

MCC News: Top North Carolina Community College News Stories of 2007

The North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) has selected their "Top Ten" news items from across the state in 2007. Of that list, the Marketing and Public Affairs office of Martin Community College has identified five news stories of significance to MCC and its tri-county service area of Martin, Bertie, and Washington Counties.

Top Five Stories in Community Colleges in 2007

1. Changing of the Guard at North Carolinas community colleges.

In March, H. Martin Lancaster, president, North Carolina Community College System since 1997, announced his plans to retire on May 1, 2008. After an eight-month search that considered candidates from across the nation, the State Board of Community Colleges on December 6 selected Dr. Scott Ralls, the president of Craven Community College in New Bern as President Lancasters successor. Dr. Ralls, who served as vice president for economic and workforce development with the System Office before going to Craven Community College, is a native North Carolinian with degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Maryland. He will become the system president on May 1, 2008. The year also saw a record number of changes among individual community college presidents, as many veteran leaders retired or moved on to other jobs.

For more information, http://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/News_Releases/scott_ralls_new_system_president.htm.

2. Dr. Dallas Herring, father of the North Carolina Community College System, passes away.

In January 2007, Dr. Dallas Herring passed away. The Duplin County native was chair of the State Board of Education from 1957 to 1977. During that time, he worked with Governors Luther Hodges and Terry Sanford to establish the North Carolina Community College System.

For more information, see <http://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/Connections/ccnews044.pdf>.

3. Community colleges clarify admission policy on undocumented students.

In November, David Sullivan, assistant to the president for legal affairs, issued a Numbered Memo clarifying the System's policy of enrollment of undocumented individuals in curriculum (for-credit) programs. For several years, each of the System's 58 community colleges had discretion in decisions about enrollment. At the time of the memo, about 35 permitted enrollment. After careful study of North Carolina's law and Administrative Code and State Board policy, Sullivan concluded that individual institutions could not bar students on non-academic criteria and extended the enrollment system-wide. Undocumented students in curriculum courses must pay out-of-state tuition, with some exceptions as details in the memo. The full text of the memo, a public record, is posted on the website for the System Office at http://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/Numbered_Memos/docs/MemosFor2007/cc07-275.pdf and also President Lancasters statement on the policy is posted at http://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/News_Releases/Statement_Undocumented.htm

4. New and Expanding Industry Training Program (NEIT) continues to grow.

NEIT provides free customized training to qualified companies adding at least 12 jobs. This year, the program worked on 208 projects and trained 19,380 workers. According to Willa Dickens, vice president for economic and workforce development, System Office, the system has committed more than \$4 million to efforts that have the potential to add hundreds of jobs all over North Carolina.

For more information, see http://www.ncccs.cc.nc.us/Business_and_Industry/neit.htm and http://www.ncccommunitycolleges.edu/News_Releases/NEITgrowth.htm

Note: this is just one of many programs available through the North Carolina Community College System. For more information, see <http://www.ncccommunitycolleges.edu/businessEducationAndTraining.htm>

5. Learn and Earn online latest entry in fast-growing distance learning in community colleges.

Governor Easley's Learn and Earn program is developing quite a following at community colleges. The initiative permits students in participating public and charter high schools to take a variety of online college-credit courses at no cost to them or to their families. Students earn both high school and college credit for completed courses. The courses are open to students in ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades, without regard to age. Students may take online courses with colleges outside of the current service areas of their local community colleges and school districts, making this a truly statewide program. The State Board of Community Colleges has significant flexibility in resolving any barriers identified in collaboration with the Department of Public Instruction.

The North Carolina Community College System currently enrolls more than 800,000 students a year in 58 comprehensive community colleges. Last year, enrollments in for-credit distance learning courses topped 180,000, with thousands more in continuing education. For information about community college participation in Learn and Earn Online, contact Antonio Jordan at the North Carolina Community College System Office, 919-807-7133. <http://vlc.ncccommunitycolleges.edu/LaE/>.

For more information, see http://www.ncccommunitycolleges.edu/News_Releases/LearnEarnNov07.htm.

For more information about a particular story, contact Peggy Beach, NCCCS Public Affairs office, at (919) 807-6964 or beachm@ncccommunitycolleges.edu.

MCC News is a compilation of press releases from Martin Community College.

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