J. Kaplan Center for Wellness, the department will have modified hours of operations for most of its programs and services. More information is available on the UNCG Recreation & Wellness web site at https://recwell.uncg.edu/transition/.

To learn more about the center, visit https://recwell.uncg.edu/kaplan-center/

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Looking ahead: July 13, 2016

Staff Senate meeting
Thursday, July 14, 10 a.m., Alumni House

UNCG Music Camp performances
Friday, July 15, 6:15 p.m., EUC/Taylor/Music Bldg./UNCG Auditorium

EMF Faculty Chamber Series concert
Monday, July 18, 8 p.m., Music Building Recital Hall

UNCG Music Camp performances
Friday, July 22, 6:15 p.m., EUC/Taylor/Music Bldg./UNCG Auditorium

EMF Faculty Chamber Series concert
Monday, July 25, 8 p.m., Music Building Recital Hall

###

Learning to Look - volunteer program begins Sept. 7

The Weatherspoon Art Museum's "learning to look" program prepares volunteers to lead free, guided experiences for nearly 6,000 school age children, university students and adult learners annually. Volunteers are accepted into the semester-long training program and commit to giving tours for one year. Apply by Aug. 5, 2016. The program begins Sept. 7. More at: [http://weatherspoon.uncg.edu/learn/volunteer/](http://weatherspoon.uncg.edu/learn/volunteer/)

###

Dr. P. Holt Wilson

Dr. P. Holt Wilson (Teacher Education and Higher Education) received additional funding from North Carolina State University for the project "Building a Conceptual Model of Learning Trajectories Based Instruction (LTBI)." This project is supported by funds from the National Science Foundation. "The overarching goal of the LTBI project was to develop a model of teaching using Learning Trajectories (LTs) as an organizing framework for instructional decisions,” the abstract states. "Through our research in the past five years, our team has empirically examined the ways in which teachers learn about LTs and use their knowledge of LTs in their practice. We have also designed a professional development program to teach K-5 teachers about LTs and examined the ways that teachers’ participation changes in the professional development learning community. The goal of the supplemental work is to build on the outcomes of the LTBI project and promote knowledge sharing between the LTBI research team and other NSF-funded researchers who, in the last five years, have also investigated teacher learning of LTs and the ways in which this learning influences classroom instruction and student learning.”

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Dr. Kathleen Mooney

Dr. Kathleen Mooney (SERVE Center) received funding from Prairie View A&M University for the project "Learning By Practice Undergraduate Curriculum Evaluation.”

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See/hear: July 13, 2016

Every spring, the UNCG history department hosts the Piedmont N.C. regional of National History Day - a program for middle and high school students, in which students do original research and create exhibitions, performances, websites, papers, and documentaries. One of those documentaries won the national competition in Washington, D.C., last month, Dr. Benjamin Filene tells us. Filene is director of Public History at UNCG. Winners Sydney Dye and Caroline Murphy attend high school in Chapel Hill.

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