



President's Report to the Board of Governors

UNC System Interim President William L. Roper

January 17, 2020

Greetings, everyone, and Happy New Year!

After what I hope were pleasant holidays for all, the UNC System and all of the institutions are back in full force, doing the important work for the people of North Carolina—educating, discovering, innovating, and serving.

Given the ongoing State budget stalemate, not all of the news that has greeted us this week is good ... but some of it is remarkably positive and worth highlighting. I want to lead with that.

The latest data measuring our progress toward our Strategic Plan goals are in. They show that we are reaching new heights in student success and economic impact, and we have sustained our commitment to making higher education accessible and affordable for all qualified students.

- Notably, the percentage of our students who graduate in five years has climbed steadily and now stands at 71.1 percent. That number exceeds our 2022 goal and far exceeds the national average. In short, our students are progressing through our institutions more efficiently, which means they are saving tuition dollars and entering the workforce more quickly.
- We're also serving and graduating more students from low-income backgrounds than ever before—this at a time when national trends show a decline in four-year college enrollment by low-income students. This is truly an important accomplishment – it means the UNC System is providing life-transforming opportunities to North Carolinians who stand to benefit most from the earning potential that comes with a college degree.
- The economic impact of all of this work is significant. For the second year in a row, we have surpassed our annual performance targets to increase the number of critical workforce degrees we award.

We still have much work to do, but in total we have met or exceeded 10 of our 12 Strategic Plan benchmark goals.

This information is freely available on the UNC System website so that institutions and the public can monitor our efforts to improve how we serve North Carolina. This is something the UNC System has never done before, and it shows our commitment to following through on the ambitions we staked out in our Strategic Plan.

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Here at the System Office, my colleagues and I have come into the new year busily engaged in several important projects that will help keep this momentum moving forward.

- For example, we have undertaken, in concert with each of the universities, a reexamination and clarification of the mission of each constituent institution. Over the coming months we will be bringing this to the BoG for your discussion, debate and ultimately your approval. This is central to the role of the BoG and the System.
- Matt Brody and his HR team are working with Governor Kellie Blue on the implementation of the chancellor incentive compensation plan that you have approved. This will reward leadership that keeps the UNC System on track to meet its long-term Strategic Plan goals.
- Pete Brunstetter is leading our efforts to implement the terms of our agreement with Vidant Health – all directed at getting to a constructive and mutually beneficial collaboration between ECU’s Brody School of Medicine and Vidant Health. This is vital to fulfilling our joint mission to benefit the people of Eastern North Carolina.
- Clinton Carter and his team are working with Temple Sloan on an exciting proposal for an improved and consolidated process for debt issuance to the constituent institutions.
- This same team is working with the universities regarding their request for tuition and fee changes. We expect to spend more time discussing this important matter in the coming months.
- Andrew Kelly and his team will be leading our efforts to explore “Income Sharing,” a relatively new idea that is helping students around the country finance their coursework without going into debt. “Income sharing” is an innovative new finance model in which students commit to pay a share of their future income stream to their alma mater in exchange for a reduction in their up-front costs of attending the college.
- We’ve also received a \$25.7 million grant through the federal GEAR UP program, which will allow us to fund college readiness and success initiatives in economically struggling areas. This work will ensure that more students get on track at an early age to attain a college degree.

Of course, the lack of a State budget for the current fiscal year is a source of great frustration, real disappointment, and deep concern that this will hurt our institutions, our faculty, our students, and the communities we serve.

Without a new state budget in place, we will be unable to pursue major capital projects and much-needed infrastructure repairs. Enrollment growth, including future NC Promise cohorts, will go unfunded. Faculty and staff will not receive raises, which means our institutions will be much less competitive when it comes to retaining and hiring the best talent.

- I am working closely with the chancellors to help them solidify plans to try to cope with the budget shortfalls.
- Each of them has submitted institution-specific impact statements. The System Office finance team is checking these for accuracy. We want them to be “just the facts.”

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- We will be sending the BoG a full set of these impact statements in the next day or two. We also will be delivering them to the leaders of the General Assembly and the Governor.
- Everyone wants to know – when will this get dealt with? We do not know – but it is April at the earliest.
- At the same time, we are working intently on the FY21 Budget proposal to the State. Our goal is to put together a compelling Budget proposal for you to consider and that the Legislature and the Governor will support, pending your approval. In particular we want to frame a more persuasive ask regarding compensation for our faculty and staff colleagues.
- I would like to take a moment to thank Faculty Assembly Chair David Green for penning the recently published op-ed in support of UNC System 2020 budget requests. His forward-looking initiative staked out a powerful argument: securing more funds for faculty salaries and other budget priorities is the surest way for the State to get the most return out of its investment in higher education.

There is no getting around the fact that the impasse in Raleigh is going to hurt. But the UNC System is resilient. Through collaboration, we will work to find ways to make sure the current crisis does not do irreparable damage to our institutions. But let me be very clear – we do not have a reserve at the System Office to cover these issues.

Finally, I'd like to report that chancellor searches at our institutions are gathering momentum. A new chancellor should be named at the School of the Arts by May and at Fayetteville State University by this fall. Meanwhile, at UNC Charlotte, the search committee has gathered public input regarding the leadership profile and expects interviews to begin early this year. ECU's search committee has just started to hold meetings and is currently in the process of gathering public input and stakeholder feedback. In the coming months, I will continue to provide regular updates regarding the status of these searches.

As ever, we appreciate the Board's leadership and the tangible support for our endeavors that we find in this Board Room, at our institutions, and in every community.

Thank you.



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UNC System Office

The UNC System Office has been awarded a new, seven-year \$25.7 million Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. This is the fourth statewide GEAR UP grant that the UNC System has secured since 2000. By 2026, GEAR UP North Carolina will provide academic preparation and college exploration services to nearly 35,000 students and their families.

The UNC System's Division of Strategy and Policy will partner with the College Foundation of North Carolina, the NC Community College System, NC State Education Assistance Authority, College Foundation, Inc., and select local agencies. Based on initial criteria of the grant award, 26 education agencies, including 88 middle schools and 67 high schools, will be eligible to participate.

Appalachian State University

Appalachian State has been recognized — for the fourth consecutive year — as a national leader for the number of alumni who are National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT). The university topped the NBPTS' 2019 list of "Top 50 Alma Maters by Total Number of NBCTs," with 2,057 alumni having earned the national credential to date. Appalachian was founded in 1899 as a teachers college, and school systems in all of NC's 100 counties employ at least one graduate of Appalachian's Reich College of Education.

For 2019–20, the U.S. Department of Education has provided more than \$4 million in continued support for the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) at Appalachian State. GEAR UP impacts approximately 15,000 students from 11 Western North Carolina counties: Alleghany, Ashe, Burke, Clay, Graham, Madison, Rutherford, Swain, Watauga, Wilkes and Yancey. Additionally, Appalachian has provided a \$2,748,295 matching funds commitment for the project.

Appalachian State signed an agreement with the American University of Ras Al Khaimah (AURAK) in the United Arab Emirates that establishes a 3+1 undergraduate program in hospitality management. Qualified AURAK students who have successfully completed three years of a bachelor's curriculum in business with a major in hospitality management will be accepted into the Department of Management in the Walker College of Business. The program was developed at AURAK's request to meet the human resources needs of the hospitality industry in Ras Al Khaimah, one of seven emirates.

Appalachian State's Army ROTC program, which currently enrolls 140 cadets, celebrated its 50th anniversary. The Mountaineer Battalion, launched in 1969, has commissioned 950 officers, including Lt. Gen. Robert Ashley '84, director of the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency, and Maj. Gen. John Evans '88, commanding general of U.S. Army Cadet Command. ROTC is a leadership course that combines college curriculum with field training. Upon graduation, cadets earn the bar of a second lieutenant.

East Carolina University

ECU celebrated its 111th fall commencement on Dec. 13, with nearly 2,300 students receiving diplomas. Dr. Laura Gerald, president of the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, provided the keynote address, telling students about growing up "on the wrong side of the tracks" in Lumberton, going to Harvard, becoming a doctor and eventually state health director, and then heading a fund that provides \$24 million in grants annually to improve the health and quality of life of vulnerable residents in the state.



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The ECU Chancellor Search Committee met for the first time on Dec. 10. The search committee's chair, Vern Davenport, encouraged the committee members to embrace the importance of the work they are beginning. Interim President Roper noted the characteristics that he believed should be at the forefront as the committee looks at potential candidates: unwavering integrity and credibility, commitment to the value of public higher education, dedication to public service, and a balance of professional and life experiences that would allow them to run an organization the size of ECU. Listening sessions are planned for January, and an online survey is available for stakeholder feedback and public input about the desired qualities for the next chancellor.

Dr. Teresa Ryan, an ECU assistant professor of engineering, has received a \$370,000 grant to continue sound propagation research to help protect military personnel. The goal of the research, funded through the Office of Naval Research, is to help improve a numeric model based on the atmospheric and sea conditions that will inform commanders of an operation how close a ship can get to an enemy shoreline without being heard. That's important not only to protect the ship from enemy fire, but also to protect the lives of those onboard as well as assault personnel as they prepare to storm the beach.

Elizabeth City State University

ECSU has been awarded a \$649,566 grant from the NSF for the advancement of STEM education. According to Annemarie Delgado, director of sponsored programs at ECSU, the grant will provide scholarships to 20 rural, low-income, academically talented students. These undergraduates, majoring in biology or mathematics, will create a "Living and Learning Community" within Viking Village. The goal is to, "recruit, graduate and prepare participants for graduate degrees and/or the STEM workforce." Additional student support services include a one-week summer residential computational skills camp, peer academic coaching, and mentoring.

A group of ECSU students traveled to Oscar C. Smith High School in Virginia in December with two trunk-loads of food. Christian Jones, Greg Miller, Dominick Cotton, and Kevin Caldwell unloaded the food and began helping the high school establish its own food pantry. The donation launched ECSU's Pantry Pioneer Program and is a result of an alumna's desire to help students in the school where she teaches. ECSU senior Eyricka Johnson launched a campaign to educate and register students, and she accepted an award on behalf of ECSU for the effort. The history major attended a conference in Washington D.C., where she was given a "Silver Seal" award by the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge. The organization promotes student engagement in elections, and ECSU was recognized for her efforts in registering at least 40 percent of the student body to vote.

Gov. Roy Cooper signed House Bill 200: 2019 Storm Recovery bill into law, giving ECSU needed aid in the wake of water damage caused by Hurricane Dorian in September. ECSU is slated to receive \$5.2 million in storm relief. According to the university's director of facilities, Dennis Leary, water infiltrated more than 11 buildings on campus through roofs, building seals, and siding.

Fayetteville State University

Chancellor Search Chair Stuart Augustine is working with the Interim President Roper to determine search committee membership with a goal to have a new chancellor named by fall 2020.



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Interim Chancellor Peggy Valentine and the president of Central Carolina Community College (CCCC) signed an agreement that permits CCCC associate degree graduates to complete an online bachelor's degree at FSU at a total cost of no more than \$10,000 in out-of-pocket expenses, or approximately \$5,000 at CCCC and \$5,000 at FSU. Students eligible for federal and state grants will likely pay less. The \$10K Pathway Plan opens the door to programs in accounting, birth through kindergarten (non-teaching), business administration (general), criminal justice, fire and emergency services administration, intelligence studies, nursing, interdisciplinary studies, psychology, and sociology.

FSU is among four other HBCUs to receive a \$300,000 grant from UNCF (United Negro College Fund) to create a Liberal Arts Innovation Center-with a STEM Focus. These funds will help the institution develop best practices to provide students with the interdisciplinary combination of soft skills and technical literacy needed for future success.

Twenty-seven students from FSU's Broadwell College of Business & Economics made history by earning BB&T Emerging Leaders Certification. They are the first at FSU to earn this credential and join the ranks of about 7,000 undergraduate and graduate students in the nation. The BB&T Emerging Leaders Certification program is a highly interactive certification program for college and university students, which focuses on self-awareness to lead others more effectively. After completing the program, students are equipped with practical tools and strategies to become more effective leaders. The BB&T Leadership Institute has 55 university partners that offer this certification training.

N.C. A&T State University

A recent report from 24/7 Wall Street places N.C. A&T among the nation's 100 colleges and universities where admissions applications have increased the most over a six-year span, defying a national trend of declining college enrollment. A&T ranked no. 68, with a near 60 percent increase in applications from 2012-13 to 2017-18. That was prior to the most recent academic year when applications shot up by an additional 6,000, resulting in an enrollment of 12,556 and A&T's continued reign as the nation's largest HBCU for the sixth consecutive year. Southern New Hampshire University topped the list, which also included such notable institutions as Georgia Tech, Rutgers, Howard, and the University of Washington.

For the third consecutive year and the fourth in the past five, the Aggies have won the black college football national championship. They beat Alcorn State 64-44 in an electrifying Celebration Bowl game in Atlanta's Mercedes-Benz Stadium. The team's academic progress rate (APR) of 981 surpasses the national average for all Division I football programs – public, private, Football Bowl Subdivision, and Football Championship Subdivision—as measured by the NCAA.

The NC Department of Transportation established the N.C. Transportation Center of Excellence in Connected and Autonomous Vehicle Technology (NC-CAV) at N.C. A&T with a \$1-million grant in December. The center recognizes A&T's national leadership as evidenced by its TECHLAV Center of Excellence in Autonomy and leading performance in the international General Motors/Society of Automotive Engineers AutoDrive Challenge, among other accomplishments. In addition to a test track that will be built for the center in Gateway Research Park, NC-CAV will have use of a road exclusively for autonomous vehicles, which will be constructed between the university and downtown Greensboro.



North Carolina Central University

The NCCU Jazz Ensemble will perform at Lincoln Center in New York City during the debut of the Jack Rudin Jazz Championship, a two-day invitational band competition. The event will feature sets from 10 ensembles chosen from among prominent university jazz programs. NCCU is the only HBCU represented. Honoring the legacy of Jack Rudin, a longtime supporter of Jazz at Lincoln Center, the competition will provide participants with quality musical literature and a forum for celebrating their achievements, while instilling higher education methodology and philosophy to the Jazz at Lincoln Center programs. Ensembles will also participate in rehearsals, workshops, and competition. The final competition will feature performances by the top three bands, followed by an awards ceremony.

NCCU held its 134th Commencement exercises on December 14. In total, the university awarded more than 700 degrees. There were 489 bachelor's degrees, 214 master's degrees, and 11 law degrees. At the Graduate and Professional Ceremony, the university conferred 225 degrees, including 76 for Master of Science, 53 for Master of Arts, and 31 for Master of Public Administration. There were 484 bachelor's degrees were awarded, including 287 BS and 74 BA degrees.

Technology and networking hardware company Cisco Systems Inc. has contributed equipment and technical services to NCCU to enhance the university's ongoing \$5 million campus network upgrade. Network improvements, which will assure a faster and more robust internet service with lower power consumption requirements, have been a strategic priority for Chancellor Johnson O. Akinleye. The upgrade will bring seamless Wi-Fi service to classrooms and learning spaces, research facilities, residence halls, and administrative offices, as more than 3,000 new wireless access points are installed.

NC State University

Two NC State faculty members have been elected fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Carol K. Hall, Camille Dreyfus Distinguished University Professor of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, was elected for contributions to the field of thermodynamics. Jacqueline Krim, Distinguished University Professor of Physics, was elected for contributions to the understanding of atomic-scale friction, wetting, and surface roughening and for exemplary efforts in scientific outreach and diversity.

Three NC State faculty members have been named fellows of the National Academy of Inventors. Rodolphe Barrangou, Todd R. Klaenhammer Distinguished Professor in Probiotics Research, is a pioneer in the discovery of the adaptive bacterial immune system known as CRISPR. Kenneth R. Swartzel, William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor Emeritus in the Department of Food, Bioprocessing and Nutrition Sciences, has developed new food preservation processes. Carlos Pignataro, an adjunct lecturer in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and a distinguished engineer at Cisco, is an expert in network architecture.

On Dec. 28, NC State alumna and NASA astronaut Christina Koch set a new record for the longest single spaceflight by a woman: 289 days. Koch is currently serving as a flight engineer aboard the International Space Station. In October, she achieved another milestone when she participated in the first all-female spacewalk in history. Koch earned a bachelor's degree in physics and both a bachelor's and a master's degree in electrical engineering from NC State. She is scheduled to remain on the station for a total of 328 days, departing for Earth in February 2020.



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UNC Asheville

UNC Asheville has launched a new merit scholarship program to recognize students with exceptional academic accomplishments, demonstrated leadership, and potential to be pace-setters in future endeavors in academic life and beyond college. The Chancellor's Scholarship is funded by the Selby and Richard McRae Foundation through a gift of \$250,000. It provides entering students opportunities to acquire skills and knowledge in problem solving necessary to pursue their goals and take their places as leaders and engaged citizens in a rapidly changing society. Each Chancellor's Scholar will receive \$10,000 in scholarship support each year for four years. Chancellor's Scholars also receive an additional \$10,000 during their four years at UNC Asheville to support study abroad, undergraduate research, and internships, which are all hallmarks of the original liberal arts and sciences education at UNC Asheville.

UNC Asheville celebrated works of students and faculty artists at the re-openings of two downtown partnership institutions—the Asheville Art Museum and the Center for Craft. The Asheville Art Museum, in partnership with UNC Asheville, launched the UNC Asheville Student Membership Initiative on January 1, 2020, offering all degree-seeking students at UNC Asheville an active student membership to the museum during their enrollment at the university. Membership includes free admission to the museum.

UNC Asheville celebrated Visiting Fulbright African Research Scholar, Florence Akua Mensah, at the culmination of her semester at the university. Visiting from her home institution of University of Education in Winneba, Ghana, she spent the semester at UNC Asheville collaborating on classes, presentations, and conferences, Mensah dedicated time to working with local nonprofit organizations and school districts focusing on curriculum provisions for inclusive education. She observed classrooms in Buncombe County schools, participated in reading training with Read to Succeed Asheville's Back to School Basic Workshop, and attended events with Mission Children Hospital Family Support Network.

UNC-Chapel Hill

In December, Kevin Guskiewicz was named chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In his first act, he announced a \$5 million investment to help the university study its past, heal from that past, and move forward together.

The Campaign for Carolina closed out 2019 by surpassing \$3 billion of its \$4.25 billion goal.

Carolina's women's field hockey team took home its second consecutive national title. Impressively, they've been undefeated for two seasons in a row.

UNC Charlotte

After gathering input from several in-person campus community listening sessions and soliciting feedback via an online forum, the chancellor search committee, chaired by trustee chair Mike Wilson '93, published the UNC Charlotte chancellor leadership profile. The profile outlines the requirements for the successor to Chancellor Philip L. Dubois, who announced his retirement, effective June 30, 2020.



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External search firm Storbeck/Pimentel Associates is assisting with the recruitment process, and the Committee expects interviews to begin in early 2020.

After the tragedy on campus last April, UNC Charlotte announced the formation of a Niner Nation Remembrance Commission to lead a comprehensive process to determine how to best memorialize the two students who were killed, how to thoughtfully remember the tragedy that occurred on April 30, and how to make a recommendation about the future utilization of Kennedy 236, the classroom where the shootings took place. After receiving the poignant feedback from the families, impacted students, and broader campus community, the Commission worked diligently to formulate the final recommendation, which was submitted to Chancellor Philip L. Dubois in December. Chancellor Dubois expects to finalize his decisions by the end of January.

A new public elementary school developed and operated by education experts at UNC Charlotte will open at the former Amay James Pre-K Center starting in August 2020. Niner University Elementary at Amay James (NUE) is the sixth school across the state created in response to the North Carolina General Assembly's UNC Laboratory School Initiative, a program created to provide enhanced educational programming to students in low-performing schools. In its first year of operation, NUE will serve 150 students in grades K-2, adding an additional grade level each year through 2024. At capacity, the school will serve 300 students in grades K-5. NUE will be operated by UNC Charlotte but will receive support services from Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, including transportation and meals for students.

The Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) named UNC Charlotte the winner for its 2019 Degree Completion Award, which recognizes institutions that apply innovative approaches to improving degree completion while ensuring educational quality. Since 2009, UNC Charlotte has increased its six-year graduation rate by 10 percent and four-year graduation rate by 17 percent. More than 90 percent of incoming first-time-in-college students take a course centered on building their commitment to success, developing critical thinking skills, and enhancing cultural awareness.

UNC Greensboro

UNC Greensboro was recently ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as the No. 1 university in North Carolina for social mobility. UNCG is one of just five universities in the country with more than 50% of students eligible for low-income Pell grants and a graduation rate of more than 50%.

UNC Greensboro announced that the SERVE Center has been awarded a five-year, \$15.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education for a regional comprehensive center designed to improve educational opportunities and academic outcomes for disadvantaged and low-income students.

A new UNC Greensboro & Cone Health center connects immigrants and refugees to community resources. Linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic barriers often prevent immigrants and refugees from receiving adequate health care. The Immigrant Health Access Project (IHAP) utilizes the community health worker model to reduce these barriers and promote access to care for uninsured immigrant and refugee adults in Greater Greensboro.



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UNC Wilmington

UNCW has been reclassified as a “Doctoral University: High Research Activity” by Carnegie and is now ranked among the Top 100 Best Public National Universities (# 92) by *U.S. News & World Report*.

UNCW has launched its first engineering program: Coastal Engineering. This is the only coastal engineering undergraduate degree being offered in the country.

More than \$400 million in construction on campus has just finished, is active, or is being planned for the very near future.

UNC School of the Arts

The search for the UNC School of the Arts chancellor is underway. The search committee is in the early stages of reviewing candidates with a timeline to name a new chancellor by May 2020.

The December production of *The Nutcracker* by UNCSA broke all-time records for sales and attendance. More than 16,500 people saw one of the 12 performances. The production, called “spectacular and inspiring” by the *Winston-Salem Journal*, grossed just under \$700,000, more than any other year. Proceeds support student scholarships, a pillar of the school’s *Powering Creativity* comprehensive fundraising campaign.

Evelyn Robinson, a high school senior who danced the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy in the recent UNCSA production of *The Nutcracker*, has been selected by the prestigious Prix de Lausanne international ballet competition. She is one of only 10 Americans chosen for the world-renowned competition, which takes place in February in Switzerland with a total of 84 competitors from 27 countries. Robinson was recently featured in the national publication *Pointe Magazine*. Faculty member Jennet Zerbe is her coach and will accompany her to the Prix, along with School of Dance Dean Susan Jaffe.

UNCSA placed two finalists and one merit winner in the National YoungArts, a prestigious visual, literary and performing arts competition. Finalists were Amira Oguntoyinbo from Hillsborough, a 2019 graduate of the Visual Arts Program, who entered the photography category, and Aron Stornaiuolo, a composition major from Charlotte, who entered in the voice/jazz category. Finalists had the opportunity to participate in YoungArts Week in January in Miami, a weeklong intensive offering master classes and workshops with internationally renowned leaders in the arts. Lucy Calaway, a soprano from Winston-Salem, was a merit award winner in the voice/classical competition.

Western Carolina University

WCU’s 535-member Pride of the Mountains Marching Band represented the state of North Carolina and the UNC System when it marched 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.



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WCU held two commencement ceremonies on Dec. 14. A total of nearly 850 graduates participated in the ceremonies, including more than 100 first-generation college students and about 200 students who received scholarship assistance to help them attend WCU.

Two members of WCU's Mathematics and Computer Science Department have been honored by the North Carolina Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Sloan Despeaux, professor of mathematics, and Nathan Borchelt, associate professor of mathematics, were recently presented the council's Innovator Award for their work in establishing and sustaining the N.C. Network of Math Teachers' Circles. The purpose of the Innovator Award is to recognize and reward those who have made an outstanding and noteworthy contribution to mathematics education.

Leaders of WCU and Haywood Community College in December signed a memorandum of understanding that guarantees admission to WCU for all graduates of the community college who satisfy specific requirements spelled out in the document. Titled the Catamount Navigator Program, the agreement builds upon the existing North Carolina Comprehensive Articulation Agreement governing the transfer of credits between the North Carolina Community College System and the University of North Carolina System. WCU previously signed similar memoranda with Asheville-Buncombe Technical College, Southwestern Community College, and Blue Ridge Community College.

Winston-Salem State University

WSSU has received nearly \$2 million in new grants from the National Science Foundation (NSF), which will expand research opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students at the university. Since May, WSSU has received six grants from the NSF. The grants will provide stipends for about 22 WSSU undergraduate students each year to conduct paid research. The grants also will support paid research for WSSU graduate students.

WSSU's Department of Rehabilitation Counseling has recently received two five-year U.S. Department of Education grants, totaling \$1.75 million, to help address a nationwide shortage of rehabilitation counseling professionals. The grants, through the DOE's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, will pay for tuition, stipends, and professional development activities, such as attending and presenting at conferences, for students in the Master of Science in Rehabilitation Counseling program.

Two WSSU business students have been selected as Forbes Under 30 scholars. Lauryn Ledyard, a senior business administration major from Gaithersburg, Maryland, and Jordan Reaves, a senior finance major from Charlotte, were among the 1,000 high-achieving undergraduate and graduate students from across the country selected to attend the Forbes Under 30 summit.

North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics

NCSSM co-hosted with Duke University the 15th annual State of North Carolina Undergraduate Research and Creativity Symposium (SNCURCS) in November. Though not yet college undergraduates, the quality of NCSSM students' original research has long allowed them to present at the symposium, and this was the first year that a high school co-hosted the event. Some 500 undergraduate scholars in all disciplines from across NC shared poster displays, presentations, exhibits, and creative performances. Nearly 60



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presentations, from explorations of machine learning to the decision-making process in baseball, were the work of NCSSM residential, online, and Summer Ventures in Science and Mathematics students.

NCSSM will host the school's 28th annual American Indian Powwow in February. American Indians from NC, Virginia, and SC will travel to Durham for a day of music, dance, arts, crafts, and food in the Charles R. Eilber Physical Education Center on NCSSM's campus, giving students, prospective students and the community the chance to learn more about and experience American Indian culture. Akwe:kon, the American Indian cultural club at the school, partners with the Office of Admissions to host the event.

Director of the National Institutes of Health, Dr. Francis Collins (a UNC-Chapel Hill School of Medicine graduate), will visit NCSSM students in January to discuss how deep knowledge of the human genome is igniting a life science revolution in precision medicine. Collins directed the Human Genome Project, the successful international effort to sequence the human genome.

Affiliates

UNC Press

The University of North Carolina Press announced the creation of the Marcie Cohen Ferris and William R. Ferris Imprint for high-profile, general-interest books about the American South. Ferris & Ferris Books will be supported by a new multimillion-dollar endowment at the Press. "The American South is the ideal canvas on which to create a better understanding of our nation and the world. These funds allow us to commission, acquire, and market books by the nation's leading authors who share that vision but who require the type of financial support normally out of reach for a university press," said John Sherer, the Spangler Family Director of UNC Press.

UNC TV

UNC-TV's multi-year "Rescan" project successfully completed 8 of the 11 required transmitter transitions in September. This complicated endeavor was aided by our multi-platform "Rescan Day" campaign, a cross-departmental effort employing extensive on-air promotional videos, digital marketing, and social media messaging. The final project will result in transitioning 11 of our 12 full power transmitters and optimal signal strength by 2020.

GSK's recent \$400,000 award, their fifth and largest, continues to support the development of the next generation of innovators through multimedia curriculum-aligned science educational materials and Sci NC programming. GSK's previous gift supported UNC-TV's Sci NC vertical that reached 4.64M viewers in less than 18 months via content initiatives including 44 feature stories, 682 social media posts, 52 web videos, and 17 live local and national presentations.

UNC-TV increased audience engagement across all platforms through original, bespoke integrations. It piloted the live, in-studio concert series as part of an extensive integrated campaign leading to the premiere of Ken Burns' latest extraordinary documentary, *Country Music*. The campaign achieved record digital traffic and social engagement, and over 1,000 people attended the three in-studio concerts and four screening events. Also, beginning in August, the Children's Media and Education Team inspired over 30,000 parents, caregivers, educators, and children through live family exhibits and workshops, including Rootle Block Party LIVE! Events in Orange, New Hanover, and Beaufort Counties.