

**Report to the UNC System Board of Governors**

Dr. William L. Roper

Friday, September 20, 2019

Good morning everyone.

Two weeks ago, Hurricane Dorian decimated the Bahamas before turning northward toward North Carolina. As we all know, any storm that powerful can do great damage and cause significant disruptions. But I'm happy to report that we all weathered the storm - by helping one another as a System. Together.

Each one of our institutions is uniquely remarkable. But Hurricane Dorian reminds us that we are extraordinary when we work together. Collaboration, cooperation, and communication—these are the qualities that help define us as a System and make each of us more resilient.

I would like to direct a specific message of gratitude to Brent Herron, our associate vice president of Campus Safety and Emergency Operations, and to the emergency managers at each of our institutions.

Once again, you all did remarkable work keeping our students, faculty, and staff safe and informed in the face of difficult circumstances.

**Leadership in Transition**

These recent events remind us that the state of the UNC System remains strong, even as it confronts challenges and change.

This is a period of transition at several of our institutions. But the strong leadership at the institutions, on the Board, and at the System Office is doing exactly what it's supposed to do: ensuring that the vital teaching, research, and engagement continues--uninterrupted and undiminished.

Today, we welcome several new leaders. Some of these changes reflect the same inter-dependent spirit of cooperation that guided us through the storm.

I would like to thank Chancellor Anderson for his years of valued service to Fayetteville State University, and we wish him well on his retirement. We welcome Dr. Peggy Valentine, who agreed to relinquish her role as Winston-Salem State University's dean of Health Sciences in order to serve as FSU's interim chancellor.

Over at the UNC School of the Arts, Dean of Music Brian Cole was promoted from within to serve as interim chancellor. Thank you, Brian. Your willingness to take on this new responsibility ensured that Lindsay Bierman was at the helm as UNC-TV's new chief executive officer by the time Dorian threatened North Carolina.

It's worth mentioning that UNC-TV worked side by side with North Carolina Emergency Management and the Department of Public Safety during the storm. Those efforts kept the entire state updated with latest information we needed to stay safe during and after the storm.

Lindsay, you've been on the job one month, and you've already faced a trial-by-flood situation! Thank you for handling it with such skill and grace.

Finally, I would thank Chancellor Phil Dubois. As the longest serving chancellor in the UNC System, he has guided UNC Charlotte through an era of robust growth and a period of recovery following the tragic shooting on campus earlier this year. As you know, Chancellor Dubois has announced that he will be stepping down at the end of this academic year, and I would like to recognize him for his many years of service to our System.

As these familiar faces leave the University, the hard work of finding their permanent replacements is well under way. The search for a permanent chancellor at UNC-Chapel Hill is ongoing. Just this week, the committee held forums so that students, faculty, and staff would have an opportunity to share their ideas about what qualities the next UNC-Chapel Hill Chancellor should have.

The search for UNC Charlotte's new chancellor is also gathering momentum. The university's board of trustees has named its 16-member search committee, which will be led by current board chair Michael L. Wilson.

At East Carolina University and the UNC School of the Arts, search committees and processes will be announced soon. And Fayetteville State will be in due course.

### **Budget and Enrollment**

I am happy to report that the UNC System's remarkable leadership is also translating into tangible successes on the ground ... at our institutions. News about East Carolina University and our NC Promise institutions is particularly noteworthy.

Last year, many were concerned about East Carolina University's enrollment and financial stability. I'm happy to report that these concerns have not been realized. Overall enrollment has more or less remained flat. But the number of new freshmen is up considerably at 4.6 percent. The number of new transfer students is also up slightly, at 0.6 percent.

Things have also stabilized financially. Interim Chancellor Gerlach is now actively involved in approval of expenditures, including for auxiliary bonds. While forecasts initially predicted significant losses for ECU-Physicians, these losses were reduced and the budget has been balanced. In addition, the anticipated \$10 million dollar transfer from ECU-Physicians to support the athletics program proved unnecessary.

The university also paid down 20 million dollars of debt. As of June 30, 2019, ECU's unrestricted cash fund balance was 231 million dollars. Active work has been done to reduce operating

expenses by 16 million dollars for financial years 20 and 21. And, in July, the S & P confirmed the university's AA- stable credit rating.

ECU's athletics program continues to pose some challenges, but management is fully engaged with the university's board of trustees to develop a workable long-term plan.

All this points to one, clear and obvious takeaway: the Pirate Nation's future is looking bright.

Now that census numbers are in, I'm pleased to report we now have record enrollment – nearly 240,000 students -- across the UNC System. We also have healthy growth at our three NC Promise institutions.

At each of these institutions, growth in enrollment is due to dramatic improvements in student retention. It is clear that our hard work to improve affordability and promote student success is paying off.

The strong showing at these institutions reflects what is happening across the entire UNC System. Overall, our undergraduate enrollment is up 0.9 percent, and combined undergraduate and graduate enrollment is up 1.3 percent.

We have seen a slight drop in incoming freshmen, which coincides with a slowdown in the growth of high school graduates. We have also seen a dip in the number of transfer students, which might reflect a strong job market that has siphoned students away from the community colleges.

But more students at our institutions are staying in school and improving their odds of graduating in a timely fashion.

At a time when attendance at other universities is falling, our enrollment continues to break records. These numbers suggest that our work is having an impact. We are delivering unparalleled education that is more affordable and more accessible to more people.

### **Concluding remarks**

Last week, Hurricane Dorian forced Elizabeth City State University to postpone Chancellor Dixon's installation ceremony. But, rest assured, this important celebration will happen on October 11. Until then, the hard work at Elizabeth City will continue.

This anecdote tells us something about our System as a whole. We will face disruptions. But, together, as a System, we overcome these challenges because we are strong together. Together, we make North Carolina's future brighter... and better.

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### **UNC System Office**

The UNC System announced a partnership with the newly-formed Defense Alliance of NC. The System's scientific research and development align with the Department of Defense and the U.S. Army's top priorities, including cybersecurity, data analytics, artificial intelligence and machine learning, advanced materials and manufacturing, human performance, virtual reality, sensing, autonomy and unmanned systems, and quantum science.

NC DPI released new student achievement data for the five Laboratory Schools operated by UNC System universities. Student achievement results for 2018-19 show encouraging signs of positive momentum, opportunities for improvement, and highlight the significant challenge that Lab Schools are designed to address.

The UNC System announced the winners of the inaugural Student Success Innovation Lab grant competition. Six UNC System institutions will receive funding for their efforts to help more students finish their degrees in a timely fashion: North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, East Carolina University, UNC Asheville, UNC Charlotte, UNC Greensboro, and UNC Pembroke.

### **Appalachian State University**

The Appalachian State University Police Department (APD) received the Law Enforcement Agency of the Year award from the NC Police Executives Association. APD was selected for its Appalachian Police Officer Development Program — the second of its kind in the nation and the only program in NC. The two-year program allows students to become sworn police officers while earning bachelor's or master's degrees, giving a job market advantage and addressing nationwide shortages of officer candidates. The second class of recruits graduated Aug. 24.

Dr. Baker Perry's leadership on a National Geographic expedition this spring to install five weather stations on Mount Everest brought global media attention to App State. Baker, from the Department of Geography and Planning, is one of many faculty who engage in research critical to understanding environmental changes and impacts. His team's weather stations provide near real-time data about mountain conditions and monitor the upper reaches of the atmosphere, which is critical to tracking and predicting weather patterns around the world.

As its first year as lab school drew to a close, the Appalachian State University Academy at Middle Fork — a partnership between the Reich College of Education and Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools — received coverage from Carolina Journal, EducationNC (EdNC) and the Watauga Democrat for improvements in attendance, behavior, and academics as noted by teachers and principal. Formerly an F-graded school, end-of-grade reports show that, overall, the academy is meeting performance expectations and teacher retention is notably higher — turnover has dropped five percentage points from last year and nearly 11 from the year prior. The academy's performance grade score is 40, up from last year's 30, having increased its growth 37.1% in one year.

### **East Carolina University**

After graduating a record-breaking number of students during the 2018-2019 academic year, ECU welcomed the third largest freshman class in the university's history this fall. Increased numbers of freshmen (4,366) and graduate students (5,570) contributed to ECU's overall enrollment this fall of 28,651, down only 67 students from last year.

The Partway Home program provides support for students who left ECU close to earning their degree; the program streamlines the process of completing their coursework. In many cases, course requirements for their programs have changed, or they may not know about the grade forgiveness policy. Eleven students completed their degrees during the program's pilot year in 2018-19, and dozens more are now in the pipeline.



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A nearly \$300,000 grant from the NSF will allow a team of ECU researchers to look at sea level rise and its impact on coastal communities. “It’s about helping coastal communities adjust to sea level rise, specifically smaller coastal communities that don’t have the resources like a New York or a Miami or other big metropolitan areas,” said Dr. Randall Etheridge, principal investigator. The project includes an interdisciplinary approach involving ECU’s Department of Engineering and Department of Anthropology as well, as the Coastal Studies Institute, a multi-institutional research and education partnership of the UNC System led by ECU.

### **Elizabeth City State University**

For students who want to become pharmacists, a dual-degree agreement has been signed between ECSU and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. According to the agreement, students can begin work on a degree in pharmaceutical science in Elizabeth City and complete their bachelor’s and doctor of pharmacy degrees in Maryland. The new program begins this semester.

Beginning this fall, the ECSU flight training section of the aviation program began operating under the Federal Aviation Administration’s PART 141 Air Agency Certificate, placing the program in a very competitive degree field. According to the FAA, PART 141 schools offer a more structured training environment; are better for full time, career-oriented students; and allow students a shorter flight-training period (reduced from 250 hours to 190 hours, saving students 60 hours of flight time and reducing their flight training cost significantly). This designation establishes a more direct commercial airline path for aviation students.

ECSU celebrated the grand opening of the STEM Complex in August. The STEM Complex will house two new academic departments – the Department of Health and Human Studies (Pharmaceutical Science, Social Work, Psychology and Kinesiology) and the Department of Aviation and Emergency Management (Aviation Science Program, the new Unmanned Aircraft Systems Program, and Emergency Management). The complex houses aviation pioneer portraits on loan from the First Flight Society and interpretive panels highlighting African American pioneers in aviation, designed by the Morehead Planetarium and Science Museum.

### **Fayetteville State University Highlights**

Professor and the Associate Dean of the School of Nursing Afua O. Arhin’s Veterans in the Community (VACOM) has been funded by the Health Resources and Service Administration Nurse, Education, Practice, Quality and Retention – Veteran Nurses in Primary Care for \$1,443,360. Aimed at veteran undergraduate nursing students, VACOM is a 3-year program to recruit students committed to practicing primary health care in medically underserved communities; provide longitudinal clinical training in community-based primary care; and offer continuing professional development.

FSU Chemistry, Physics, and Materials Science student Lenore Miller was awarded back-to-back internships at the NASA Langley Research Center. Miller conducted research on thin film coatings and the effect of hypersonic light projectiles on such coating at the center. Miller conducted her research projects under the supervision of Dr. Daryush Ila and in partnership with Combat Capabilities Development Command United States Army Research Laboratory on the effects of energetic ionizing particles on the structure of graphene and graphite.

FSU entered into a bilateral articulation agreement with Rowan-Cabarrus Community College that will allow students who complete an associate degree in Fire Protection Technology at Rowan-Cabarrus to transfer seamlessly to FSU to complete their bachelor’s degree in Fire and Emergency Services Administration at an affordable cost, effective fall 2019 semester. Both FSU and Rowan-Cabarrus have received official Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) recognition from the United States Fire Administration.

### **N.C. A&T State University**



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N.C. A&T opened the 2019-20 school year with another record in enrollment, firmly establishing itself as the nation's largest HBCU for the sixth consecutive year. The total headcount of 12,556 represented a gain of 3.4 percent over the previous year. University leaders anticipated the surge after the enrollment cycle saw nearly 25,000 students apply for admission – an increase of 6,000 over the previous year and an A&T record. Fueling growth was an increase in retention from 77 percent to 79.3 percent. In addition, A&T experienced growth in academic quality: Nearly one-third of the entering first-year class, which included 19 valedictorians, are classified as sophomores or juniors from college credits earned in high school, and 17 percent carried GPA of 4.0 – 4.5.

U.S. News & World Report rated A&T the nation's top public HBCU for the second consecutive year. A&T moved up to no. 6 in the overall HBCU rankings within the magazine's Best Colleges issue and broke into the National University's numerical rankings for the first time. The university experienced increases in key data points across the Best College lists, including growth in peer scores, graduation rate, alumni giving and more. On the HBCU list, A&T's peer score ranked second in the nation, behind only Spelman College. In Money magazine's Best Colleges issue, A&T repeated as the most affordable of the 22 NC campuses ranked in the issue. Graduates ranked third in early career earnings in the UNC System with an average salary of \$51,800, trailing NC State and Chapel Hill.

Huge interest in A&T's outstanding graduates pushed the university's fall career fair past capacity for the third consecutive year, with 190 employers and 650 employer representatives taking part in the September event. Career Services officials scheduled a second fall fair, also at capacity. Employers for both events include Honeywell, J.P. Morgan-Chase, Facebook, Amazon, Nike, Oracle, Rolls Royce, and many more.

#### **North Carolina Central University**

NCCU launched a Clinical Research Science Certificate Program in fall 2019 to address the need for clinical researchers and trial scientists. The certificate will prepare individuals for work in university labs, pharmaceutical manufacturers, and the Triangle's growing clinical research organizations. The 12-credit-hour program requires nine-credit hours of instruction and three-credit hours of clinical rotation with industry and academic partners.

NCCU concluded the 2018-19 year with \$33.1 million in grants and other outside funding sources for research, the second-highest funding total in university history. Project awards included deployment of carbon nanodots to destroy health-damaging free radicals and using findings to assist individuals/communities facing health threats.

NCCU and NC State University have formed a partnership to boost drug discovery research, increasing opportunities for development of marketable products at both institutions. The agreement provides NCCU with access to expertise at NC State's Comparative Medicine Institute, while opening the doors for NC State researchers to use high-throughput screening technology and a library of over 200,000 chemical compounds housed at NCCU's Biomanufacturing Research Institute and Technology Enterprise (BRITE).

NCCU brought home honors at the annual 2019 HBCU Awards ceremony, which recognizes excellence at the nation's more than 100 HBCUs. NCCU was awarded Best Research Center based on the Center for Health Disparities, a Research Center in Minority Institutions housed in the Julius L. Chambers Biomedical/Biotechnology Research Institute (JLC-BBRI). The 2018-2019 men's basketball team was recognized as Men's Team of the Year. Denzel Goodlin, a May 2019 graduate, also earned first-place as HBCU Male Student of the Year.

#### **NC State University**

On August 30, NC State and the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics held a live online/video Q&A with NASA astronaut Christina Koch, an alumna of both institutions serving as a flight engineer aboard the International Space Station. Koch, a three-time graduate of NC State, took questions from students and talked



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about the ways her studies in science and engineering prepared her to live and work in space. The video downlink was hosted on NC State's campus in the Talley Student Union.

NC State received two major grants from the Novo Nordisk Foundation to advance research in biotechnology and crop science. A \$27 million grant will fund an international collaborative research and training program to improve the manufacturing processes for biotherapeutics, drugs used to treat chronic, potentially lethal diseases. A \$30 million grant will underwrite interdisciplinary research at NC State and three Danish universities to help make crops more resilient against environmental stresses and reduce the need for chemical treatments and irrigation.

NC State was awarded a \$24 million grant from the NSF to test new ways of increasing wireless speed and capacity. To ensure the nation's leadership in 5G, the NSF and an industry consortium have invested \$100 million over the next seven years to build specialized wireless networks. The Research Triangle will host the nation's third network, called the Aerial Experimentation Research Platform for Advanced Wireless, or AERPAW.

### **UNC Asheville**

Biology major Ari Miller was the first undergrad to ever receive a Smithsonian Grant from the Global Genome Initiative to study reptiles and amphibians and used the grant this summer collecting snakes, geckos, and frogs in Vietnam. Ari worked with a team of Smithsonian scientists analyzing the finds from the Vietnam trip and other expeditions. So far, they've discovered two new species of gecko from a trip to Myanmar.

UNCA was again featured as one of The Princeton Review's best colleges and ranked in the top 20 nationally on several lists with accolades for the "Best Quality of Life," and "The City Gets High Marks." Universities included in The Best 385 Colleges were chosen "primarily based on our high opinion of their academics," according to The Princeton Review. U.S. News & World Report also ranks UNCA as seventh-best public liberal arts university in the nation. Kiplinger's lists UNCA as a best college value. Forbes included UNCA in "America's Best College Values," and the Fiske Guide to Colleges 2020 included UNCA among the "best and most interesting" colleges.

This year, UNC Asheville will offer new interdisciplinary undergraduate certificates –Sustainability and Applied Social Science Research. Sustainability combines courses in the physical sciences, social sciences, and humanities with the lens needed to problem-solve environmental challenges. With courses on big data analytics, econometrics, systemic decision making, and ethnographic methods, Applied Social Science Research will prepare students for future innovations in business and government.

Faculty grants include: Graham Reynolds, assistant professor of biology, who received a three-year National Geographic Explorer grant to conduct expeditions to the Bahamas in an effort to save the silver boa (a species he discovered) from extinction; Ryan Steed, assistant professor of chemistry, who received a \$326,000 grant from the NIH for a three-year project entitled, "Function and dynamics of rotor-stator interactions in the proton-translocating Fo motor of ATP synthase;" Department of Chemistry and Student Affairs received a \$997,988 NSF grant to create a multi-faceted program focused on supporting students through scholarships and support structures; and Sally Wasileski, chair and professor of chemistry, is co-director, along with colleagues in several other COPLAC schools, of a project to support women faculty in STEM, which will be supported by an NSF ADVANCE grant of \$883,754 received by SUNY Geneseo.

### **UNC-Chapel Hill**

UNC-Chapel Hill placed fifth among national public universities on U.S. News & World Report's annual "Best Colleges" rankings for the 19th consecutive year. For the 15th consecutive time, UNC-Chapel Hill was the first public university (tenth overall) in rankings of national universities for best value. The week before, UNC-Chapel Hill was ranked the third best public school in the nation by the Wall Street Journal and Times Higher Education.

The journalism program was launched as a department in the College of Arts & Sciences in 1924. This month, the school is being named in honor of Carolina alumnus Walter Hussman Jr., and will now be called the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Hussman School of Journalism and Media. With a \$25 million gift to the school, the Hussman family is investing in the future of journalism and the media, reinforcing those values for the next generation of media leaders being trained at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Twenty-three students and recent graduates have been selected to receive the Fulbright U.S. Student Program award for 2019-2020, the highest number of recipients from UNC-Chapel Hill in one year. This year's Fulbright recipients represent a diverse array of fields, including archeology, chemistry, environmental studies, and public administration. The experiences will range from teaching English in South Korea to conducting research on depression screening in Malawi.

### **UNC Charlotte**

The UNC Charlotte Board of Trustees has named the search committee to begin the process for determining who will succeed Philip L. Dubois as chancellor. Michael L. Wilson, chair of the UNC Charlotte Board of Trustees, will oversee the search committee to find the University's fifth chancellor. The 16-member committee represents faculty, staff, students, alumni, community members and UNC Charlotte's Board of Trustees.

Chancellor Dubois will retire June 30, 2020. The UNC System's senior chancellor has effectively managed the UNC System's fastest-growing and third-largest institution by headcount with 43 percent growth in enrollment since 2005, making significant improvements in the academic credentials and ethnic diversity of incoming freshmen and transfers. Dubois also oversaw the construction of the University's Center City Building (CCB) and, later, its connection by light rail to the main campus in University City. Other accomplishments include adding NCAA Division I FBS football, achieving a record level of externally funded research awards, and providing leadership for UNC Charlotte's largest private fundraising campaign, projected to reach its \$200 million goal ahead of schedule.

In May, UNC Charlotte broke ground for a 130,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art science facility whose flexible classroom and laboratory spaces will reshape the way science is taught and studied. Scheduled to open in 2021, the building is the fulfillment of a commitment made in 2016 with the passing of the \$2 billion Connect NC bond. Improvements to Burson and Cameron buildings, the current primary science teaching and lab facilities, will be supported by \$45 million funding approved by the NC General Assembly.

UNC Charlotte is one of 69 universities worldwide—from 1,200 applicants in 135 countries—for the prestigious Millennium Fellowship program. Twenty undergraduate students will implement the LIFE Skills Initiative of the program's partners, United Nations Academic Impact and Millennium Campus Network. They will help high school students from areas designated by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools as having high numbers of low-income families to gain access to resources designed to build life skills. Other universities chosen include Arizona State University, Cornell University, Georgetown University, Georgia Institute of Technology, and Harvard University.

### **UNC Greensboro**

UNC Greensboro received a \$5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to lead an assessment of dual enrollment pathways in NC. Additionally, in conjunction with N.C. A&T, UNCG was awarded a two-year NSF grant to build a high-speed research data network that will connect the two universities and enable faster, easier sharing of research with scientists across the world.





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UNCG has launched five new degree programs in response to student and labor market demands: MS in Informatics and Analytics; BS in Information Studies; Online PhD in Business Administration; Joint PhD in Social Work with N.C. A&T; and Online BS in Integrated Professional Studies.

UNCG has also welcomed five new deans this year: Dr. Carl Mattacola, School of Health and Human Sciences; Dr. Bruce D. McClung, College of Visual and Performing Arts; Dr. Karen Bull, Division of Online Learning; Dr. Andrew Hamilton, Undergraduate Studies; and Dr. Sherine Obare, Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering.

UNCG has received over \$5 million in grant support for student success. Key initiatives include: 1) The Academic Success Coaching Program, launched this fall to transform the first-year student experience. The program, one of two initiatives funded by a \$1.2 million Edward M. Armfield, Sr. Foundation grant, will reach 150 first-year students this year. 2) The third annual CHANCE summer program, a weeklong college immersion experience for Latinx students. More than 150 students participated this year. Of the summer 2018 cohort, 28 students were admitted to UNCG and 16 are enrolled. Ten students from the summer 2017 cohort are current UNCG students.

### **UNC Pembroke**

UNCP welcomed a record 7,698 students, a 7.9 percent growth from fall 2018. This jump comes on the heels of last fall's enrollment surge to 7,137, an increase of 14 percent over the prior year. In the span of two years, the university has increased total enrollment and the academic profile of entering classes.

The number of students enrolling in upper division STEM-related programs has increased nearly three times faster than the increase in total upper division enrollment in the last five years and is expected to continue climbing thanks in part to a \$999,978 S-STEM (Scholarships in STEM) grant from the NSF. Funding will provide scholarships to support 30 students pursuing bachelor's degrees in biology or chemistry over five years, beginning spring 2020. There will be three cohorts of 10 students.

UNC Pembroke and N.C. State University are expanding their 3-plus-2 engineering program to offer additional degree options for students interested in civil and environmental engineering careers.

Virginia Teachey, a highly skilled executive with 25 years of administrative and financial experience in higher education, has been named vice chancellor for Finance and Administration after a nationwide search.

UNCP and Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina return outdoor drama *Strike at the Wind!* to the Tribal Cultural Center after a 10-year hiatus, contributing to efforts to build collaborative efforts to serve the community.

### **UNC Wilmington**

According to preliminary data, UNCW set an all-time record for enrollment in August, registering 600 more students than last year.

UNCW's coastal engineering program welcomed its first class of students this fall. The program, part of the Department of Physics and Physical Oceanography in the College of Arts and Sciences, builds on the university's international reputation for excellence in coastal and marine science education. UNCW is the first university in the U.S. to offer a Bachelor of Science degree focused on coastal engineering.

UNCW continues to make great progress on several campus construction projects. The university's new academic building, Veterans Hall, is scheduled to open next fall. Renovation of Dobo Hall, which was severely damaged



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during Hurricane Florence in 2018, is also on schedule for completion in summer 2020. The university recently installed a second group of modular lab units, bringing the available space in modular labs, classrooms and faculty offices to 45,000 sq. ft. total. In August, UNCW completed the topping out ceremony for the first building in the student housing village, and construction on the second building is also under way. When completed, the new village will include four residence halls, 1,800 beds, and a 1,000-space parking deck.

### **UNC School of the Arts**

UNCSA's School of Filmmaking was ranked No. 11 by The Hollywood Reporter in its list of "The Top 25 American Film Schools." The film school also made Backstage's list of "31 Film Schools You Should Know." And the film school was among the unranked "Best Film Schools for 2019" from around the globe according to Variety in its "Entertainment Education Report." For the third consecutive year, The Hollywood Reporter ranked the UNCSA School of Drama among the world's top five undergraduate theater programs. And UNCSA was also the highest-ranked arts-focused school in Money's "Best Colleges for your Money 2019."

UNCSA kicked off the public phase of its \$65 million comprehensive campaign in September with a reception for more than 250 donors on the School of Filmmaking's Stage VI. The reception was an immersive, interactive event that featured students and faculty highlighting each of the campaign's five pillars: scholarships, faculty support, innovation, living/learning environment, and community engagement. Interim Chancellor Brian Cole and Vice Chancellor for Advancement Edward Lewis announced that \$53.5 million has been raised thus far.

Three alumnae of UNCSA are nominated for Emmy Awards. Drama alumna Tiffany Little Canfield is nominated for casting the FX series "Fosse/Verdon." Dance alumna Margaret Qualley, who studied ballet in the high school program, is nominated as supporting actress as Ann Reinking in "Fosse/Verdon." Filmmaking alum Zoe White, director of photography for Hulu's "The Handmaid's Tale," is nominated for outstanding cinematography for the episode "Holly." Several other UNCSA alumni appear in or work behind the scenes of nominated shows.

UNCSA has partnered with the Reynolda House Museum of American Art to create the Reynolda Quartet, an ensemble of renowned faculty artists in the UNCSA School of Music. The quartet's inaugural performance sold out within days of its announcement. That appearance will be followed by concerts in Germany and Italy. The quartet includes violinist Ida Bieler, violist Ulrich Eichenauer, violinist Janet Orenstein, and cellist Brooks Whitehouse. Reynolda and UNCSA have a long history of collaborations.

### **Western Carolina University**

WCU dedicated its new 614-bed residence hall in honor of Levern Hamlin Allen, the university's first African-American student. Allen Hall is the first building on the WCU campus named after an African-American member of the WCU community. Levern Hamlin Allen enrolled in 1957, just three years after the Supreme Court's landmark Brown v. Board of Education ruling that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional. In dedicating the building, WCU officials lauded Allen as a "quiet pioneer of integration, helping blaze the trail for thousands of African-American students who would one day follow in her footsteps and enroll at Western Carolina."

Total enrollment crested 12,000 for the first time in WCU's history this fall, the second year of record enrollment under the NC Promise tuition plan. WCU's total enrollment of 12,167 was driven in part by notable increases in distance education and graduate student populations and a surge of returning undergraduates. This marks the fourth consecutive year with an increase in enrollment and the eighth time in the past nine years. In addition to NC Promise, officials point to the university's increasing academic reputation, location in the scenic mountains, and interest in several high-demand degree programs as reasons behind the growth trend.

The first cohort of students in the new doctoral program in psychology is now on campus. The program is designed to help address the need for more mental health service providers, especially in the western region of NC. The

doctorate in psychology is WCU's fourth doctoral-level program, joining doctorate programs in educational leadership, physical therapy, and nursing practice.

The 535-member Pride of the Mountains Marching Band is preparing not only for its halftime show, but also to entertain the world when it marches once again in the annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City. The band previously was selected to lead the 2014 parade, marking an unusual return trip for a participant just five years after its original appearance. In announcing WCU's invitation to return, Wesley Whatley, the parade's creative producer, said: "In most cases, it takes much longer for a group to receive another invitation, if at all."

Leaders of Western Carolina University and Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College signed a memorandum of understanding guarantees admission to WCU for all A-B Tech graduates who satisfy specific requirements. Called the Catamount Trailblazer Program, the direct-entry admission initiative, which derives its name from the mascots for both institutions, builds upon the existing North Carolina Comprehensive Articulation Agreement governing the transfer of credits between the NCCCS and the UNC System.

### **Winston-Salem State University**

WSSU is the no. 1 public HBCU in the nation, according to the magazine's "Best Colleges for Your Money" 2019-20 rankings. The rankings identify colleges that have a strong record of helping students graduate and preparing them for jobs at which they'll earn enough to pay off their debt. WSSU is no. 2 overall among all 107 HBCUs for value. Money magazine examined 26 measures of affordability, educational quality and alumni's financial success for the rankings. Data was compiled for the ranking from the U.S. Department of Education, Peterson's, PayScale.com and Money/College Measures calculations.

More than 1,000 new students participated in the new student orientation for fall 2019 along with the largest freshman class in more than a decade.

Dr. Celia R. Hooper has been named the interim dean of Winston-Salem State University's School of Health Sciences. Dr. Hooper steps into the role while Dean Peggy Valentine serves as interim chancellor of Fayetteville State University for the next year. Dr. Hooper is dean emerita for the School of Health Sciences at UNCG.

A new study finds that WSSU has an annual economic impact in the Piedmont Triad of nearly \$500 million and generates more than 8,400 jobs. Dr. Zagros Madjd-Sadjadi, the WSSU economics professor who conducted the study, said the majority of the impact – \$299.3 million – is from the more than 12,000 university alumni who live and work in the Triad. WSSU's \$494 million annual impact includes: the "human capital impact," or the increased earnings for WSSU alumni who live and work in the region: \$299.36 million; university spending on salaries, benefits, supplies and services: \$187.5 million and 2,791 jobs; spending by WSSU's nearly 5,200 students: \$7.1 million and 109 jobs; and spending by WSSU visitors: \$700,000. The study also found the region's unemployment rate would be 1 percentage point higher (5.5 percent vs. 4.5 percent) and per capita income would be reduced \$350 without WSSU.

In 2014, 43 percent of more than 800 of incoming freshmen who participated in the national CIRP Freshmen Survey said WSSU was their first choice. By 2018, that number rose to 62 percent. Among public, four-year colleges surveyed the average is 50 percent. Among schools with a similar selectivity, the average is 43 percent. CIRP is a longitudinal study of US higher education, regarded as the most comprehensive source on college students.

This summer, WSSU signed new transfer partnership agreements that create a streamlined path for Forsyth Technical Community College and Davidson Community College graduates to pursue a bachelor's degree from



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WSSU. Through the 2+2 agreement, graduates of Forsyth Tech's associate in biotechnology program can transfer to WSSU with junior status – 60 or more credit hours – to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Biology. Meanwhile, new transfer agreements create opportunities for Davidson County Community College graduates who earn an AAS in Zoo & Aquarium Science to pursue a BS in Biology at WSSU.

#### **North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics**

In June, NCSSM broke ground to create the school's second campus, in Morganton, NC, on a 62-acre parcel of land formerly used by the NC School for the Deaf. At the ceremony, Carolinas HealthCare System Blue Ridge announced a private gift of \$5 million, which conveys naming rights for a comprehensive student wellness and activities center. It is the largest single philanthropic gift in the history of NCSSM. NCSSM also received a \$465,000 gift for the Morganton project from Golden Leaf Foundation and a \$250,000 gift from Burroughs Wellcome Fund.

NASA astronaut Christina Hammock Koch, a 1997 NCSSM graduate and also an NC State alumna, connected by live video downlink from the International Space Station with students from both institutions on August 30 to answer their questions about her career and the experience of living and working in space. The event inspired young women and men to pursue careers in STEM and brought substantial media attention to the roles of both institutions in preparing North Carolina students to be leaders in STEM.

The first cohort of NCSSM Entrepreneurship Fellows spent the summer working at Triangle area technology startups under the tutelage of mentors who are senior figures and founders of those companies, with many students emerging with designs on starting their own startups in North Carolina. The pilot effort was funded by a gift from Joe Colopy, a founder of Durham's Bronto Software, which sold to NetSuite in 2015, who now operates Colopy Ventures, an angel investor in technology startups. Colopy and NCSSM plan to expand the program next summer to involve more students and companies.

#### **UNC-TV Public Media North Carolina**

UNC-TV partnered with the UNC System Office and the System's six historically minority-serving institutions to record a leadership roundtable discussion. This program will highlight the ways these campuses are meeting state and community needs, while preparing students for employment success and will air in October during Countdown to College's Free Application week.

As part of its ongoing commitment to public affairs, UNC-TV opened its new public affairs-focused production studio located in the capital, also known as "The Jones Street Studio," this summer. It will provide multi-camera studio productions, non-broadcast productions for state agencies, and a secure facility if emergency communications are needed, while also marking the return to a Raleigh "inside the beltline" operation after a three-year hiatus of legislative coverage. The organization has also kicked-off its year-long participation in the Knight-Lenfest Newsroom Initiative with the challenge of defining and implementing a new approach to public affairs programming that sheds light not heat on pressing issues.

Rootle's Block Party LIVE! came to Chapel Hill in August. Over 3,600 kids and their families enjoyed hands-on activities, live music, and meet-and-greets with Read-A-Roo and other PBS Kids Characters. This was the first of two Rootle Block Party LIVE! events focused on family engagement and early educator professional development made possible by the partnership with and funding from the NC Department of Health and Human Services.