

University's Position Portrayed Inaccurately in Pine Needle Article

A front-page story in the previous issue of this newspaper led to numerous misunderstandings, stemming in part from the use of the word “recognition” in the headline and the lead sentence.

As some local readers will know, the term “recognition” has a particular meaning in government relations with Native Americans and in historical record-keeping. The use of the term—in an article that was originally about a list of Tuscarora-related recommendations that had been sent by an alumnus to multiple offices on campus—was naïve.

The university has no authority, role or interest in “recognizing” any race or ethnic group in any legal or political sense of the word, according to numerous officials on campus, including the university spokesperson, university attorneys and the Office of Student Affairs.

Federal “recognition” involves the government-sanctioned rights of tribes to exist with some independence known as “sovereignty,” and their tribal lands may be held in trust. Federally recognized tribes may be eligible for federal grants and services.

State recognition varies in the U.S. based on state laws. The state of North Carolina recognizes eight tribes within its borders, including the federally recognized Eastern Band of Cherokee.

Some North Carolinians of indigenous descent want recognition as “Tuscarora” and have organized around this cause. Last fall their petition to the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs was denied.

The federally recognized Tuscarora Nation, headquartered in Niagara County, N.Y., has stated through its attorneys that “all groups claiming sovereign Tuscarora status and using Tuscarora cultural patrimony to support their claims of sovereignty must cease such actions immediately.”

Some UNCP alumni and students involved with this local political organizing have also challenged the representation of Native history on campus, as mentioned in the March 4 Pine Needle article erroneously titled “UNCP Makes Moves to Recognize Tuscarora.”

For example, alumnus Donnie Red Hawk McDowell sent a letter on Jan. 28 to at least five offices on campus with recommendations, including some for UNCP's five-year strategic plan, that mostly centered on curriculum revisions, diversity programming, labeling and

naming conventions used in telling the school's official history, and a critique of state lawmaker Hamilton McMillan, who wrote the legislation that founded the school in 1887.

Reporter Stephanie Sellers' original lead sentence that she submitted for Pine Needle publication was, “Some offices on campus are planning ways to bring North Carolina's Tuscarora People into UNCP's inclusion and diversity program initiatives, instill recognition and invite speakers.” At some stage in the editors' review before going to the printer, that lead was shortened to, “Some offices on campus are planning ways to recognize North Carolina's Tuscarora People at UNCP.” Either way, both versions convey an unclear concept of recognizing someone.

Space for a more accurate headline was shortened at the last minute to make room on the front page for sharing the chancellor's memo about the novel coronavirus.

The university issued an official statement afterward that pointed out “recognition of American Indian tribes is not a responsibility of UNC Pembroke as the authority to do so is a responsibility of the North Carolina Commission on Indian Affairs, as set forth in North Carolina General Statutes section 143B-406 (1977). The university greatly respects the authority of the Commission and the integrity of its procedures to provide legal recognition to American Indian groups in our state.”

A quote from the director of UNCP's Museum of the Southeast American Indian that summarized how donated artifacts' origins are typically identified was deleted when editing the story to fit the newly laid-out front page.

As for educational and social programming on campus, the university clarified, “UNC Pembroke supports all Native students regardless of tribal affiliation.

UNCP serves students affiliated with more than 32 state and federally recognized tribes, and a number who identify as Tuscarora. UNCP works to make all students, both Native and non-Native, respected and welcomed on our inclusive campus.”

Pine Needle editors are sorry for any ambiguities, factual errors, gaps or miscommunication that occurred during the preparation of the March 4 article. The Pine Needle is a student organization, the views of which do not represent The University of North Carolina, its employees or Board of Trustees.



As graduation nears, many colleges consider how the pandemic will impact commencement exercises. **Photo/ Alan Berner/Seattle Times/TNS**

Students Voice Concerns about Spring Graduation

Ky'Aire Goode
Editor-in-Chief

Seniors set to graduate in the Spring semester are now faced with disappointment since commencement ceremonies for the spring “will be disrupted,” according to UNC System Interim President Bill Roper.

At a special meeting of the UNC Board of Governors, Roper announced that each university's chancellor, with input from faculty and the student body, will decide if and how they will celebrate at their colleges.

“The health and safety of students, staff and faculty are the top priority,” Roper said.

Seniors were largely displeased with the board's decision.

“They're breaking...students' hearts with this. Especially first-generation students. We looked forward to that. That walk has been our motivation for the past four years, and to have it taken from us because of the possibility that this virus will still be around [would be] heartbreaking,” senior Amara Watters said.

Senior UNCP student Jeremiah Kelly was disappointed with the board failing to mandate that schools reschedule graduations for a later date.

Student Government Association representatives have informally

polled students about options for having graduation in the Summer or to combine with December graduates.

“Multiple universities do Summer commencement,” Kelly said.

Stasia Maddox, a senior psychology major, suggested that the university commence students by department and allow family to livestream the events to keep crowds small, but maintain the tradition.

Students also feel that some of the meaning behind their hard work would be taken away without a graduation celebration.

“I'm literally heartbroken right now. My Bachelor's in Psychology means the world to me. I went through hell and back mentally and physically. It just wouldn't feel the same if I won't have the celebration I deserve,” Maddox said.

Kelly echoed the sentiment and outlined the adversity he fought through to reach the point where he could graduate.

“From being a transfer student to being a young parent to fighting against academic probation to fighting and overcoming collegiate depression to knowing my aunt would not be able to make my graduation because she passed... I wanted to finish [school] for her. Without this moment the story [would] forever feel unfinished,” he said.

CARE Resource Center Still Serving Community

Zachary Young
Staff Writer

The Office for Community & Civic Engagement continues to address food insecurity on campus and in the community amid the COVID-19 outbreak. The CARE Resource Center located in Wellons Hall Suite C is a food pantry & professional clothing closet that is available to students, faculty, staff and community members.

CARE provides a variety of

items such as bakery, dairy, frozen, meat, nonperishable goods and produce. In addition to food and professional clothing, CARE offers hygiene items as well.

CCE Director Christie Poteet is confident in CARE's efforts to “continue its mission of alleviating hunger on our campus by providing access to food for our students, faculty, and staff.”

With all of CCE's programs aimed towards the community, many challenges are being faced during this unprecedented time.

“Right now, our responsibility is to be good stewards in our community by moving to virtual engagement... Our office mission is to help students think about how they can support and engage our community when they are most in need. We are thinking about ways that we can continue our mission while practicing social distancing and adhering to the recommendations made by the CDC and governing bodies,” Poteet said.

CARE will be open Monday,

Wednesday and Friday from 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. until further notice. Any updates regarding the hours of operation for CARE can be found on their website.

“We recognize this will be a very difficult time for a lot of individuals and as long as we can safely provide resources to our campus community, we will do so,” Poteet said.

For questions contact the CARE Resource Center via email care@uncp.edu or by phone at 910-775-4367.

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CCE and Citizen-U Party to the Polls on Super Tuesday

Zachary Young
Staff Writer

The Office for Community and Civic Engagement (CCE) in association with UNCP Votes hosted a “Party to the Polls” event on Super Tuesday in the UC lounge in an effort to promote political literacy and to encourage students to exercise their right to vote.

CCE shuttled students who live on campus to the voting poll location at Pembroke Rural Fire Department on Prospect Road in Pembroke.

“With UNCP being a minority-serving institution, I would like to see the campus have a higher turnout and be represented in politics. I truly believe minorities are underrepresented in politics,” said Jorge Castillo, a freshman Student Service Leader with CCE who helped organize the event.

Red Springs resident Caleb McNeil was at the polls campaigning for Jeff McNeill, who was running for Robeson County School Board District 4.

McNeil is a registered Republican and a first-time voter. He says he is a firm



Students gather for the “Party to the Polls” event in the University Center on Super Tuesday. **PN Photo/ Zachary Young**

believer in exercising the civic responsibility of voting.

“Every vote counts. People say it doesn’t count, but it really does,” McNeil said.

Sophomore Adonis Jackson, a Bernie Sanders supporter, says two of the biggest issues he sees are healthcare and corruption in Washington, D.C.

“We really need someone to stand up to big corporations, the pharmaceutical industry and the military industrialization complex.”

Jackson still plans to support the Democratic nominee even if Bernie Sanders does not receive the nomination.

Pembroke resident Roman McNeil is registered as an unaffiliated voter. He has voted Democratic in previous elections but voted along Republican lines in this primary, and plans to vote Republican in the November general election.

In regard to the Democratic candidates McNeil believes that Bernie Sanders would be the strongest opponent to President Donald Trump.

“They [candidates who have dropped out] are supporting Biden just to stop Sanders. He [Sanders] is completely different.”

Nelia Crane, another Pembroke resident and registered Democrat, shared

her thoughts on our current administration.

Crane urges all young people to vote “Get out and vote. If you don’t vote, keep your lips closed and don’t complain about the people who go in office.”

The candidate who secures 1,991 delegates will receive the party’s nomination.

Currently, former Vice President Joe Biden leads Senator Bernie Sanders by a margin of 1,201 delegates to 896.

The general election will be Tuesday, Nov. 3. You can contact your local board of elections office to find out where your polling location is.

Novel Coronavirus: How ‘Novel’ Is it?

Mitchell Doub
Staff Writer

The events of the past two weeks have been unprecedented.

Public schools and universities are shutting their doors, gatherings of 10 or more are discouraged, flights from Europe and many other regions have been banned, sporting events are canceled, and most entertainment venues are shuttered. Disney World, which never closes—is closed.

The coronavirus was first identified in late fall in Wuhan, China.

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services states that Coronaviruses are a large group of viruses that can cause illnesses in animals and humans.

They commonly circulate in the United States and usually cause upper respiratory symptoms such as cough or runny nose, although some can cause more serious illness. They often spread through the air by coughing or sneezing or through close personal contact.

Seasonal outbreaks of respiratory viruses are not new, but the coronavirus outbreak has captured the attention of public health officials.

According to the National Institutes of Health and the NCDHHS, respiratory viruses generally have a much higher mortality rate in the elderly, the young and those with severe preexisting medical



On a normally busy Friday, the indoor and outdoor seats at Chapman’s Restaurant in Southern Pines remain empty during the global pandemic. **Submitted photo.**

conditions such as COPD, diabetes and kidney disease.

According to the World Health Organization, as of March 24, there are 372,755 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 16,231 deaths.

The United States has 42,164 cases with 471 deaths (1.1% mortality rate). Italy appears to be one of the world’s trouble spots with 63,927 cases and 6,077 deaths (9.5% mortality rate). South Korea, on the other end of the spectrum, has 9037 confirmed cases with 120 deaths (1.3% mortality rate).

According to WHO, a 2003 SARS (Severe acute respiratory syndrome) outbreak sickened 8,098 people leading to 774 deaths (9.6% mortality rate). SARS is still active and is in the coronavirus family.

MERS (Middle East respiratory syndrome) is ongoing with 2519 confirmed cases and 866 deaths (34% mortality rate). MERS is also in the coronavirus family.

According to the Centers for Disease Control projections, this season has seen 370,000 Americans hospitalized by the flu with 22,000 deaths (5.9% mortality rate for those admitted to a hospital).

Between April 2009, and April 2010, the CDC estimates that the H1N1 influenza pandemic caused 61 million illnesses, 273,304 hospitalizations and 12,469 deaths in the U.S. alone (a 4.6% mortality rate if a person was sick enough to be hospitalized and less than a tenth of 1% if they weren’t). The CDC estimates that as many as half a million people died world wide.

The granddaddy of all viral pandemics occurred between 1918-1920.

The Spanish flu is estimated by the CDC to have infected almost one third of the earth’s population (500 million people) and killed 50 million (a 10% mortality rate).

In comparison, the advent of the respirator, anti-virals and other

supportive health measures are credited with bringing the COVID-19 worldwide mortality rate down to 4.4%.

The WHO estimates that worldwide, the mortality rate for people without a severe preexisting health condition is 0.9%.

That means that worldwide, on average, 99.1% of those infected (as long as they are otherwise healthy) will recover. The danger remains high though, for the elderly and the infirm.

Statistics from WHO, CDC and NIH show there are over 3000 species of Corona virus with seven known to affect humans, and one of those is actually the cause of the common cold.

On a percentage basis, MERS and SARS were much more deadly than COVID-19 (34%, 10% and 4.4% respectively).

On a sheer numbers basis, the Spanish flu killed 50 million, the swine flu killed over half a million whereas, to date, COVID-19 has killed 16,231.

SPORTS



Men’s Basketball Pulls Off Victory Over North Georgia Nighthawks

Isaiah Dunavant
Sports Writer

With the first outright Peach Belt Conference regular season championship and the top seed in the PBC Tournament, the 15th ranked UNCP Men’s Basketball team looked to continue its winning ways as they took on the eighth seeded North Georgia Nighthawks.

The Braves welcomed leading scorer Tyrell Kirk back into the lineup after missing the previous three games.

Kirk was able to give a welcome boost to the already potent Brave offense.

At the start of the first half the Braves and Nighthawks were in a back and forth battle but, with 6:51 remaining in the first half, Senior forward Akia Pruitt sparked a 12-7 run to end the half and take a 33-27 lead into the break.

Coming out of half time, UNCP got a 4-point play from guard Tyrell Kirk.

The onslaught began after that, outscoring North Georgia 57-35 to closeout the game.

Akia Pruitt finished with a season-high of 21 points while also grabbing 7 rebounds, taking him over the 1,000 mark for his career.

Junior Spencer Levi and Senior Shaun Kirk also added a big spark off the bench.

Levi went a perfect 5-5 from the field and finish with 15 points.

Shaun Kirk had an impressive night as well, with 14 points and making a career high of four 3-pointers.

The Braves are now 8-1 in their last nine PBC Tournament games dating back to the 2016-2017 season.



Senior forward Shaun Kirk dunks ball in game against North Georgia. Photo/ Willis Glasgow/UNCP Athletics

The Braves hoped to make 9-1 as they prepared to take on the fifth seeded Cougars of Columbus State.

The Braves are 1-1 against Columbus State, winning their last

meeting. The team wished to get win number 25 to gain momentum going into the Division II NCAA tournament.

In last year’s NCAA Division II UNCP was defeated in the first

round by Catawba College. This year, the Braves had hoped for the possibility of a higher seeding and for the opportunity to make a deeper run in what would have been the 2020 tournament.

Outdoor Track and Field Teams Rack Up First Place Wins at 2020 Braves Classic

Zachary Young
Sports Editor

The UNCP Outdoor Track & Field teams finished in first place at the 2020 Braves Classic the university hosted on March 6.

The men’s field consisted of 11 teams, while the women’s field had a total of 10 teams.

On the men’s side of the competition, UNCP finished with a total of 266 points followed by Mount Olive University in second place with 246 points and Methodist University in third with 21.

The men’s team had seven first place finishes on the afternoon.

Notable performances came from Junior Brandon Boyles

who finished in first place in the Shot Put with a distance of 13.38 meters, earning 10 points for the Braves.

Bradley Thompson finished in first place in the high jump with a distance of 2.00 meters, good enough for a new outdoor personal best.

In the 1500 meter Sophomore Joshua Chepkesir finished first with a time of 4:02.55, also a new outdoor personal best.

In the 110 meter hurdles event Junior Jathan Deberry recorded a first place finish with a time of 15.44.

Freshman Mat Maier finished first in the 800 meters with a time of 2:00.71, a new outdoor personal best.

In the 400 meter hurdles Senior

Dominic Foy finished first with a time of 57:35.

Senior Ean Ormsby won the 5000 meter with a time of 15:42.36.

The UNCP women’s team finished the afternoon with 313 points, more than the nine other teams’ final scores combined.

Mount Olive would finish in second place with 178 points and Meredith College in third with 19 points.

The women’s team would also end the day with seven first place finishes.

Notable performances came from Freshman Breze Erving earned a first place finish in the long jump with a distance of 5.47 meters, a new outdoor personal best.

In the pole vault, Junior Alayna Richardson finished in first place with a distance of 3.05 meters.

Freshman Crysten Jordan won first place in the high jump with a distance of 1.55 meters, good enough for a new outdoor personal best.

Sophomore Dy’ Air McCormick earned first place in the 100 meters with a time of 12.70.

In the 400 meter hurdles, Senior Jacques Tucker won first place with a time of 1:07.11.

Junior Erman Jepleting finished the 5000 meter run in first place with a new outdoor personal best time of 18:12.19. Jepleting also won first in the 1500 meters with a time of 4:52.79, another new outdoor personal best.

Campus News

Sororities Adapt to Coronavirus Changes



Kamryn Locklear, Kayla Miraglia, April Butts (bottom row), Joselyn Alexander, Ana Rivers, April Smith, Kandice Darnell, Raelyn Seabolt, Mackenzie Stallings, Elizabeth Williams, Meeghan Worden (middle row), Mary Davis, Skylar Sessoms, Emilie Murphy, Madelyn Gwynn, LeeAnna Craig, Gracie Reid, Kylie Burge, Madison Long (third row), Zeta Tau Alpha welcomes new members. Kinsey Land, Madison Hunt, Taylor Beard, Daria Parker (back row). Photo/ Sarah Graybar

Madison Long
Staff Writer

Many on campus organizations at UNCP are being impacted by the fast spread of COVID-19. Students in Fraternity and Sorority Life are disappointed in losing this semester on-campus, and all the hard work they have invested.

Members of Greek Life organizations pay money every semester to remain a member of their chapter and organization. This

money allows the members to participate in philanthropy or service events and other social events.

“Our chapter pays dues every semester. Unfortunately, these dues were paid before the virus impacted our school, therefore we probably will not receive a refund. We pay money to have events, sisterhoods, and build relationships and the coronavirus has put all this on hold,” said Kandice Darnell, president of Zeta Tau Alpha.

The members of these organizations extend time and energy into the planning and hosting of events to raise money for their philanthropy or to socialize with each other.

They have leadership roles designated just for planning events and making sure everything is organized.

The women of Kappa Delta along with Zeta Tau Alpha were in the process of planning some big events this semester, but they have been cancelled.

“We had been heavily preparing for our annual shamrock event to raise money for Prevent Child Abuse America. Due to the amount of people that would come to the event, it was cancelled,” said Rachel Moore, president of Kappa Delta.

Both organizations were also in the process of receiving new members.

“Our new members did get to participate in bid day however they are going to miss out on a lot this semester,” said Darnell.

Moore also elaborated on how they received new members into their chapter, however their new member experience will be sadly affected by them not being able to be on campus with one another.

While they are held back from being able to achieve their goals this semester Darnell said how “next fall will just be a busy time for our chapter, but I’m really excited for that.”

Both organizations will also be losing seniors this year who will go off into the alumnae world for their organizations.

“I’m sorry to our seniors that your time was cut short and your lasts came way before they should have, but I hope that you will prosper and bloom in life after graduation,” said Darnell.

Moore also mentioned that seniors will not have the chance to enjoy any of the “lasts” that come with their final semester of college and their sorority.

“This is a special time for them to be able to look back on their time in Kappa Delta and remember what brought them home to us in the first place. I feel for them deeply and hope we can find a way to celebrate them throughout this uncertain time,” said Moore

While the Season was Cut Short, UNCP still had a Great Year in Sports

Mike McGuinness
Sports Editor

Before their season was cut short, men’s basketball wrapped up the regular season Peach Belt Conference championship.

In the first year of competition in the Mountain East Conference, the swim team wrapped up the conference championship; the wrestling team won the MEC in their respective sport, as well as the women’s indoor track team. The men’s team placed second.

Even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and the cancellations involved throughout

the sports world, one thing cannot be argued: it was a great year for Pembroke sports.

While these teams were massively successful, they were led by multiple standout performances from individual athletes.

Five UNCP wrestlers found themselves seeded to wrestle for individual season championships in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Logan Seliga, Nick Kee, Tyler Makosy, Kaleb Warner, and Brandon Sloop were present before the cancellation of the championships.

The men’s track team had seven representatives, including Joshua

Chepkisir, who were prepared to represent the university; and the swim team, led by Ketlyn Matos Rodriguez and Nathalia Silva, set a break-neck pace in multiple events, shattering school records throughout their season.

Akia Pruitt earned an all-regional spot for his work on the hardwood.

UNCP’s spring sports were on a tear, with the baseball team scorching their opponents in the truncated season.

Before play was halted, they had raced out to an 18-5 record, with 11 straight victories.

The men’s basketball team was ranked 22nd in the nation and was

en route to a first-round Division II NCAA Tournament re-match against Catawba College, who knocked them out of the same round last year, when their bus was called back from Tennessee.

While some of the student-athletes did not get to complete their seasons, they had absolutely nothing to be ashamed of. For a school of UNCP’s size, they outperformed the expectations of many who did not give them a chance.

In not just one but two conferences, the Pembroke Braves represented themselves well. The performances of these teams are just a sign of things to come.

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