

# THE PENDULUM

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## Get the sticks ready:

## Thousands swarm downtown Raleigh in protest for equality

Michael Bodley  
News Editor

After months spent writing their congressmen, banging on doors throughout the capital and launching a massive social media campaign, an estimated 80,000 to 100,000 marchers converged on Raleigh for the “Mass Moral March” Feb. 8.

More than 50 Elon University students and faculty members joined State NAACP President William J. Barber Jr., to protest a series of legislative measures passed since Gov. Pat McCrory and the Republican state legislature was elected last year.

Toddie Peters, coordinator of the Poverty and Social Justice program, required students in two of her classes to attend the march with provided transportation or write a paper on the movement’s history or themes. Out of a combined 40 students in both sections, only seven chose the paper, an attendance rate Peters said she was slightly surprised by and quite proud of.

“For most of them, they were learning on the ground,” Peters said. “I’m not sure how many of them had any background on what was going on. For the majority of them this was really sort of learning about what the issues were, seeing social justice in action and applying these issues, these themes to what we’re talking about in class.”

Though the North Carolina NAACP sponsored the march, the protestors who thronged the downtown streets came largely from grassroots sources — student-led coalitions and democracy initiatives. The N.C. Student Power Union (NCSPU), founded by a group of students through the University of North Carolina school system to combat budget cuts and tuition hikes in public education, sent dozens of activists to the march.

“The General Assembly has done things to attack groups that make up my generation in

See MORAL MONDAY page 3



CAROLINE OLNEY | Photo Editor

Despite having 21 freshmen on a roster of 25 players, Elon players and coaches embrace the team’s youth and newness entering their first season of competition.

## Elon women’s lacrosse braces for inaugural season of play

Zachary Horner  
Senior Reporter

There’s newness in the air surrounding the Elon University women’s lacrosse team, and it’s not just because the team has begun its first season of intercollegiate competition.

The Phoenix roster of 25 players features 21 freshmen, but that’s not something that bothers the team or its coaches.

“It doesn’t matter,” said Josh Hexter, Elon women’s lacrosse head coach. “You hear coaches say, ‘Well, you know what, we’re young this year.’ That’s just a built-

in excuse to fail. That’s what it is. We are who we are.”

The Elon women’s lacrosse team has opened its inaugural season of play as members of the Atlantic Sun Conference and as a Division I sport. A quick glance at the team’s roster shows youth. The freshmen are complemented by two seniors and two sophomores who have never played Division I athletics — they were on the club team at Elon — and two coaches, one taking on his first D-I head coaching job and another in her first coaching position ever.

“The newness is exciting,” Hexter said.

“I think it’s going to be great. We’re not worried about the fact that we have 21 freshmen on a 25-person roster. We’re just getting after it.”

### Getting to opening draw

In February 2012, Elon athletic director Dave Blank told The Pendulum that the university was looking to add swimming, sand volleyball or lacrosse as a women’s sport in an effort to get closer to the university’s gender equality goal.

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# F E B R U A R Y

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>12</b> Spring Organization Fair 5 p.m. Moseley Center	<b>13</b> "1776: The Musical" 7:30 p.m. McCrary Theatre	<b>14</b> Women's Tennis vs. UNC Wilmington 2 p.m. Jimmy Powell Tennis Center	<b>15</b> Men's Golf at Triangle Invitational 9 a.m. Raleigh, N.C.
<b>16</b> "Miss Representation" film screening 2 p.m. LaRose Digital Theatre	<b>17</b> Professional Discovery Week begins Student Professional Development Center	<b>18</b> Jennifer Siebel Newsom, "The Representation Project" 7:30 p.m. Whitley Auditorium	<b>19</b> Presentation Design with Michael Vaughn 12 p.m. Belk Library	<b>20</b> "Half the Sky" Part II film screening 7 p.m. McEwen 011	<b>21</b> Diversity and Leadership Conference 4 p.m. Lindner Hall	<b>22</b> Jose Antonio Vargas, "My Life as an Undocumented Immigrant" 2:40 p.m. McKinnon Hall
<b>23</b> Baseball vs. Wagner 1:30 p.m. Latham Park	<b>24</b> Women's Basketball vs. Furman 7 p.m. Alumni Gym	<b>25</b> Fellows' New Works Festival 7:30 p.m. Yeager Recital Hall				

## THE PENDULUM

Established 1974

The Pendulum is a daily operation that includes a newspaper, website, magazine and multimedia. Letters to the editor are welcome and should be typed, signed and emailed to [pendulum@elon.edu](mailto:pendulum@elon.edu) as Word documents. The Pendulum reserves the right to edit obscene and potentially libelous material. Lengthy letters may be trimmed to fit. All submissions become the property of The Pendulum and will not be returned. The Pendulum is located on the third floor of the Elon Town Center on Williamson Avenue.

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not be heard by regular folks," he said. "I'm willing to put my body on the line, spend a night in jail in order to tell the state and the legislators that me and my neighbors don't believe in what it's doing."

Toward the end of 2013, the McCrory administration tried to move protestors off Capitol grounds and onto Halifax Mall, a grassy open space downtown, but a Wake County judge overturned the administration's decision in late December, giving the go-ahead for Saturday's march to spill through the streets — following a pre-determined route.

While Hickson's young group of energetic and politically-active, well-informed citizens may grab all the headlines for protesting, they may remain a minority in the political landscape among the youth in the United States.

"I wish that I could say we are seeing some generational shifts," said Jason Husser, assistant professor of political science and assistant director of the Elon University Poll. "But the reality is that young people today aren't particularly that much more involved than



Supporters of the pro-choice national organization Planned Parenthood came out in droves to advocate against measures to restrict abortion. PHOTO SUBMITTED BY RODNEY BOLES

previous generations."

But according to Peters, exposing students to political dissent, and then allowing them to form their own opinions, may be a stepping-stone toward attracting this generation and those to come to politics.

"I tell my students my job is to make them think critically," she said. "It's not my job to tell them what to believe and advocate for in that sense. Your purpose in this class is to figure out what you believe, and to develop reasons for supported arguments using evidence and critical theory."

### Funding the future of education

One of the NAACP's most important prerogatives, Barber said Saturday, is reversing the budget cuts that have been made to the state's public education system under the McCrory administration.

Perhaps in response, McCrory announced Monday Feb. 10 proposed raises to the salaries of 32,000 of North Carolina's 95,000 public school teachers, or about one-third. Entry-level teachers in the state system currently bring home \$30,800 per year. The proposed raises would increase that to \$35,000 by 2015.

Under last year's budget, the administration also slashed raises for teachers earning master's degrees in the state.

"I'm concerned about the school system as a whole right now," Joe Ferrell, principal of Burlington's Walter M. Williams High School, told The Pendulum in August 2013. "Why would teachers seeking master's degrees come to North Carolina, where they're now not rewarded for their work in furthering their own education?"

If the governor's proposal passes muster in the state legislature, those teachers will again be rewarded.

But teachers can't teach without students, according to Dhruv Pathak, member of the NCSPU and sophomore at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. And stopping the upward trend in tuition isn't enough for Pathak. He said he wants to see an eventual decline.

"Keeping tuition and education as accessible as financially possible is NCSPU's goal, but also my passion because I know way too many folks that have dropped out because of financial burden," he said. "We want make sure that the N.C. General Assembly and Board of Governors make efforts to hear students voices about tuition, but also to freeze for now, and eventually cut, tuition."

NCSPU isn't only interested in advocating for in state-students, though. Pathak and Hickson both criticized the Board of Governors deliberation to raise the sticker tag on out-of-state tuition by 9.2 percent, a move

that will be voted on this month.

"We consider our involvement in education as broad as you can find it," Hickson said. "We think about how our public schools impact the community, impact students and workers in these schools. We are going to advocate very much against raising tuition that much for out of state students. Our main mission is to protect the integrity of education at all levels, for all people."

A well-educated populace is the key to sustaining a spirit of social justice, according to Peters, who said a critical view of the system is necessary for progress to be made.

"It's about asking what the actual issues are," she said. "Social justice includes how people of faith express that faith in public, but looking more broadly at who are the coalition partners, what are they doing expressing or engaging as part of democratic practice and how are they advocating for what they believe."

Even though student participation isn't necessarily indicative of political engagement, Husser said the activism is a good place to start for young adults.

"These types of actions and activities, regardless of one's party affiliation, can lead to long-term political engagement," he said. "People who tend to engage early on in their life tend to politically engage throughout the course of their life cycle." **S**

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# Housing selection to push sophomores toward Danieleley next year

Meghan Leonard  
News Reporter

Rising sophomores face slimmer housing selections next year as Elon University attempts to create more of a neighborhood environment. In order to do so, the university has set its sights on separating students based on their class year.

As the housing system now stands, students of all class years live together in mixed living situations around campus, though most underclassmen are scattered mostly throughout the Historic Neighborhood and the Oaks Apartments.

According to Alicia O'Brien, program assistant of housing operations, the senior staff and president of the university made the decision last spring to transition to class-year-based housing campus-wide.

O'Brien said they are trying to concentrate all of the freshmen class into the Historic Neighborhood and the new Global Neighborhood. Sophomores will see the biggest change, though. Next year, few sophomores will be allowed to live in the Oaks, as the majority of the class will be placed in the Danieleley Center area.

O'Brien said she doesn't expect positive feedback regarding the housing changes until the rising sophomores experience living in Danieleley together. Residence life and school administration hope the new hous-



Though some current sophomores live in the Oaks Apartments this year, rising sophomores will be encouraged to live in the Danieleley Center next school year.

BETH LESTER | Staff Photographer

ing plan will strongly enforce Elon's commitment to community and will bring the classes together as a whole.

"With all of the sophomores living in Danieleley, it will be sectioned off and more fit for the second-year students," O'Brien said.

She said Danieleley Center is a good steppingstone between living in a hall-style dorm like Carolina or Smith and an actual apartment, either on- or off-campus. The administration plans to section off the Oaks for juniors and the Station at Mill Point mostly for seniors.

"Our hope is that more juniors and seniors will want to remain on campus if the Oaks and the Station at Mill Point are reserved for upperclassmen," O'Brien said.

The change in housing selection has been received negatively by many of students, especially the current freshmen.

Per the administration's living-learning plan, the majority of the Class of 2017 is distributed through the Historic Neighborhood and the rising Global Neighborhood.

Melina Accarpio is among the few freshmen who currently live in Danieleley.

"I had to live in Danieleley as a freshman,

and even though I don't really mind it now, I definitely don't think it's fair that I have to live here again next year," Accarpio said. "I wanted to live in the Oaks."

Another freshman, Dana Maloney, said she worries about getting to class on time.

"Danieley is so far away from all of my classes. I hope my teachers will be okay with me being late to every class," Maloney said. "I think this is going to cause a lot more people to want to live off campus."

Although the majority of sophomores will be placed in Danieleley, O'Brien said Danieleley does not have the capacity to fit the entire class. More than half of the rising sophomores will be placed in Colonnades or Crest, and some will still get to live in the Oaks Apartments.

Housing selection is based on each student's housing priority number, which is calculated by the student's grade point average and amount of credits completed. Housing selection begins Feb. 26.



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BETH LESTER | Staff Photographer

In the coming school year, sophomores will be housed in Danieleley Commons rather than housing such as The Oaks.

# In 2014, Governor McCrory looks to lead *Administration's program to concentrate on small business,*

Stephanie Lamm  
Assistant News Editor

Gov. Pat McCrory held a press conference Jan. 21 where he laid out his administration's agenda for the 2014 short session.

In the State of the State address last year, McCrory promised to focus on the three E's: economic growth, education reform and increasing government efficiency. For his second year in office, McCrory said he plans to concentrate on energy, education and Medicaid reform.

McCrory praised the General Assembly's extensive tax reforms, which included a plan to lower the income tax rate from 7.75 to 5.8 percent, and the corporate tax rate from 6.9 to 6.5 percent by 2015.

During his campaign, McCrory promised to reduce debt. In 2013, the North Carolina unemployment debt peaked at \$2.8 billion, but the debt is now \$1.85 billion. The state is on track to have unemployment debt to the federal government paid off by 2015, which would save \$400 million in interest payments.

To do so, McCrory made cuts to several state welfare programs. The governor cut unemployment benefits from \$535 for 26 weeks to \$350 for a maximum of 20 weeks.

"With collaboration of the House and Senate, we made necessary changes to the unemployment benefits aimed at paying off our debt and getting off the credit card to the federal government and getting people back to work," McCrory said.

## Energy to become innovative

McCrory, who worked at Duke Energy for more than 25 years, said energy innovation should be the state's first priority.

"We're 10 years behind in this effort, and we need to begin that process as soon as possible," he said.

The governor said he plans to invest in seismic testing and researching inland resources for hydraulic drilling. Though



North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory smiles as he begins his inaugural address Saturday, Jan. 12, 2013. PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS

there has been controversy surrounding hydraulic fracking, McCrory said his administration plans to pave the way for natural gas companies to research fracking sites in North Carolina.

The N.C. Mining and Energy Commission set the safe drilling distance at 650 feet away from homes, buildings and water wells. Many states are set at 1000 feet.

Though fracking is not up for official debate yet, exploratory wells could be drilled as early as 2015.

The administration says his plan includes an "all-of-the-above" strategy, investing in

solar, wind, biofuel, coal, natural gas and oil. Later this month, the governor will meet with U.S. Energy secretary Ernest Moniz to discuss North Carolina's role in the department's energy initiative.

## Educating for the future

Last year, McCrory's administration couldn't pass a proposed 1 percent pay raise to teachers. The General Assembly also stopped teacher tenure and pay raises for master's degree holders.

"You have to have an educated work

force," said Tom Tiemann, the Jefferson Pilot professor of economics. "The low-skilled, low-wage manufacturing that drove North Carolina 40 years ago is disappearing in the U.S. If you're competing on low wages, there's always someone who is going to undercut you."

On Feb. 10, McCrory announced plans to increase teacher pay from \$30,800 to \$35,000 by the year 2016. North Carolina currently ranks 47th in teacher pay in the nation, and teacher wages have been frozen for the past 5 years.

Alamance-Burlington Board of Education chair Tony Rose said raising teacher pay is a step in the right direction, but it might not go far enough.

"We need to extend the pay raise to all teachers, not just teachers with less than 6 years of teaching experience. These teachers haven't received a pay raise in the past 5 years, and they are struggling to make ends meet," Rose said.

The governor's education reform plan, "A Passion for Education," takes a bottom-up approach to improving the school system.

"If we emphasize basic reading and writing skills in the early years of schooling, fewer resources would be needed later to fill in the gaps," the administration said in a press release.

North Carolina's high school dropout rate is 20 percent. Of the students who enroll in community college, 65 percent must take remedial courses.

## Medicaid on state level

Last year, the McCrory administration refused the Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act. Because of this refusal, more than 500,000 North Carolinians were denied Medicaid.

"We said no initially to expanding Medicaid under Obamacare because we believe we need to first fix the system to make sure children, the disabled, the women, the elderly and the poor are getting the services they need in N.C.," McCrory said.

# 'Carolina Comeback,' focus of financials

## *tax reform, education, transportation in upcoming year*

"Partnership for a Healthy North Carolina," which includes Medicaid reform and strives to improve customer service in the health sector.

The partnership would create several Comprehensive Care Entities statewide that would deliver care to Medicaid recipients in the most cost-effective way.

"North Carolina cannot continue to overspend on Medicaid," said Senator Ralph Hise, co-chairman of the Senate Health Care Committee.

The Department of Health and Human Services plans to meet with lawmakers this month to plan out the details of this partnership. The governor hopes they will come up with a program that measures the health outcomes for recipients, improves customer care, addresses mental health and substance abuse and eliminates high costs and unnecessary paperwork.

In a statement to the press, the CEO of the North Carolina Medical Society, Robert Seligson said, "Health care is vitally important for all North Carolinians and we're interested in learning more about the details of the governor's proposal. However, if the administration's idea of reform is bringing in out-of-state corporations so they can profit by limiting North Carolina patients' access to health care and cutting critical medical services to our state's most vulnerable citizens, that is not change we can support."

### Building business, building the future

"Every extra hoop that governments make a business jump through because of rules and regulations is an added expense for the business, leaving fewer resources for hiring and other expansion," McCrory said in a press release about "The North Carolina Comeback."

McCrory said small business owners see North Carolina as one of the worst regulatory climates in the nation. He said his administration hopes to eliminate "redundant" oversight committees and streamline

the permitting process.

Tiemann said the governor should focus less on cutting regulation and invest more money in education and infrastructure.

"The regulations in North Carolina are not particularly onerous. It's not the easiest place to set up shop, but it's not the most difficult. There are a multitude of reasons businesses choose one state over another, including roads and an educated workforce," said Tiemann.

When the governor was inaugurated, the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce told McCrory to build new roads and invest in education, but McCrory's cuts to both of those departments seem out of line with the pro-business group's demands.

"We need a balance in our regulatory agencies, and I don't think North Carolina's balance has been that far off in the past 30 years. McCrory could focus his efforts elsewhere," he said.

McCrory also stressed the importance of having private-sector members within the government bureaucracy.

"Pat McCrory realizes that individuals who understand an economic climate that cultivates job creation must run North Carolina's regulatory agencies," a statement released by the McCrory administration said.

McCrory's 2014 cabinet includes several members with experience in the private sector. Sharon Decker, secretary of commerce, spent 17 years at Duke Energy and has more than 30 years of combined business and commerce experience. William Daughtridge, secretary of administration, is the president of an oil distribution company. Lyons Gray, secretary of revenue, was CEO of the Downtown Winston-Salem partnership and is owner and operator of Salem Systems, Inc. and Triangle Campers, Inc.

The governor pledged to fight against federal taxes and regulations placed on businesses. He made special note of federal healthcare mandates, saying these would harm businesses trying to expand and hire new workers.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory and first lady Ann McCrory during the Inaugural Ceremonies.

### Fixing infrastructure, renewing transportation

Tony Tata, the new secretary of transportation, plans to restore North Carolina's infrastructure to boost tourism, commerce and travel.

North Carolina's transportation infrastructure is the seventh worst in the nation. The McCrory administration promised to take steps to improve the safety and efficiency of roads, bridges and railroads.

In addition to rebuilding the existing transportation infrastructure, the administration plans to expand the road system in order to tie rural and urban areas together in a way that minimizes congestion, improves safety and mitigates environmental impacts.

The 25-year plan includes a beautification project called "Art That Moves You" headed by Susan Kluttz, secretary of cultur-

al resources. Though plans for the project are still in the works, McCrory said adding art to major highways in North Carolina would increase tourism and boost the economy.

### Reaction to Moral Monday Movement

When asked about the Moral Monday protests that took off in response to his administration's policies, McCrory said, "I'm happy to meet with them if they have viable solutions to some very complex problems in North Carolina. I'm a big advocate of dialogue, both with people I agree with and people I disagree with, but I'm more an advocate of solutions."

In his closing remarks, McCrory said, "This is a team effort. It's going to take a team, including all the citizens of North Carolina to continue the next chapter of the 'Carolina Comeback.'"

# Proposal for free community college unlikely to impact Elon's transfer enrollment

Simone Jasper  
Senior Reporter

Free two-year education at community or technical colleges could be available to all high school graduates in Tennessee, according to the state's governor. During his State of the State address on Monday, Feb. 3, Republican Gov. William Haslam said Tennessee should use \$300 million of its lottery fund to pay for the proposal through an endowment.

"Tennessee will be the only state in the country to offer our high school graduates two years of community college with no tuition or fees along with the support of dedicated mentors," Haslam said in the address.

The proposal, which Haslam called the Tennessee Promise, is a part of "Drive to 55," the governor's plan to increase the percentage of Tennessee residents with advanced degrees.

"In the year 2025, 55 percent of Tennesseans will need a certificate or degree beyond high school to get a job," Haslam said. "Today, only 32 percent of Tennesseans qualify."

Haslam said "cost is the biggest hurdle to further education" for many Tennessee families. Across the country, many people attend community college to save money before transferring to traditional, four-year institutions.

According to Kaitlyn Schultz, Elon University's associate director of admissions and director of transfer and special admissions, students who intend to enroll in private institutions generally start as freshmen and graduate four years later. At Elon, students who transfer from other post-secondary institutions make up about 2 percent of the total student body.

Of students who transfer, 25 percent come from community colleges. For these reasons, Schultz said, free community college might not affect Elon and its peer institutions.

"For a school like Elon, we wouldn't necessarily see a significant impact or increased number in students coming from community colleges," she said.

Instead of affecting transfer rates to four-year institutions, the proposal is more likely to increase the number of Tennesseans who pursue jobs that require skilled labor, according to Gregory Lilly, associate professor of economics at Elon.

"Our economy is producing a lot of jobs that don't need a four-year education," Lilly

said. "Community colleges are suitable for finding people to fill these jobs. They fill the gap between all these jobs that need [education] beyond high school and graduates who can't afford or haven't thought about continuing their education."

Jason Husser, assistant professor of political science and policy studies at Elon, also pointed out potential benefits for the state of Tennessee.

"Presumably, the state economy would improve," he said. "The larger the base of skilled labor, the better the chances new businesses move into the state."

Husser said some residents won't take advantage of the plan, so it is hard to gauge how much it will contribute to the 55 percent goal.



Graphic by Terrence McLaughlin.

According to Husser, the guarantee of continued free education in skilled fields could help some at-risk students stay motivated.

"It doesn't strike me that this is going to solve the problem of American high school drop-out rates," he said. "There are a lot of other real, structural barriers. It is possible that this would provide some incentive to stay in high school."

Lilly agreed, saying the proposal is feasible because investments in human capital usually work. But he argued that Tennessee should consider investing in earlier stages of its residents' lives.

"This has to be an investment in [primary and secondary] education," Lilly said. "Unless they get high school degrees, it's not going to work."

If more people could obtain higher education, Husser noted that the state would spend

less money on social aid programs such as welfare.

"One of the best ways to improve a person's long-term economic outcome is with better education," Husser said. "They're likely to be more financially stable."

According to Husser, Haslam likely unveiled his proposal because of his desire to improve conditions in his state instead of political reasons. The governor is running for reelection in 2014, and results from the Vanderbilt Political Review showed a 61 percent approval rating at the end of 2013.

"He's going to win the election, probably - no matter what he does," Husser said. "He's one of the most popular governors in the country."

Even if Haslam wins the gubernatorial race as predicted, the Tennessee Promise proposal could still fail to launch. Currently some states, including Arkansas, Georgia and South Carolina, use lottery funds to provide scholarships based on academic achievement but have not put the money toward guarantees of continued education for all high school graduates.

According to USA Today, other states have tried offering free, long-term, post-secondary options without avail. A current "Pay it Forward" proposal in Oregon would take away a portion of income from recent college graduates to pay for the public university education of future students.

Lilly said residents are more likely to be in favor of using state lottery money instead of cutting incomes, potentially leading to success for the Tennessee proposal.

If Tennessee successfully implements its

plan, other states would probably consider similar proposals, according to Husser. He pointed out that North Carolina, which has 58 community colleges, might try to replicate the proposal because the state has traditionally been innovative in education.

If the proposal works in Tennessee or elsewhere, students who start their education at community colleges could end up with Elon degrees at half the price.

But currently, Schultz said Elon does not plan to significantly increase its transfer population and instead is focused on expanding its freshman classes.

Meanwhile, Elon is implementing programs to help current students who transfer from other institutions. As an undergraduate, Schultz transferred to Elon from a community college. She said she wants future students to have access to resources as they transition. At the beginning of spring semester, she started a mentoring program between students who transferred last school year and new transfer students.

"They were encouraged to reach out to those students before they came to campus," Schultz said.

Taylor Binnix, a 2013 Elon graduate who transferred from a community college, said she is glad to see Elon progressing with its support of transfer students.

"The most challenging part was meeting people," Binnix said. "I couldn't fit in with the freshmen because I had already been to college or with the upperclassmen because I didn't share their Elon experiences. [To propose resources for transfer students,] I made connections with a lot of people in admissions and academic advising. They were really glad to have student feedback."

For students who transfer from community colleges, Schultz said adjusting to Elon's social climate isn't the only problem.

"The big difference [between the types of schools] is the academic achievement," she said. "There's a significant jump in the amount of coursework you need to do."

Despite the social and academic difficulties some students face when coming to Elon from community colleges, Schultz said they offer important perspectives.

"Community college transfer students bring a lot of diversity to Elon's campus," she said.

# NC one of the nation's most religious states, says Gallup poll

**Michael Papich**  
Assistant New Editor

Politics and religion often intersect in the United States, and according to a new Gallup poll, that mix is more likely in North Carolina than in most other states.

In the poll, Gallup asked respondents in each state how religious they were. Fifty percent of North Carolinians in the survey said they were “very religious,” making North Carolina the ninth most religious state in the union, according to the poll.

Jason Husser, assistant professor of political science at Elon University, said religion and politics are often intertwined. But as the poll showed, it is more profound in North Carolina.

“Religion has a deeper and broader impact here,” Husser said. “It informs more pieces of legislation than most states.”

Husser said a higher level of religiosity also means preachers and religious figures have more popularity and political power. Similarly, the Elon Poll in February 2013, of which Husser is the assistant director,

found that Billy Graham was the second most admired public figure among North Carolinians.

“They can tell their congregation that certain things are going on in the state,” Husser said. “Moral Monday is an example of this. In Vermont, you’d have a harder chance getting something similar off the ground.”

Jeffrey Pugh, professor of religious studies at Elon, said the politics of North Carolina tend to be more conservative because the dominant religions in the state — Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist — came from smaller camps in the 1800s.

“They had conservative views on the Bible. The Bible was the word of God,” Pugh said. “They had conservative views on humans. Humans were sinners in need of redemption.”

Pugh said this created a series of beliefs “almost indigenous” to the Southeastern United States, so much so that he said it is hard to tell among current conservative Christians in the state whether their religion informs their politics or vice-versa.

“Christianity itself becomes a captive of the culture,” Pugh said.

North Carolina also has less religious diversity than other states, with the majority of religious North Carolinians identifying as Protestants.

“Catholics have had, at some times, difficulty bridging political gaps with Protestants,” Husser said.

Pugh said less religious diversity can create more homogenous thinking, not only in a community, but also among individuals.

“We tend to stay with people who are like-minded, and if we stay with people along those same lines, we’re less likely to be challenged or entertain the idea that we are wrong,” Pugh said.

But even in North Carolina, pockets of liberal Protestantism exist.

“Methodists aren’t just all conservative. It’s a spectrum,” Pugh said. “But the majority would identify as middle-of-the-road or conservative.”

Husser added that the poll’s results are not as simple as the majority of North Carolinians having strong beliefs.

“Religion can serve as a social network to connect like-minded people,” he said. “It’s not clear if the results are just about these attitudes or about beliefs.”



MEAGAN CASAVANTI | Staff Photographer  
North Carolina is the ninth most religious state in the country, according to Gallup.

# LGBTQ parades crucial to awareness, acceptance from Croatia to US

**Michael Papitch**  
Assistant News Editor

As more states accept same-sex marriage, two speakers at Elon University took time to compare and contrast the fight for LGBTQ rights in the United States to that in Croatia.

Mima Simic, a writer, film critic, television host and Croatian Zagreb Pride Organization’s “LGBT Person of the Decade,” addressed the audience in the Isabella Cannon Room Feb. 10 to talk about LGBTQ rights in the wake of Croatia’s war in the early 1990s and the need for a new national identity.

“In order to reproduce and produce this new nation, being homosexual was not a good identity,” Simic said.

Part of this opposition comes from Croatia’s resistance to other geo-political entities.

“The LGBT non-government organizations [NGOs] were funded with foreign money, so this spread the idea that LGBT

rights were being imposed by the West and by the European Union [EU],” Simic said.

Both Simic and the event’s other speaker, Katherine MacFarland Bruce, visiting assistant professor of sociology at Elon, talked about the importance of pride parades in creating LGBTQ visibility in both Croatia and the United States. In Eastern Europe, pride parades faced significant obstacles when they were first started.

“The first attempt at a pride march was in Belgrade, Serbia. It didn’t even get started because the people organizing it were beaten up,” Simic said. “There was blood all over the city.”

Despite the hardships faced in her personal experiences, Simic talked with a great deal of humor, like when she described one of the first pride marches in which she participated.

“People were curious about us,” Simic said. “I saw a few women walk out of a beauty parlor and say, ‘They look completely normal.’”

Bruce said pride parades have been a main tool of visibility across the world.

“It’s not a visible identity until you make it visible,” Bruce said. “And a pride parade is like a massive ‘coming out.’”

She went on to say pride parades and public LGBTQ activism in the United States tend to precede pro-equality laws, though other countries usually have political action first.

“In the U.S., you see the people acting when the laws and political will aren’t there,” Bruce said.

Simic decided to make a public statement affirming her own lesbian identity by going on Croatia’s “Who Wants to be a Millionaire,” and briefly talking about her girlfriend in the show’s between-round banter. The episode happened to air on Easter Sunday.

“In Croatia, people are sick of politics, especially after the war,” Simic said. “You have to approach them in ways they don’t expect: through their living rooms or on cooking shows.”

Bruce added that a large amount of the LGBTQ messages in the public are introduced in this way.

“It’s taking fun entertainment, then putting in a little activism. That seems to be where it’s going,” she said.

While Simic talked about the progress being made in Croatian equality for gays and lesbians, she said the same is not yet true for people who identify as transsexual.

“Trans issues are not seeping into the mainstream,” Simic said. “When you even say ‘gender’ on TV, people don’t know what you’re talking about.”

Throughout the presentation, Simic and Bruce referenced a map created by the pro-LGBTQ non-profit ILGA-Europe, which described Croatia as having 48 percent respect for human rights and LGBTQ equality.

“It doesn’t seem like 48 percent to me,” Simic said. “But perhaps it’s because I’m so ambitious.”

# Obama announces plan to raise minimum wage to \$10.10 for federal workers

Michael Papich  
Assistant News Editor

The State of the Union address usually serves to rally the nation for a new year, but this year, President Barack Obama introduced a new policy to raise the minimum wage for federal workers by executive order.

In the plan laid out after the address, the Obama administration would only provide federal contracts to companies that pay their employees a minimum of \$10.10 per hour. The change would take effect in 2016.

There is substantial disagreement among economists over the impact changes the minimum wage would have on the nation's employment. Stephen Lich-Tyler, lecturer on labor economics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, said part of the reason for this disagreement is a lack of clean, scientific experiments.

"Minimum wage changes tend to happen when the labor market is improving anyhow," Lich-Tyler said. "Any negative effects will be masked by an economy that's improving, and when we see positive effects, it's hard to know how much of that is the minimum wage."

Whether economists believe an increase in the minimum wage would help or impede employment, Lich-Tyler said there is one common thread throughout their findings.

"Everyone really has the same findings: that it would have a small effect on employment," he said.

## Minimum wage and the public

The first federal minimum wage law that was not overturned by the Supreme Court took effect in 1938, at \$0.25 per hour.

The current national minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour, but adjusting for inflation, the minimum wage has been higher in the past.

Fast food workers in the United States have protested the \$7.25 minimum wage for the past year. Twenty-one states, including the District of Columbia, have a statewide minimum wage that exceeds the national rate.

Most recently, New Jersey raised its minimum wage to \$8.25 per hour in a ballot initiative. North Carolina is one of 20 states where the state's minimum wage is the same as the national.

Kenneth Fernandez, assistant professor of



RACHEL INGERSOLL | Staff Photographer

Adjusting for inflation, the national minimum wage, currently \$7.25 per hour, has remained static for over 30 years, but it may soon rise.

economics at Elon University and director of the Elon Poll, said an increase in minimum wage across the board to \$9 an hour was popular among those polled – 90 percent among Democrats and 51 percent among Republicans.

Fernandez said the number 10 could change some people's perspectives.

"When you get into double digit numbers, it can affect people's perspectives," Fernandez said. "Business and marketing people know you can sell more for \$9.99 than \$10."

Past increases in the minimum wage have ranged from roughly 9 to 14 percent, with the last increase in July 2009 raising the minimum wage by 10.6 percent.

The increase proposed by Obama for contracted federal workers would be 39.3 percent.

Fernandez added that public opinion on increasing the minimum wage may change when people consider federal employees.

"They'll think of people who have job security. They'll think of people with higher pay," Fernandez said. "But during the budget crisis, we saw workers working hourly, getting checks cut, so people's perception might be changed by that."

## Concerns over increases

Among some economists and politicians, there is a concern that an increase in the minimum wage will lead to layoffs in lieu of paying

more to all current employees, but Fernandez said many businesses are now set up in a way that would make mass layoffs difficult.

"Industries have learned to have very little inventory and have been very efficient in staffing. It's very difficult for them to layoff large amounts of people off," he said. "But some economists say they'll find a way."

Fernandez gave the example of McDonald's as a model that uses minimum wage.

"McDonald's is working with a skeleton crew," he said. "They sell food very cheap and only hire people when they need them."

Lich-Tyler said any inconsistent increase in the minimum wage would have disadvantageous effects on those contractors who do have to increase pay.

"Probably what will happen is you would see some imbalance between what these contractors do when it comes to federal work versus what they would be doing if it were the private sector," he said.

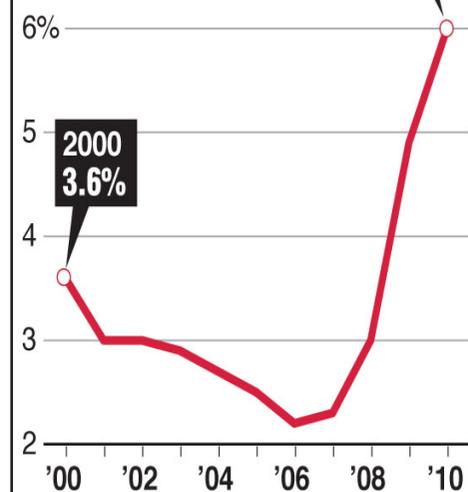
Adding to the inconsistency of increases, the government's requirement that contractors use the new minimum wage of \$10.10 would only apply to new contracts. Any renewed contracts would need to be renegotiated if the minimum wage requirement is to be included.

Lich-Tyler said he anticipates federal contractors trying to shift some of their low-skilled, minimum-wage workers into jobs that would require them to take on more responsibility.

## Minimum wage

Last year, 6 percent of U.S. workers made the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour or less.

Workers earning federal minimum wage



• The percentage of hourly workers earning the federal minimum wage or less has doubled since 2008.

GRAPHIC COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS

# Burlington plant spills more than 3.5 million gallons of wastewater into Haw River

Stephanie Lamm  
Assistant News Editor

More than 3.5 million gallons of wastewater spilled into the Haw River after a pipe broke at a Burlington treatment center Jan. 27. The pipe took almost three days to repair, and officials say the spill is mostly cleaned up.

This is Burlington's third raw sewage spill in January. On Jan. 11, 50,400 gallons of wastewater leaked into a tributary of Haw River, and on Jan. 24, a broken pipe spilled 28,600 gallons into the same area.

While state officials were notified about the spill the night it happened, the public was not alerted until after its containment Jan. 30. State law mandates water systems notify the public about leaks of more than 1,000 gallons within 48 hours, but Burlington chose to delay its disclosure.

North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources spokeswoman Susan Massengale said Burlington granted the department permission to delay the release of information past the 48 hour deadline. Division of Water Quality supervisor Corey Basinger said officials wanted to wait for accurate information to come in before releasing a statement to the public.

"It was an ongoing incident, and the regulatory agency wanted to report the correct information. They wanted to inspect the site, but they didn't want to be in the way of all the folks trying to stop the spill," said Eric Davis, Burlington's water and sewer opera-

tions manager.

As a winter storm advisory came in on Jan. 28, officials wanted to get the scene cleared before the storm moved in. But as inclement weather postponed the arrival of personnel and equipment, the spill could not be contained within the usual two-day period.

Though the public was not alerted to the spill, Davis said it was not dangerous.

"We closed the park and the walking trail, and we didn't think people would be on the river since it was covered in sheet ice," he said.

The Haw River Assembly put out a statement warning community members to stay out of the river this week.

The statement said the spill's impact on algae growth, aquatic life and drinking water will last until the rain dilutes the pollution.

The assembly called the wastewater spill an "environmental disaster" and said the cold weather was the only thing that kept the incident from becoming a public health disaster as well.

Calling the city officials' choice to with-

hold information "unacceptable," the assembly demanded stricter safety measures and public notification systems.

Pittsboro, N.C., which gets its drinking water from the Haw River, was notified of the spill as soon as the leak was detected. Biological tests showed no impact on the water quality in Pittsboro. Burlington officials said

they do not expect any long-term environmental effects from this spill or the past two spills.

"The biggest threat to the environment is the oxygen demand that the sewage exerts on the stream. When the sewage enters the waterway, it consumes a lot of oxygen. The oxygen depletion threatens the organisms in the river," Davis said. "With the water as cold as it was, there wasn't a lot of bacterial action. From an environmental standpoint there wasn't a huge threat."

In relation to the 400 million gallons that ran through the Haw River during the two days of the leak, 3.5 million gallons are of little consequence to the overall water quality.

The Haw River Assembly's statement said the spill "brings up serious concerns about aging infrastructure — is it being inspected, repaired and replaced before any further di-

**"FROM AN  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
STANDPOINT  
THERE WASN'T A  
HUGE THREAT."**

**ERIC DAVIS**

**BURLINGTON WATER AND SEWER  
OPERATIONS MANAGER**

stances.

The freshman was also arrested for two misdemeanors: possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of up to one-half ounce of marijuana.

Bond was set at \$30,000. Sires will appear in court Feb. 17.

## Nevada drops defense of same-sex marriage ban

Following a challenge to Nevada's constitutional amendment barring same-sex marriage, the state's Department of Justice said it won't be defending the ban in appeals court.

On Feb. 10, Nevada's Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto said, after federal court rulings against prohibitions on same-sex marriage and other LGBTQ issues, the state's arguments for the amendment are "no longer sustainable."

Gov. Brian Sandoval, a Republican, said he supports the decision by Cortez, a Democrat.

## Drone strikes on US citizens may return

For the first time since new criteria were placed on using drone strikes on American citizens, the Obama admin-

istrators to public waters occur?"

The Burlington sewage system usually deals with 8 to 10 minor leaks per year. So far, the system has experienced more spills than normal. Due to the location of the leaks along the sewage line, the spills have also been more serious.

In the last three spills, the pipes have been compromised closer to the wastewater treatment plants. Pipes closer to the plant carry more sewage, making it harder to contain and re-route the lines.

"Much of the infrastructure of America, and definitely including sewage movement, is old and apt to fail. This infrastructure is not normally replaced prior to failure, thus causing frequent breaks, and thus spills," said Paul Moersdorf, adjunct professor in the environmental studies department at Elon University.

Burlington's wastewater system is comprised of 420 miles of sewage lines. Only about 10 miles of the system are inspected and repaired each year due to time and resource constraints.

While Davis agrees that the infrastructure could use updating, he said not all problems are related to the condition of the pipes.

"With the Jan. 11 leak, there had been a lot of rain, which contributed to the volume of that spill," he said. "When we got to look at the line, we saw somebody had thrown a pressure tank in the sewer. Somebody opened a manhole and stuck a pressure tank in there. That's not related to infrastructure, that's vandalism."

## News Briefs

### Freshman arrested on felony drug charges, misdemeanors

An Elon University freshman was arrested Feb. 7 inside his Daniele I apartment for five drug-related charges.

Orion Ezra Sires, 19, was arrested by the Elon Police Department for three felony charges: possession of marijuana with intent to sell or deliver, manufacturing of marijuana and maintaining a vehicle, dwelling or other place for controlled sub-

administration is considering using a targeted strike on an unnamed American living in Pakistan.

In the past, drones have been used to kill Americans, most notably Anwar al-Awlaki and his 16-year-old son Abdulrahman al-Awlaki. But under new guidelines, Americans targeted for killing are entitled to due process. This comes in the form of a review by the Department of Justice.

Drone attacks have been conducted in Pakistan since 2004. The CIA has put a hold on strikes in the past months as the Pakistani government and the Taliban work on peace talks.

## Understanding cultural awareness and engagement

Global citizenship, civic engagement and diversity are broad and diluted words on the Elon University campus. Elon's goal of teaching students how to broaden their horizons is admirable, but current university practices are leaving students without vital background knowledge as to why these concepts are important.

In recent years, Elon has placed a heavy emphasis on promoting these three main institutional concepts. These ideas can be seen prevalently throughout events held at Elon each year. The university brings in a wide range of speakers from all paths of life and holds cultural events pertaining to these ideas.

Elon must recognize that its role in developing engaged citizens extends past simply hosting cultural events. There must be a deeper component to put the importance of panel discussions, dance shows and speakers in a global context.

This context will shed light on why Elon promotes global citizenship, civic engagement and diversity instead of telling students how to embody these broad concepts.

During the month of January, the university held seven official diversity themed events that intended to promote its core institutional concepts. The majority of diversity and global events held on campus are speakers. These lecture style events have become lackluster in recent years. The unvaried diet of diversity that Elon feeds to its students appears to assume that simply attending these speeches will transform students into a more globally-engaged citizens. This is a lazy approach to reinforcing concepts that the university promotes ardently.

All Elon students take "The Global Experience" during their first year at Elon. This course is an attempt by the university to teach its students the value of understanding the world around them. According to one "Global" class syllabus, the goal of the course is "to broaden and heighten your understanding of the world around you." Despite this worldly goal, these courses are not effective in inspiring students to explore the world around them.

Although every student has taken this course, there is a drastic lack of uniformity

in how these courses are taught. This lack of consistency divides the student body. Some students are left with a more enlightened view of the world around them while others walk away from the course with no further appreciation of the global outlook than they had when they entered the university.

To provide its students with a firmer understanding of global citizenship, civic engagement and diversity, Elon should make an attempt to create a homogenous "Global" course. This course would discuss the three concepts of civic engagement, global citizenship and diversity and provide background information as to why the university promotes these concepts.

Although this would not guarantee that all students would progress to become civically engaged global citizens, it would provide every student with the same platform from which to grow.

Elon spares no expense teaching its students about how to live life as globally aware and engaged citizens but does little to provide the reasons why these concepts are so important. Simply bringing

in speakers and teaching a one-semester course does not do enough to train students to appreciate living in a more culturally aware world.

The concepts a university chooses to promote and project onto its student body are important. They should be valued in the classroom as well as around the campus. Without Elon professors providing uniformed and detailed explanations about the importance of these pillars, students are missing out on a key piece of the Elon Experience.

Creating a more culturally aware and engaged student body is a timely and modern goal for Elon to have. The university has taken great strides in striving to educate its students about the world around them but there is still work to be done.

The current practices in place do not inspire students to re-envision their outlook on the world around them. The university must take the time to teach its students about the importance of embodying the concepts of global citizenship, civic engagement and diversity if it wants to create a more culturally aware generation.



Reporter Lara Logan moderated a panel of six experts in different religious fields on April 30, 2013 for Elon's Spring Convocation. The discussion focused on multi-faith tolerance on campus and in the world.

# Our destiny lies above us: making the case to save NASA

Since humans began to walk the Earth, we have been explorers by necessity and by choice. Something within ourselves drives

us to seek out new places and opportunities. Without this drive to explore, our world would be a very different place today.

Where would we be if Christopher Columbus felt content in Europe? What if Thomas Edison was happy with the amount of light



**Nick Foley**  
Columnist

candles emitted? What if Mark Zuckerberg never founded Facebook? Well, society could probably live without that last example. In all seriousness, the urge to explore is as natural as breathing.

Every time I watch Congress struggle with seemingly endless budget talks, it is bewildering why NASA is always on the chopping block. Of all the parts that make up the budget, I fail to understand how cutting NASA, which currently makes up a mere .5 percent of the budget, will

somehow promote “fiscal accountability.”

Since its inception in 1958, NASA has worked to explore the last frontier – space. Its motto, “For the benefit of us all,” serves as a reminder that the work done at NASA is not only essential to our nation, but to the entire world. As a direct result of research made possible through manned space flight, the organization has given society many technological advances. Some developments include advanced satellite communication, space blankets, scratch-resistant glasses, aircraft anti-icing systems, fire resistant technology, temper foam (which is commercially used in mattresses) and water filters.

The diligent work of NASA scientists and astronauts has led to advances in medical technology as well, including artificial heart pumps and limbs, the ability to monitor a fetus while it’s in the womb, tools for cataracts surgery, increased understanding of bone-mass and “cool suits,” which help lower the body’s temperature when under stress.

As a glasses-wearing human who enjoys using a temper foam pillow when sleeping, I personally am thankful for what

NASA has given me. From a medical and scientific standpoint, the value of the technology that NASA has given society during its 55 years far exceeds the amount of money the US government provides to NASA each year.

Even in its heyday during the space race of the 1960s, the operational budget of the space agency was less than 5 percent of the total US budget. Cutting NASA’s already small budget would be a futile attempt to fix the budget and an embarrassment to the entire country. Turning away from space exploration opens this frontier to other countries and wastes the systems NASA has in place.

Since we paved the way for space exploration in the late 1960’s, other countries have started space programs of their own. Russia, India and China have space programs that can easily put a human in space. Like us, they too have found that space provides an excellent platform for scientific research and growth.

To abandon NASA is to cede our current place as the international leader in space. The country is too powerful for that. We are too strong for that. I dare our

country to continue to push higher and further, just as every generation has done before us, with NASA leading the way.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS  
As a direct result of research made possible through manned space flight, NASA has given society many technological and medical advances.

# Challenging the norm with early graduation

If you think about it, four years is a really long time. Four years is a presidency, four years is the time span between every Olympics, four years is the length of Kim Kardashian’s first marriage (and more than 20 times longer than her second, infamously brief marriage). And when you’re 21 or 22, the age of most graduating seniors, four years is little more than one-fifth of your

lifetime. Like I said, four years is a long time.

and universities decided four years would be the standard allotment of time for obtaining a bachelor’s degree. A lot can happen in that time, and each of those years holds valuable experiences for every student.

But four years is not for everyone. I never would have thought four years wasn’t for me until one day. It just wasn’t. I wanted to go out and try something new, and I knew a lot of people who felt the same way but hadn’t done anything about it. I had the credits thanks to APs, full schedules and Winter Term classes, so I decided to graduate a year early.

I have friends at other schools graduating in three years, taking gap years at the start and in the middle of college, and interning away from campus for their final semester of college. What

I am doing is no different than what they are doing: I was veering off the traditional college path, something that is becoming more and more common with the rising cost of college.

When you combine cost and time spent at universities in the U.S. compared to other countries, the picture looks a bit bleak for Americans. In England and Wales, for example, a taxpayer pays roughly \$15,000 per year for a university education, but most undergraduate programs only last three years. India, Pakistan, South Africa, New Zealand and most countries in Europe follow the three-year system as well.

I don’t want to bash the four-year system, but I think looking at other countries’ trends helps put things in perspective. The four-year experience

that so many Americans have come to know is not the norm. It can be a great benefit for some people, but for others, four years is too long or not long enough.

Regardless of how much or how little time you devote to obtaining a degree, the purpose of college is to have a meaningful experience that will help you hone the skills you need to start a career. Hopefully it will help you improve yourself as a person along the way.

While three years, five years, two years or six years might seem odd to the majority of four-year students, as Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, “Life is a journey, not a destination.” College is, also a journey and regardless of the length, it’s what you do on that journey that makes it count.



**Mary Kate Brogan**  
Columnist

At some point in our nation’s history, the administrators of American colleges

# Sochi 2014: Russian Olympics begin

**Kaitlin Dunn**  
International Editor

The 2014 Olympic Games kicked off on Feb. 7 with a dazzling Opening Ceremony.

The show began with a video of a little girl asleep in her bed. Her dreams guided the audience through thousands of years of Russian history. She flew through the air and then beckoned to five giant snowflakes, which opened to form the shape of the five Olympic Rings. The fifth ring malfunctioned, and did not open.

The Sretensky Monastery Choir then took to the floor and sang the Russian national anthem.

Then came the parade of nations. Greece led the nations, who followed in alphabetical order according to the Russian alphabet. The Russian were the last to process in to much fanfare.

The rest of the ceremony paid tribute to Russia's history and culture, including music by Stravinsky and Tchaikovsky, with selections from "Swan Lake," and "The Nutcracker." The well-known Bolshoi Ballet Company performed a scene from Tolstoy's "War and Peace."

There were also tributes to Russia's well-known inventors and scientists including Dimitri Mendeleev, who solidified the periodic table of elements, and aviator Igor Sikorsky.

At the end of the three-hour ceremony, the Olympic cauldron was lit by hockey legend Vladislav Tretiak and figure skater Irina

Rodnina. Other torchbearers included tennis player Maria Sharapova, gymnast Alina Kabaeva, pole vaulter Yelena Isinbayeva and wrestler Aleksander Karelin.

There is some controversy surrounding several of the selected torchbearers. "Today Show" anchor Matt Lauer said about Kabaeva, "according to all reports, she's in a relationship with Russian president Vladimir Putin." Another contested choice was Rodnina, who tweeted a racist photo mocking President Barack Obama last September.

## #SochiProblems

Since arriving in Sochi, many journalists and athletes have encountered bizarre and substandard living conditions, leading to the trending hashtag, "SochiProblems."

Many hotels are unfinished or in the process of being remodeled, sporting loose wires, falling plaster and contaminated water. One journalist encountered live wires in his shower. Several people tweeted their confusion over the bathroom situations, including toilets right next to one another and fire hoses above sinks.

American bobsledder Johnny Quinn's tweet featuring a picture of his demolished bathroom door that he had to punch through to escape went viral. The accompanying tweet said: "...With no phone to call for help, I used my bobsled push training to break out. #SochiJailBreak."

On Feb. 10 Quinn got stuck again, this time in an elevator with fellow bobsledders



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS

**Sage Kotsenburg won the first gold medal of the 2014 Games in the slopestyle snowboarding competition.**

Nick Cunningham and David Cripps and tweeted a picture of himself trying to get out.

As reported by newsite Vocativ, a notice went out to Sochi volunteers at the beginning of February that said: "Due to an extreme shortage of pillows for athletes who unexpectedly arrived at Olympic Village in the mountains, there will be a transfer of pillows from all apartments to the storehouse on 2 February 2014." Pillow company MyPillow attempted to ship 3,000 pillows to Sochi, but the shipment could not make it past Olympic Headquarters in Colorado due to Russian custom restrictions.

Beyond the gripes about hotels, a plethora of tweets complain about the city itself. Construction is still going on all over the city, despite the fact that the Games have already started. Pictures have documented uncovered manholes, crumbling streets and broken elevators. Journalist Emily Walker tweeted a photo of a worker spray painting the grass. "The grass isn't greener on the other side, it's green where you...paint it. #SochiProblems @PHSCE."

## US takes gold in slopestyle events

On Feb. 8, 20-year-old American snowboarder Sage Kotsenburg captured the first gold medal of the Sochi Games slopestyle with a trick he had never attempted before. One day later, 23-year-old American Jamie Anderson, a favorite in this event, took

gold in the women's slopestyle event

Not only was this the first event of the Olympics, it was also the debut of the slopestyle event in the Olympics.

Kotsenburg was not expected to medal. Before qualifying for the Olympics, he had not won a snowboarding competition since he was 11 years old.

"Coming here and winning, I can't even describe the feeling," he said.

Anderson is a far more experienced competitor. She is a four-time gold medalist at the X-Games and won her first medal at 15.

Anderson's entire family came to Sochi to support her. "To see my family today just brought tears to my eyes," Anderson said. "It was such a special moment I'll remember forever."

Slopestyle involves snowboarding down a hill and features a mix of rails and jumps. Kotsenburg earned his high score for a rarely performed trick called a 1620 Japan Air Mute Grab. He performed four and a half revolutions while grabbing the board at the front of his feet and pulling it behind him.

In the men's competition, Staale Sandbech of Norway took the silver while Mark McMorris of Canada won the bronze medal. McMorris was the favorite to win the competition before breaking a rib at the X-Games in January. In the women's event, Enni Rukajarvi of Finland took silver, and Jenny Jones won bronze, making her the first to win a medal on snow for the United Kingdom.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS

**A trio of Russian horses known as the troika gallop across the sky in the Opening Ceremonies.**

# Nigeria's intolerance of homosexuality disturbs human rights activists

Dalton Cox  
International Correspondent

DUBLIN- Nigeria's recently passed anti-gay laws are not something one would expect to encounter outside areas of major media coverage, nor would Dublin be the place one would expect to encounter coverage of this legislation.

Founded in 2000, Metro Eireann is Ireland's leading multicultural newspaper, catering mainly to the diverse population of Dublin. The Metro Eireann International Leadership Award ceremony was held on Jan. 17. Notable guests included Ireland's Minister of State for Trade and Development Joe Costello and Ni-

geria Ambassador to Ireland Felix Pwol.

The 2013 award was presented to the Nigerian Governor of Delta State, Emmanuel Eweta Uduaghan. Since becoming governor, Uduaghan has initiated his three-point program of peace and security, human capital development and infrastructural development, the current success of which led to his recognition by Metro Eireann.

Upon receiving the award, Uduaghan devoted his acceptance speech to defending Nigeria's Same-Sex Prohibition Act, which had been signed into law by Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan several days prior to the event. In his speech, Uduaghan compared homosexuality to pedophilia in an effort to relate

the Nigerian law to a largely Western audience and concluded by advising all homosexual people in Nigeria to migrate to other countries where same-sex relations are accepted.

The Same-Sex Prohibition Act, which was signed into law on Jan. 7, not only forbids the recognition of gay marriage in Nigeria but also sentences anyone convicted of same-sex relations to up to 14 years in prison. Those involved "directly or indirectly" with a gay organization or those who merely fail to notify law enforcement of other people's homosexual conduct could face up to 10 years in prison. Consequent arrests have begun, and in the state of Bauchi, major news sources are reporting police have allegedly used torture on convicted gay men.

"Rarely have I seen a piece of legislation that in so few paragraphs directly violates so many basic, universal human rights," said United Nations Human Rights Commissioner Navi Pillay in a statement.

Pillay said she hoped the Supreme Court of Nigeria would soon review the constitutionality of the law.

"Rights to privacy and non-discrimination, rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly, rights to freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention. This law undermines all of them," she said.

Indeed, the Western world seems to have condemned Nigeria for the recent legislation, fearing that the laws will not only limit freedom of assembly but will also begin to deter relief and education efforts regarding HIV/AIDS. Other countries have not yet cut their humanitarian funds to Nigeria.

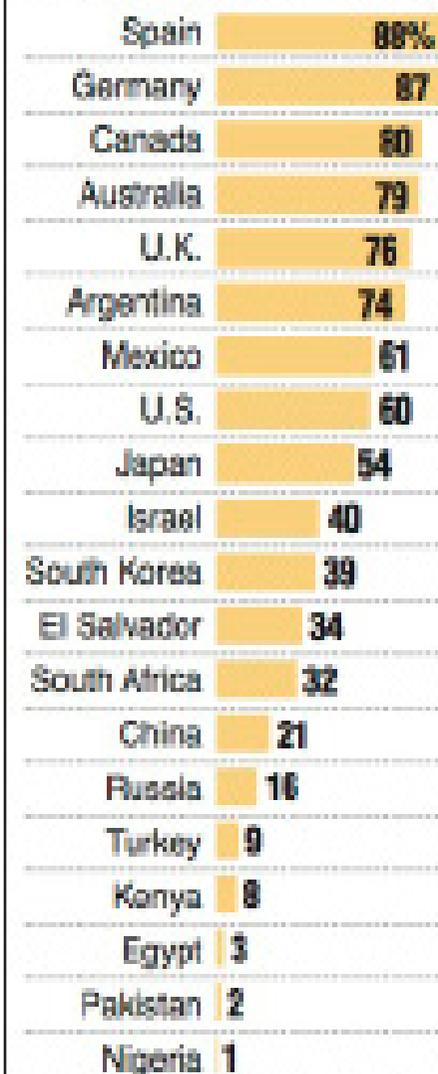
A 2013 Pew Research report found that Nigeria is the world's least tolerant country of homosexuality with approximately 98 percent of the country's population opposing society's acceptance of homosexuality.

Previously during the "Metro Eireann" award ceremony, all other award recipients had referenced initiatives towards same-sex rights, presumably inciting Uduaghan's speech. One of these recipients was President of the European Parliament's Development Committee Michael McGowan.

"We all want a planet where we live in peace and security together," McGowan said in his speech. "It is not about implementing what we sometimes arrogantly call 'European values' or even 'African values.' These are universal human values."

## Views on homosexuality

Percent of people in each country who think society should accept gays, lesbians:



Source: Pew Global Attitudes survey of 800-3,286 adults, March 2-May 1, 2013; margin of error: +/-3.1-7.7 percentage points  
Graphic: Pal Cam

© 2013 MCT



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS

Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan recently signed the Same-Sex Prohibition Act which forbids gay marriage and makes homosexuality a crime punishable by up to 14 years in prison.

GRAPHIC COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS.

Nigeria is ranked last in a Pew report on countries tolerant of homosexuality.

## Elon professor's fear of children inspires 'Kids These Days'

**Courtney Campbell**  
Senior Reporter

The crying, the screaming, the constant attention — all are reasons people are dissuaded from having children. Even after having kids, Elon University English professor Andrew Perry said he still lives with the fear of fatherhood, so he decided to write a book about it.

"Kids These Days" tells the story of married couple Walter and Alice. They relocate

to Florida, where Walter unknowingly accepts a shady job from his brother-in-law in order to make ends meet. On top of that, the two are expecting their first child, something that completely petrifies Walter.

Perry said the novel's inspiration emerged from his own fear of raising a child.

"I really wanted to keep living that life where I was not really responsible," Perry said. "The scariest thing is that they are there every single day."

Ultimately his wife, fellow Elon professor Tita Ramirez, was the driving force that convinced him to have children.

"I [told] him I knew he would be a good father and that I wanted to be a mother with someone who would be good at it," Ramirez said. "Except the truth is I'm pretty sure I didn't convince him. Our son, when he arrived and once he was old enough to laugh and hold a cracker and use baby sign language, convinced him."

The couple had two sons while Perry was in the middle of writing his book. But welcoming his children into the world put "Kids These Days" on the back burner.

It took Perry about a year to complete the first draft of the book and three more years to finish it, and he said the book would have taken less time to write if their children hadn't been born while he was working on it.

Luckily for his writing, he still maintained his fear of children even after beginning to raise them.

"People kept telling me that I was going to fall in love with the kid after it was born, change my mind, and I would not be able to finish the book," Perry said. "I love my kids to death, but that did not change my fears."

And, according to Perry, raising kids is still no easy feat. He said that while the logistical aspects of parenthood are the easy part, explaining things to always-curious children is more difficult.

"I am trying to let [my son] keep his innocence for as long as he wants," Perry said. "I have not explained death yet. The other day I was about to kill a fly with a rolled up newspaper, but let it live so I wouldn't have to explain it."

Though now Perry has finished his book and can turn

his full attention back to fatherhood, he still has high hopes for "Kids These Days."

His said biggest goal for the novel is for it to reach as many people as possible, despite how scary it can be to have so many people looking at his work. He said he hopes people are able to see themselves in the book and identify with the story.

"I hope that the book is a little about growing up for the reader. To see a version of the person you want to be and want to become that you can become," Perry said. "The book is serious without taking itself too seriously. I am most interested in the ways we harm each other. The ways we do it unintentionally, and how we recover from that."

tionally, and how we recover from that."

"Kids These Days" was the culmination of several years of writing — a passion of Perry's that began in college when he took a creative writing course. From there, he was inspired to explore his creativity and writing ability.

"I am a novelist," Perry said. "I am better at long form than short form. I am attracted to it because it's messy, but it requires precision. There is more room to explore complicated ideas."

Despite the difficulty and stress that may come along with writing, editing and publishing a novel, Perry said he finds himself

to be happiest and a better person while working on a literary project.

"Once I feel that I have the story, I am a happy man," Perry said. "When I am writing, my life makes much more sense. Not to say it wasn't hard as hell, but I am definitely happiest when I am writing."

But Perry said he considers his son to be his greatest accomplishment.

"He's a really cool kid. And maybe something in the way we raised him has something to do with that," Perry said. "It's just crazy. It's a never-ending roller coaster, which I treat as a revelation, but everyone else already knew."

**"I LOVE MY KIDS TO DEATH, BUT THAT DID NOT CHANGE MY FEARS."**

**ANDREW PERRY**  
ENGLISH PROFESSOR



PHOTO COURTESY OF DREW PERRY  
Even though Perry said being a father to his two kids is a joyful experience, it can still be scary. This fear of raising children was what inspired him to write his most recent book, "Kids These Days."

# Czech point: Junior navigates forest, Elon

Nathan Smith  
Copy Editor

It's not usual for Elon University junior Tereza Novotna to be dropped off in a forest, with only a map and a compass to help her find her way out. Sound scary? It might be for some people, but for Novotna, it's just another day of orienteering.

Novotna is one of many others around the world who participate in this lesser-known sport. Though it can be intricate and complicated, at its heart it's a race. Runners are given a compass and a map of the terrain - typically a forest - and are left on their own. They must get from point to point in the quickest way possible, as their times are set against their competitors. How they get from one location to the next is up to them.

Novotna, who runs track and cross country at Elon, attributes much of her success in running to the popularity of orienteering in her home country, the Czech Republic. She grew up with the culture of orienteering, which is much bigger in the Czech Republic, as well



Orienteers travel around unknown terrain, attempting to make it from check point to check point as quickly as possible. An example of a check point is pictured above. PHOTO COURTESY OF TEREZA NOVOTNA

as Scandinavian countries like Sweden, Norway and Denmark than it is in the United States.

Novotna quickly became a star in the Czech Republic, traveling across Europe to compete in championships at both the continental and world levels. In high school, when she was at the peak of her orienteering, she estimates that she would go to 50 races or so a year.

After finishing second at the Junior World Orienteering Championships in 2009, fourth in 2010 and third in 2011, Novotna participated in the World Games in her first stint as a senior member of the Czech national team.

"It was an amazing experience," she said. "You get to see how the pro [athletes] live, and it was fun."

When it came to selecting a college, Novotna made the decision to give up orienteering to go to school in the U.S. After spending her freshman year running track and cross country at Saint Leo University in Florida, Novotna transferred to Elon. She quickly made her presence known on the track, earning Second Team All-Southern Conference in 2012.

Novotna said that orienteering has certainly helped her in track and cross

country, but in orienteering, being a good runner isn't enough.

"You have to be focused on exactly what you're doing, and if you start think-

to the world of orienteering.

"In my experience running [trails] with her, she is fearless, confident and cunning," Esplin said. "These traits, along with her built-in sense of direction, make her an impressive runner and orienteer."

Novotna has been to a few races in the U.S., and while she is complimentary of the sport in the U.S., she said it's nothing compared to Europe. Though traveling all over the country makes it difficult for the sport to fully develop, she said there is good terrain in the U.S., which plays a big part in the success of orienteering.

"If orienteering had someone experienced to market their sport as a test of surviving in the wild, it could work," Esplin said. "I think maybe the draw of orienteering is they haven't heard about orienteering before," which she said could also hurt the brand for those who don't want orienteering to become too popular.

For now, Novotna is content with running at Elon, though she may want to return to orienteering in the future.

"I would love to be good at it, but right now with the conditions here [at Elon], there are no orienteers around me, so it will be difficult to make progress," she said.

**"SHE IS  
FEARLESS,  
CONFIDENT  
AND  
CUNNING."**

**NICOLE ESPLIN  
ELON SENIOR**

ing about something else, you get lost," she said. "It's so easy to get lost, and you have to practice on how to take the right direction, to find the control point and so on. There are so many aspects."

Senior Nicole Esplin has experienced this process firsthand. After meeting on the cross country team, Esplin became friends with Novotna and was introduced



PHOTO COURTESY OF TEREZA NOVOTNA

The Euromeeting Sprint in Innsbruck, Austria took place two summers ago. Novotna completed the course in just under 15 minutes, finishing first in the women's division and 13th overall.

## Seniors take the stage with NC Theatre's production of 'Les Miserables'

**Kelsey Higgins**  
Senior Reporter

Elon University music theater majors dream a dream of one day making it big on Broadway. North Carolina Theatre (NCT), one of the region's premiere producers of professional Broadway musicals, recognized the potential in Elon senior music theater students.

Karrah Fleshman, Justin Gaab and Christopher Manley have recently been cast in NCT's production of "Les Miserables," which will open Feb. 11 and continue through Feb. 23.

Dave Clemmons, a visiting professor at Elon and former casting director in New York City, will direct the show.

"I've had a relationship with [NCT] for over 20 years," Clemmons said. "And because of my history with the show, they wrote and asked me to direct."

Clemmons proved instrumental in getting the Elon students involved with the production.

"They bring me in about four or five times a year, and I work with the senior

class and teach master classes with the theater department," he said.

Gaab said he sent in a video audition after Clemmons asked him if he was interested in auditioning for the show.

"Getting these kids involved was an opportunity that I knew was possible, and I'm glad that the faculty and everyone worked so hard to make it happen," Clemmons said. "Elon is very near and dear to my heart, and it has been a privilege to have these kids involved."

The students involved with the production said they are incredibly excited to have the opportunity to work with professional actors.

"It is an incredible learning opportunity to perform with such renowned actors," Gaab said. "Every day I learn something new about the profession, and it is so nice to be treated like a professional."

The biggest struggle, he admits, is commuting back and forth between school and rehearsals.

"Rehearsals are long, but a lot of fun," Gaab said. "The best part is getting to learn about equity and future theaters. I

really feel like I have learned a lot about my profession."

The Elon seniors are also joined by Elon alumni Maxwell Korn '10, a music theater major who was a founding member of Rip\_Chord, and Meagan Chieppor '12.

"It's a wonderful thing to be able to see these kids who are so well-trained come and put that into practice," Clemmons said. "I pulled them aside the other day and told them they are representing Elon very well. If I didn't know, I would assume they were professional actors from New York. Everybody respects them."

Clemmons also had alumni Korn and Chieppor in classes and said the two have done a terrific job proving themselves.

This production will lack the iconic turntable of the original production, but Clemmons said they have found a creative way to solve that problem.

"The original design relies so heavily

on that, but I think we have come up with a really unique production that is interesting and has shades of the original, but it also certainly has things that are new and borrowed from other productions and our own spins," he said.

The lead roles belong to Raleigh native Lauren Kennedy as "Fantine", former Broadway actor Craig Schulman as "Jean Valjean" and Chuck Wagner as "Javert."

"I'm excited to see all of this come together," Clemmons said, "especially knowing we are going to be giving them a story they will love, if they don't already."

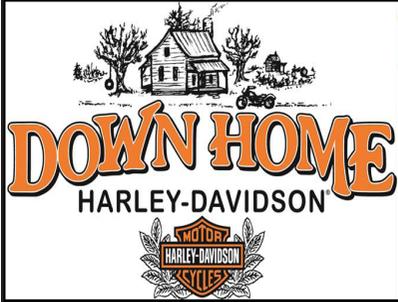
Student rush tickets will be available one hour before curtain call for \$25 for the best available seat. This original production of "Les Miserables" will be performed at Raleigh Memorial Auditorium at Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts. For more information visit [www.NCTheatre.com](http://www.NCTheatre.com).



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHELSEA RICHARDSON

Elon music theater majors Justin Gaab, Christopher Manley, Karrah Fleshman and Dave Clemmons rehearse for NCT's production of "Les Miserables," which will open Feb. 11 and continue through Feb. 23.

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# Black History Month celebrated through song and dance

Diana Stancy  
Reporter

Whitley Auditorium burst at the seams with excitement Feb. 7 while unveiling an anthology of African works of art performed by Elon University students to celebrate Black History Month.

Directed by dance professor Jason Aryeh, the performance highlighted dance pieces learned by students who traveled to Ghana for the performing arts Winter Term program, in addition to pieces choreographed by junior dance majors Brenna Dames and Sophie McNeill.

This performance has been a long-time goal of Aryeh's.

"This really was something I was thinking about since I moved to Elon, and I wanted to make it become a reality," he said. "My idea of embracing history is through performance, and I wanted people to come and experience the different ways of embracing history."

The show, titled "Embracing History to

Spring Forward," showcased a variety of performances to celebrate history through movement, singing and poetry.

The performance was also memorable for the students who were part of the cast.

"We have Black History Month celebrations all the time at Elon, but it's new that it's a dance program, and it's something out of the box," said junior dance major Danielle Biggs.

This performance was unique in that individuals with wide ranges of dance experience were included in the performance.

"I love the idea that anyone can dance," McNeill said. "I know people were both non-majors and majors that went to Ghana and just showing their love of dance and showing that anybody can dance, I think it is an amazing thing for the audience to leave with."

Additionally, the preparation required by this performance fostered an overall sense of community and inclusiveness among the members of the cast.

"There was just a sense of togetherness in

everything we did," Biggs said.

Although the cast was diverse, there was a unity that shined throughout the performance.

"Culturally, getting other races and ethnicities to empathize with another race, I think is a really important thing," McNeill said.

Once the performance ended, it was evident that the audience was touched by

the demonstration of African culture and the passion that inspired the performance.

"I definitely hope the audience left with joy," Biggs said. "I know one of the pieces was called 'Celebration' and this was a celebration of black history in America and in the world."

The overall message of the performance was clear: Black History Month is a celebration to remember the past and embrace history.



EMILY STONE | Staff Photographer

Students in professor Jason Aryeh's Winter Term trip to Ghana celebrate Black History Month through dance.

# Vital Signs sings support through Make-A-Wish benefit concert

Casey Brown  
Senior Reporter

A cappella shows are not a foreign concept on Elon University's campus. Each of the five groups has concerts and small shows every semester, but junior Nick Cook, the president of Vital Signs, and the rest of the group are doing something a little different. Their next show will benefit the Make-a-Wish Foundation.

"We always thought about doing a benefit concert," Cook said. "We have a voice on this campus, literally, and we want to make a positive difference. We want to do something for somebody else, instead of [making money to put] towards our own projects."

Choosing Make-A-Wish of Central and Western North Carolina was a decision that had a direct connection to Vital Signs. Nick's younger sister, Bella, has been fighting leukemia for two years. She is a Make-A-Wish child – the organization sent her and the rest of Nick's family to Disney World this past summer. Seeing first hand the good the organization does, Cook said he felt motivated to give back to them.

"I have so much love and respect for this organization," Cook said. "It is powerful what they do. We could have done a canned food drive or a book drive, but a concert has never been done before. We wanted something that could continue."

Sophomore Mary Asimos, Vital Signs' vice president and musical director, said putting together the benefit concert has varied from the typical concert experience because it's not just about one group, but nine groups working towards one cause.

Cook's first order of business was reaching out to Elon's four other a cappella groups, Rip\_Chord, Twisted Measure, Sweet Signatures and Smooth Progressions, to see if they were interested in joining the lineup. The groups were enthusiastic to comply with Cook's request.

Junior Wiley Marsteller, a member of Rip\_Chord, was excited for the opportunity to help a good cause and collaborate with his fellow groups.

"We love getting the opportunity to make a difference with our performances, and we hope that our presence at the Make-A-Wish foundation event will help to raise money

towards a fantastic cause," Marsteller said. "This event also gives Rip\_Chord the chance to work together with other a cappella groups toward a common purpose, a trend we should incorporate more frequently into our schedules."

Senior Katie Middleton, president of Twisted Measure, echoed Marsteller's sentiment, adding that it was an opportunity to show support for a member of the a cappella community.

"We decided to participate in this concert because of the wonderful cause and the chance to support our fellow co-ed a cappella group, Vital Signs, and their inspiring organizer, Nick Cook," Middleton said. "Having events such as these on Elon's campus allows us to put our talent toward helpful causes and experience a combination of fun and philanthropy for such a relevant and famous foundation."

Besides Elon's a cappella groups, there are four other groups from other schools performing. Cook and his coordinator's assistant, junior Bethany Coats, are both North Carolina natives. They used their connections at other schools to fill the concert's roster.

The guest groups that will be performing

are the Sea Belles of University of North Carolina at Wilmington, the Enharmonix and the VoiceMale from Appalachian State University, and the Ladies in Red from North Carolina State University. Cook said they sought out a mix of groups so there would be equal representations of male, female and co-ed groups.

"Each of our groups has its own fan base," Cook said. "There's a greater appeal with different groups, because the audience knows it's supporting Make-a-Wish and also seeing nine a cappella groups on one night."

Vital Signs is in the process of finalizing schedules, publicity materials and song lists for this upcoming show. More than anything, they are ready to debut what they hope is a long-running event the entire Elon community can enjoy.

"Benefit concerts are some of my favorite events to attend," Asimos said. "Not only do you get to see an amazing show but you leave knowing that it was all for such a great cause."

Vital Signs will be selling tickets throughout the week for \$5. The concert will be at 7:30 p.m., Feb. 15 in Whitley Auditorium.

# Budding Elon baseball team

## *Slew of new players looks to*

Tommy Hamzik  
Sports Editor

There used to be a commercial for ES-PNU that used the slogan, "Tradition never graduates."

The Elon University baseball team may have lost 16 players from last year's Southern Conference Tournament champion squad, but that's not an excuse to stop adding to the rich tradition of the program.

"We don't want to rebuild," said Mike Kennedy, Elon head coach. "That word's not in our vocabulary. We just want to re-

load, get right back at it and compete."

The Phoenix welcomes 16 new players — 10 freshmen and six junior college players — on the heels of the program's sixth NCAA Tournament berth, one that ended with a loss to No. 6 University of Virginia.

"Over the course of the last 10 years, maybe even longer, there's kind of an attitude that comes along with our program that we're going to do things right," Kennedy said. "We're going to work hard at it. We expect to win. Some guys have to step up. We're going to make sure that they understand that they're here for a reason. They

have a tradition to uphold."

That tradition begins with winning SoCon championships, something Kennedy said remains the focus for his team. But it's going to take some work this year with the slew of newcomers. In addition to that, Elon was picked to finish fourth in the SoCon by the media and the coaches. Considering the Phoenix has only finished as low as fourth once — its first year in the league — it's a change of pace entering the season.

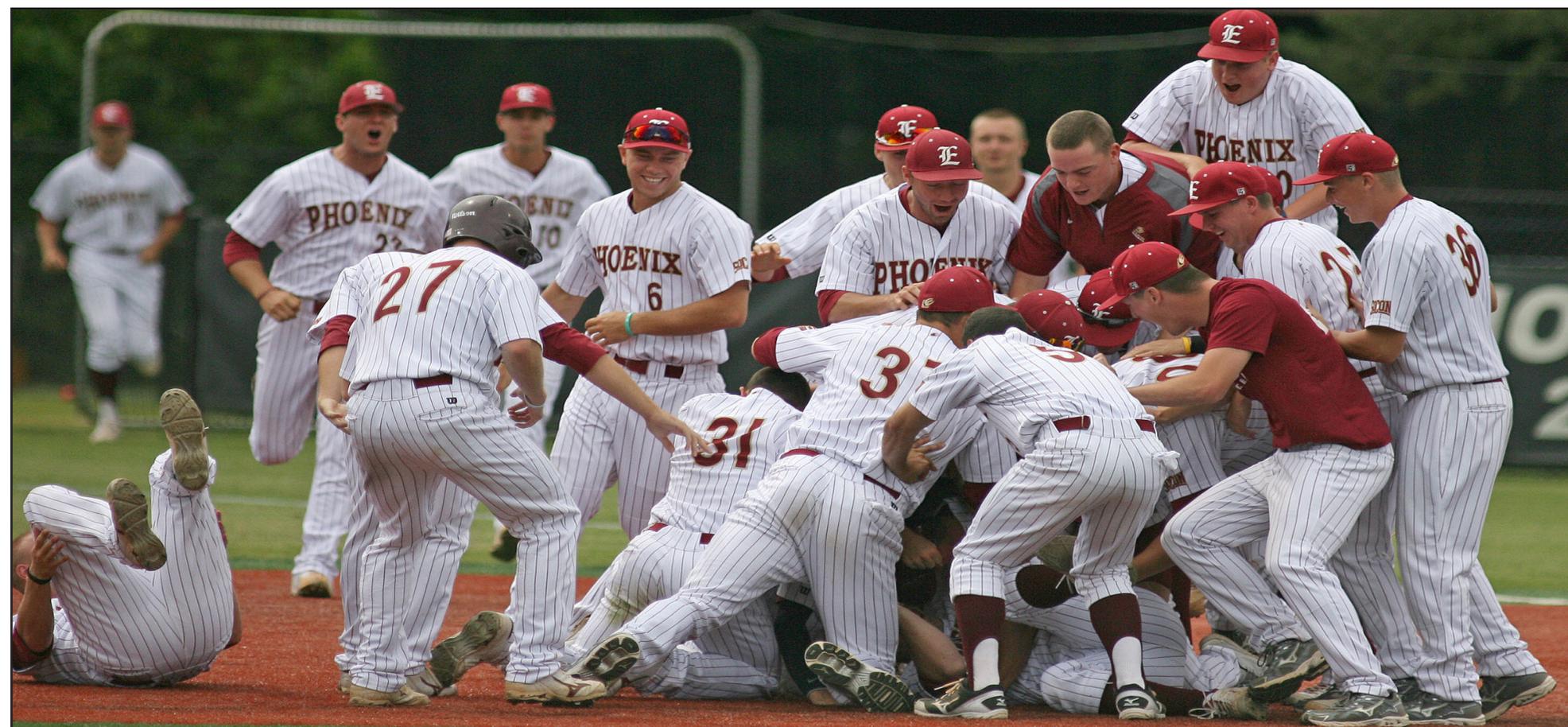
Senior infielder Sebastian Gomez said winning one more would be nice but also the team should be striving for that every

day.

"Anything below [a SoCon title] is not acceptable here," Gomez said. "At Elon, we win. That's all we want to do. That's all Coach Kennedy does. He brings it out of us, somehow, someway."

Gomez, relief pitcher Ryan Pennell and starting pitcher Jacob Baker are Elon's only three seniors this season. If you factor in that Baker came to Elon after playing two years of junior college, that leaves Pennell and Gomez as the only two in their fourth year with the Phoenix.

Pennell made 24 appearances out of the



FILE PHOTO BY AL DRAGO

Last season was full of success for the Elon baseball team, but the loss of 16 players means the 2014 squad will have an all-new look. The Phoenix opens the new season on Friday against Cincinnati at Latham Park.

# aims to continue tradition *build on 2013 SoCon title*

bullpen in 2013, striking out 22 and posting a 5.87 earned run average. He earned victories in both the SoCon Tournament and the NCAA Tournament, throwing a combined seven innings and not allowing a run in games against Georgia Southern University and University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

Gomez has bounced around a number of different positions in both the infield and outfield. He was named second team All-SoCon in 2013 after leading the Phoenix with a .323 batting average.

Kennedy said he sees Gomez playing a lot at second base this season. Both Gomez and Pennell said they're excited to be taking on more leadership roles in 2014.

"I'm just trying to set a good example

for the younger guys," Gomez said. "We're trying to instill the right values in these guys. The work ethic, coming out here and working every day. If you're tired, you have to push through it. It's a grind. We play 60 some games, so you have to grind it out."

While the team has only been officially practicing since late January, the players have been doing individual workouts since before winter break. Prior to that, the Phoenix played a fall slate which, according to Kennedy, "had some bumps in the road, but overall went well."

Because of those bumps, Kennedy said the newcomers are still finding and settling into their roles on the team. He acknowledges there might be some struggles early on.

"For the most part, there are guys that are going to be in important roles who just haven't played at this level," Kennedy said. "It's going to take a little time to get those guys' feet wet. I think we have talented guys, and once they gain experience, they'll understand the level of play. We can't emulate that in practice."

The pitching rotation looks to be completely retooled after the losses of starters like Spencer Medick, Kyle Webb and Dylan Clark. Kennedy said there were five or six guys competing for the starting roles at the end of January.

Elon had issues with depth in the bullpen last season, sometimes not having enough relievers capable of holding onto leads. Pennell said that should be different in 2014.

"I think we have much more depth," Pennell said. "A lot more harder throwers and more guys throwing strikes. Coach [Micah] Posey's emphasis in the off-season was to get ahead, throw strike one and pound the zone. Basically, let the hitter get himself out, and don't try to do too much."

Consistency is one aspect that will be vi-

tal not only to the bullpen's success, but to the team's as a whole, Pennell said.

"Last year, we've said that it was a great year, great run," he said, "but we by no means played very well the whole year. A big emphasis is playing our best baseball throughout the year instead of just our last 10 games and being more consistent rather than just going on stretches."

Elon may have bid farewell to first baseman/catcher Ryan Kinsella (who hit 21 home runs and batted .313 before being drafted by the Arizona Diamondbacks), but there are some key pieces to the puzzle returning. Alongside Gomez is junior infielder Casey Jones (.287 batting average in 2013) and in the outfield are twins Quinn (.269 batting average) and Blaine (.262 batting average) Bower.

"Across the board, we're pretty solid right now," Gomez said. "We just need to keep working and not take any days off. Any day we take off, some other team is working harder than we are."

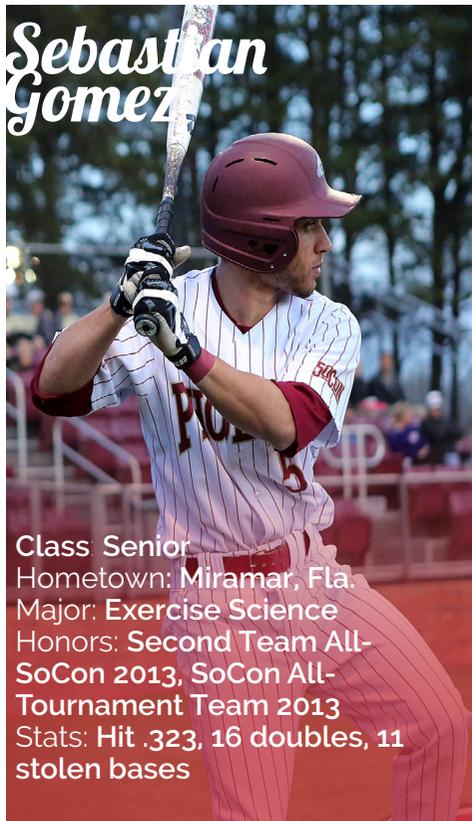
The Phoenix's schedule shapes up a bit differently than in years past, with the most obvious difference being the amount of home games. Elon will play 33 games at Latham Park, the most since entering the Division I ranks. The Phoenix will play 10 games against teams that made the NCAA Tournament in 2013, most notably home-and-homes with No. 8 North Carolina State University (Feb. 18 and March 19) and the No. 13 University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (April 16 and May 7).

Elon opens the season with an eight-game homestand, beginning with three games against the University of Cincinnati Feb. 14-16. The Phoenix once again hosts the Elon Invitational, with St. Joseph's University, High Point University and Gardner-Webb University coming to town the weekend of Feb. 28-March 2. Elon also plays Wake Forest University and Coastal

Carolina University twice, one game each on the road and at home.

"Everyone's trying to do that, play more games at home," Kennedy said. "Guys are in class longer, they get to sleep in their own beds. There are lots of positives to playing at home. We're very fortunate to be able to do that, especially early in the season. Hopefully it helps us."

If anything, playing at home should be a constant reminder to the newcomers, and the team as a whole, of the rich baseball tradition they are expected to uphold.



**Class Senior**  
Hometown: Miramar, Fla.  
Major: Exercise Science  
Honors: **Second Team All-SoCon 2013, SoCon All-Tournament Team 2013**  
Stats: Hit .323, 16 doubles, 11 stolen bases

GRAPHIC BY KRISTEN DEMARIA | Design Chief

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# Phoenix motivated to prove doubters wrong

Kyle Maher  
Senior Reporter

The Elon University softball team was less than enthusiastic about where it was picked to finish in the Southern Conference's pre-season poll.

The Phoenix, which struggled to a 21-31 record last season, was picked seventh out of the conference's eight teams, something senior infielder Lauren Oldham insists will be in the back of every player's mind.

"We were told a couple days ago about [our ranking]," Oldham said. "It's a good motivator because we know we're not seventh. We can come in first. We just want to prove everybody wrong. It gives us a chip on our shoulder heading into the season."

When head coach Kathy Bocock saw where her team was positioned, she knew it would be an important motivator for each of them. So she gathered her team together, told them where they stood and issued a challenge.

"They're aware of it," Bocock said. "I talked to them about it. I told them, 'They picked us seventh, what are you going to do about it?'"

The Phoenix took its coach's challenge and ran with it, going all out in practices and



Despite being picked to finish seventh in the SoCon, the Phoenix opened the 2014 season with three straight wins at the Charleston Southern tournament. Elon beat UNC-Wilmington and Maryland-Eastern Shore (twice). Next on the schedule will be a trip to Florida for the Hatter Invitational Feb. 14-16.

offseason workouts in order to get the SoCon Championship that some players said is well within their grasp.

"I think [being picked seventh in the SoCon] is going to motivate us to be better than everyone else thinks we're going to be," said Carleigh Nester, a senior outfielder. "It's going to be great when we come out, have a great season and surprise everyone who ranked us seventh."

Perhaps the most surprising part of the team being ranked seventh is that the Phoenix had four players named to either the first or second all-conference teams. Nester and sophomore outfielder Emily Cameron were given First-Team honors, while Oldham and senior catcher and third baseman Johanna Spencer were given spots on the second team.

Bocock said she was proud of her players' honors but hopes the recognition will be a springboard toward more prominent awards for the whole squad at the end of the year.

"Preseason is preseason, but it's a compliment to the girls," Bocock said. "It's all about them. The biggest thing our whole team is focused on is that preseason single awards are good, but we'd like to win the team awards at the end."

Oldham, Nester, Spencer and senior middle infielder Ali Ford want to leave a lasting legacy on the program in their final season

with the Phoenix. In order to do so, Oldham said she hopes to end her career with what associate head coach Jess Jacobson called the "championship sandwich."

"We started out getting a championship in the SoCon a couple of years ago, and we want to end our time in the SoCon with a championship," Oldham said. "That's been our ultimate goal from the get-go."

In order to do so, the Phoenix must first navigate a difficult non-conference schedule that sees them play in two tournaments – the Charleston Southern Classic and the Hatter Invitational in Deland, Fla., both of which feature elite opponents from across the country. Sandwiched in between their trips to Charleston and Deland is a home game with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which houses one of the premier softball programs in the country.

That many difficult games early in the season would eat away at the confidence of some teams. But Bocock knows her team needs those games in order to improve their strength of schedule. It doesn't hurt, Bocock admits, that Elon is in close proximity to several of the most prominent programs in the country.

"We want to make sure that out-of-conference, we're playing some good teams to help with our RPI," Bocock said. "We have ACC teams in our backyard and a great facility here, so they're all wanting to come

and play us."

It will also get them ready for the ever-competitive SoCon which, according to Nester, is up for grabs.

"We have a lot of good competition [in the SoCon]," Nester said. "It's always been that way. The competition is pretty even straight across the board. I don't think there's a bad team. They're all good."

On the mound, the Phoenix return six starters, all of whom have had a year of collegiate softball under their belts. Bocock said this will give them invaluable confidence and experience this year and in seasons to come.

It's what each of the six brings to the table that has Nester excited.

Offensively, assistant coach Tyler Engle has implemented minor tweaks in every player's swing, and the results have been immediate and encouraging.

"Coach Engle brought in some new philosophies on hitting, and it's really done wonders," Oldham said. "We're killing the ball right now."

"We have a lot of depth on our pitching staff," Nester said. "We have all this variety of pitching where none of them throw exactly the same. You can put one in throwing fast and then put another one in throwing knuckle curveballs. It's going to keep other teams off balance."



**Class Senior**  
Hometown: Kernersville, N.C.  
Major: Psychology  
Honors: First Team All-SoCon  
2013  
Stats: Hit .370, .660 slugging  
percentage, 11 home runs

# Isenbarger's three-pointer propels men's basketball

For 39 minutes Feb. 8, Georgia Southern University seemed to be in control of Elon University in men's basketball. In the closing seconds of the game, with Elon trailing by two, senior guard Jack Isenbarger took a pass and heaved up a three pointer from 30 feet away. The improbable shot swished through the net, and Elon stole a 60-59 win.

The Phoenix shot 33.3 percent from the field for the game and only 28.1 percent in the second half. Strong defense was able to keep the Phoenix in the game despite the absence of senior forward Lucas Troutman, who was out with the flu.

Senior forward Ryley Beaumont led Elon with 14 points, and Isenbarger added 10. Freshman forward Brian Dawkins scored a career-high seven points as Elon improved to 14-11, 7-3 in the Southern Conference. The Phoenix travels to Furman University Feb. 12 before hosting Samford University Feb. 15.



ASHLEY KING | Staff Photographer  
Jack Isenbarger was 2 of 16 from the field against Georgia Southern before making the winning shot.

## Rhodes' career day leads Elon to blowout

Behind a career-high 20 points from freshman forward Jenifer Rhodes, the Elon University women's basketball team dominated Georgia Southern University Feb. 8, winning 85-60. Elon was 7 of 11 from three-point range, including four threes from junior guard Zora Stephenson.

Elon led 42-30 at halftime, but 20 points in the first five minutes of the second half sealed the deal for the Phoenix. The 23-6 run in the early stages of the second half gave Elon a 67-36 lead with 13:28 remaining.

Following Rhodes in scoring was Stephenson with 16 points and senior guard Kelsey Harris with 15 points.

Elon also beat Davidson 66-63 at home Feb. 10 behind 19 points from Stephenson. The Phoenix improved to 11-12, 7-5 in the Southern Conference. The Phoenix is on the road at Western Carolina University Feb. 15.

## Lacrosse falls in first ever game

Nearly two years after the announcement that Elon University was adding women's lacrosse as a varsity sport, the Phoenix took the field for its first-ever game Feb. 8. Facing No. 6 Duke University, Elon fell 25-4.

The Blue Devils scored less than a minute into the game, but Elon freshman attack Sloane Kessler had a quick answer, tying the score at 1-1 at the 27:43 mark of the first half.

From there, Duke reeled off an 11-0 run before freshman attack Anna Vitton scored with 2:54 left in the first half. Duke pushed its lead to 25-2 until freshman midfielders Bailey DeMuth and Paige Lorton both scored their first career goals for Elon in the final 30 seconds of the game.

The Phoenix will play its first ever home game at 4 p.m. Feb. 14 in Rhodes Stadium against Longwood University.

## Women's tennis sweeps North Carolina Central

After four road matches against major conference opponents, the Elon University women's tennis team opened up its home schedule Feb. 8 by sweeping the Eagles of North Carolina Central University 7-0.

Elon shook up its doubles pairings with two new pairings: senior Jordan Johnston and sophomore Taylor Casey and senior Frida Jansaker and junior Maria Camara Ruiz.

The shake-up helped the Phoenix, as Elon won the doubles point. Elon went on to win all six singles matches, including a win from freshman Tolley Rice, who was playing her first match of the season. Elon improved to 1-4 on the season with the win. The Phoenix hosts the University of North Carolina at Wilmington Feb. 14.

## Softball opens 2014 season with win

A five-run third inning gave the Elon University softball team an early cushion and the Phoenix never looked back as they defeated the University of North Carolina at Wilmington 8-3 Feb. 8. Freshman left fielder Alaina Hall scored on a throwing error from UNCW sophomore catcher Erin Brown for the game's first run, and senior infielder Ali Ford singled home senior center fielder Carleigh Nester soon after.

Freshman catcher Carey Million had an RBI sacrifice bunt to score Ford and senior infielder Lauren Oldham capped off the inning with a two-RBI single. UNCW would cut the deficit to 5-3, but Elon scored three insurance runs in the seventh inning.

Junior pitcher Chelsea White earned the complete game victory for the Phoenix, moving her record to 1-0 on the season. Elon beat the University of Maryland-Eastern Shore twice, 9-0 and 11-0, to improve to 3-0 on the season before tying Charleston Southern University 5-5 in a darkness-shortened game. Elon plays at the Hatter Invitational in Florida Feb. 14-16.



File Photo by Al Drago  
Elon senior Lauren Oldham hit .455 and drove in four runs at the Charleston Southern Tournament.

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## WOMEN'S LACROSSE

from cover

"[At] Elon, we're generally 60 percent female-enrolled and 60 percent male participant [in athletics]," he said. "So we're out of balance. When you look at it from that standpoint, it's risky to add more men's opportunities at this point in time."

Blank indicated lacrosse was the favorite, and one month later the announcement that women's lacrosse would become an official Division I sport at Elon was made. The new team would begin play in 2014.

"Women's lacrosse is growing at an incredible pace, and we are excited to add this opportunity for Elon student-athletes," Blank said. "Women's lacrosse is becoming increasingly popular at all intercollegiate levels, and we feel the sport is a strong fit for our athletic program."

On April 28, 2012, Elon announced it had hired Josh Hexter, then the Duke University women's lacrosse associate



CAROLINE OLNEY | Photo Editor

Hexter and Crotty worked with the four upperclassmen — Emily Bishop, Tierney Guido, Kelli Stack and Megan Griffin — over the past season to build a foundation.

head coach, as the first head coach for the Phoenix.

"It was obvious to me from the beginning that a solid foundation for excellence has been built at Elon, and my job now is to extend that excellence to the women's lacrosse program," Hexter said following the announcement. "We've got a tremendous plan in place, and I am looking forward to getting started."

Former Duke attack Virginia Crotty, who played for Hexter from 2008-2011, was selected as the first assistant coach for the program Aug. 20. She was working at an advertising agency in New York City, something she called a "good out-of-school job." But her desire was to be down south.

"When Josh called me, I said, 'Fly me down tomorrow so I can definitely say yes,'" Crotty said. "When I saw the campus and the draw that it would have for a lacrosse program, I thought it was a no-brainer to accept the position."

When senior Tierney Guido, then a sophomore at Elon, first heard the announcement, she immediately called her best friend and fellow sophomore Emily Bishop.

"We were just like, 'Do we try out? Do we do this?'" Guido said. "And obviously,

our initial response was, 'Yes, we have to.'"

Guido and Bishop, club lacrosse players at the time of the announcement, began to prepare for the season. The following year, they, along with then-freshmen Megan Griffin and Kelli Stack, were recruited as the first ever Elon women's lacrosse players. The four players practiced with Hexter and Crotty last spring, and all agreed it was extremely helpful.

"They were able to work with us and get used to us," Hexter said. "[It] really didn't matter that they're seniors, it's more the fact that they had a year to kind of work with us. So when the freshmen come in and have questions about why we're doing something or what we're doing, they've already done it, so they can kind of help out that way."

They began to set the bar for the freshmen that arrived in 2013.

"They bring some leadership. They're great kids. If we were recruiting people, we would recruit kids like them," Hexter said.

### Top of the pyramid

With a group of 21 freshmen joining the four upperclassmen to kick off the program, the coach is one of the most important pieces of the puzzle.

According to his former boss, Hexter is one of the best men for the job.

"What he really brought to our program was a sense of teaching the fundamentals and helping the girls love the

game," said Kerstin Kimel, the head coach of the women's lacrosse team at Duke, where Hexter had been on staff since 2005.

Hexter said the best thing Kimel did for him while he was at Duke was allow him some independence as a coach and, most importantly, give him a feel for what

“FOR THE TEAM, I WANT A CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP.”

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SENIOR

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“WE WANT GIRLS WHO ARE LOOKING AT ELON TO KNOW WE’RE GOING TO SET THE BAR REALLY HIGH.”

VIRGINIA CROTTY  
ASSISTANT COACH

when he arrived at Elon, he started down his own path.

And when he needed an assistant coach, Crotty was a choice that made it easy to adjust. She was a low attacker at Duke, and Hexter coached attack.

“We always had a good, working, solid relationship, very honest,” Crotty said. “That, to me, was really important. I think it was for him as well. It’s nice that we know each other, didn’t have to break through those walls at first.”

Some players said they’ve benefitted greatly from both of the coaches already.

“They know what they’re talking about, they have a ton of experience,” said Elle Hvozdovic, a freshman midfielder. “I specifically take the draw, so I’ve been working a lot on the draw with them and they’ve really been helping my game. They’re really good at picking out exactly what you need to work on to help you become a better player.”

#### Developing a chemistry

Team-building on a team of 21 freshmen is tricky.

“We read poetry yesterday and then we kind of talked about that,” Hexter said.



CAROLINE OLNEY | Photo Editor

Hexter comes from a winning environment at national power Duke and wants to build the same at Elon.

it was like to start a program.

Hexter leaned on Kimel for advice when he was first hired, as Duke was in the NCAA Tournament at the time. But

“Then we just try to do something things where the girls get together and share and just talk about things – what are we afraid of, what do we want – and start to talk

about who we are.”

It’s a challenge Hexter said he was ready to face head-on, one of many that show up when starting a new program.

For leadership, the team will look to the four upperclassmen who have a year of Hexter’s coaching under their belts.

Senior attack Bishop, one of the former club players, echoes Hexter’s sentiments about the advantage of youth.

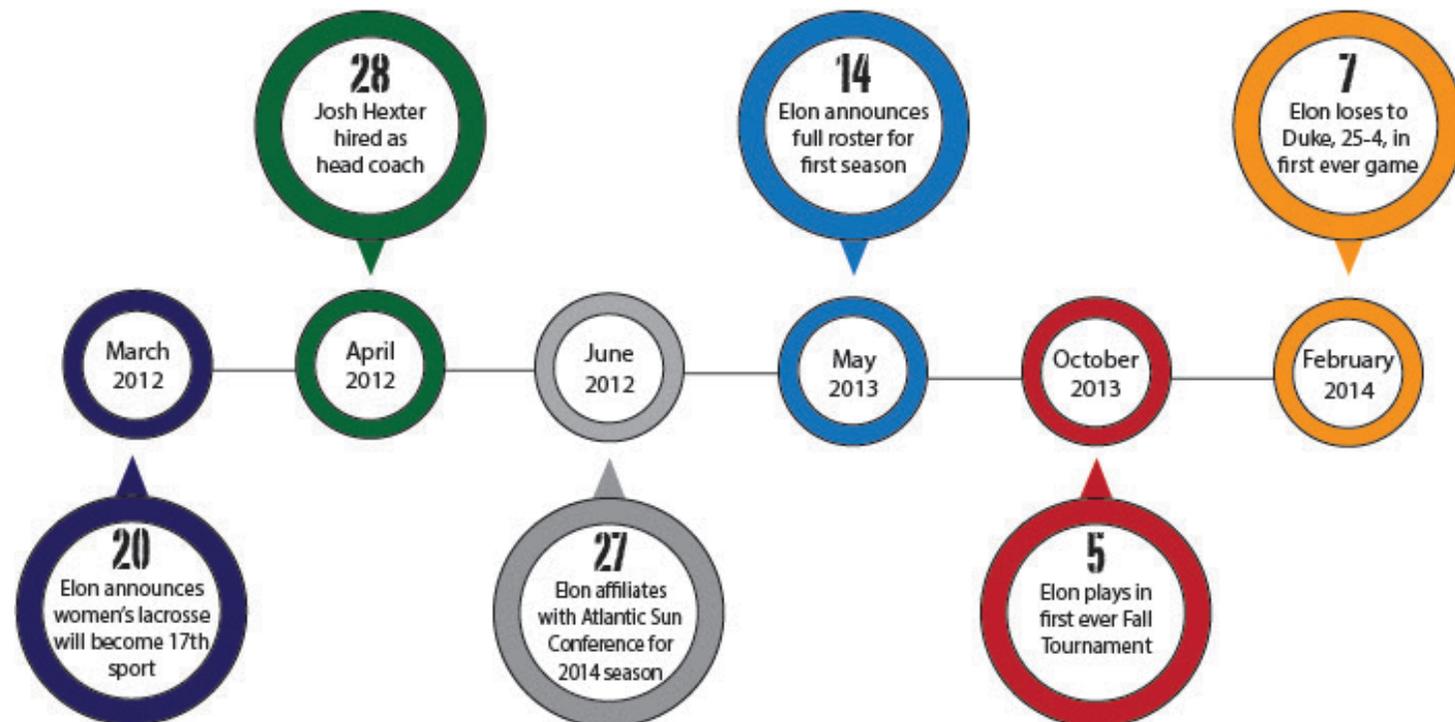
“Since there is no team dynamic already in place, it’s much easier to just build one,” Bishop said. “It’s not like there’s interruptions or anything. I think it’s an advantage because we just get to create a dynamic. We don’t have to worry about bringing [the freshmen] into one that already exists.”

And Hexter said he is excited to put together the pieces of the puzzle.

“Every player’s got a bright spot, you’ve just got to find that and put it into play and the kids are doing great so far,” Hexter said.

Hvozdovic acknowledged the challenges a young team brings but said they’re not intimidated by facing more experienced opponents.

“For us, I think we just have to take it as a learning experience and watch and



GRAPHIC BY KRISTEN DEMARIA | Design Chief

It took slightly under two years from the time Elon athletic director Dave Blank announced the beginning of the program until the team's first-ever game.

see how they play and try to reflect that in the way we play,” Hvozdovic said. “They have a step up on us from playing longer, but that doesn’t mean that we don’t have a chance playing against them. Our team in particular has a ton of hustle and grit, and we’re able to put 110 percent into everything, so I think if we’re willing to put in the work and the time, we’ll be just as good as those other teams.”

## Reasonable expectations

Kimel’s Duke team went 3-12 in her first year, but it didn’t take long for the program to find success. The Blue Devils made the Final Four in 1999, Kimel’s fourth season, but she said there’s a difference now to having that path to success.

“Starting off now, there’s so many more teams, the game has grown so much, it’s even more competitive now than it was

18 years ago,” Kimel said. “I think it is a daunting task but also a really fun one because there is a place for everybody in Division I, and it’s exciting that Elon has that challenge ahead of them.”

Hexter shied away from talk of records or championships.

“The only goals that we set are just to get better every day,” he said. “I don’t want to set goals that could potentially limit us. We’re pretty realistic in what we want to do, but when you get right down to it, what’s most important is to live in that moment and get better every day.”

Crotty said she thinks Elon has the potential to be a strong lacrosse school like Duke and perhaps even be a Final Four team in five or six years because of the athletes the program is drawing in and the teams the Phoenix will play.

“A lot of people shake us off, they’re doubting it,” Crotty said. “But I would say,



CAROLINE OLNEY | Photo Editor

Freshman attack Sloane Kessler, right, scored the program’s first-ever goal against Duke Feb. 7.

## WHAT TO WATCH FOR



**Longwood at Elon**

0-1 | 0-1

Friday, Feb. 14 | 4 p.m.

Rhodes Stadium | Elon, N.C.

GRAPHIC BY TOMMY HAMZIK | Sports Editor

Elon will play its first ever home game Feb. 14 against Longwood University in Rhodes Stadium.

with all the materials we have here, I think it is realistic.”

“We want to set the bar really high. We want girls who are looking at Elon to know we’re going to set the bar really high.”

Guido put that bar at conference championship level.

“For the team, I want a conference championship,” she said. “There’s no doubt in my mind that we can do it. I think we have the skill, the heart, the hustle. It’s definitely in our sight. It’s definitely in our realm of possibility.”

A word Hexter constantly used when speaking about developing his team was “fun.”

“What I really like is we don’t complain, and we don’t whine,” Hexter said. “We’re out there, and we’re having fun, there’s no doubt about it. But we’re trying to work really hard, and they’re going with it, and they’re getting better every day.”

And getting better every day, he said, is the key to building a successful team, despite the challenges a young team brings.

“Trying to build a powerhouse program, hopefully, and thinking long-term.

Really, even those powerhouse teams now think in the moment and they’re just trying to get better every day,” Hexter said. “When you start to be able to think like that and live like that, then all of a sudden, you’re racking up some wins.” §

HEAD COACH JOSH HEXTER

**Defenseman on lacrosse team at Assumption College**  
Class of 1996

**Coach at Division III Bridgewater State (72-42 record)**  
1998-2004

**Assistant coach at Duke University (120-43 record)**  
2005-2012

For full multimedia story with videos and graphics, please visit [elonpendulum.com](http://elonpendulum.com)

EMILY STONE | Staff Photographer  
Members of the Elon cheerleading squad support the women's basketball team in their game against Georgia Southern Feb. 8. The Phoenix won 85-60.



EMILY STONE | Staff Photographer  
Senior Julie Champagne and freshman Lucas Melfi dance in celebration of Black History Month Feb. 7 in Whitley Auditorium. The performance was directed by dance professor Jason Aryeh.



CAROLINE OLNEY | Photo Editor  
Elon women's lacrosse players practice in the snow Feb. 10 at Rudd Field in preparation for the team's home opener against Longwood on Feb. 14.



ASHLEY KING | Staff Photographer  
Junior Kevin Blake jumps towards the basket during Elon's game against Georgia Southern Feb. 8 in Alumni Gym. The Phoenix won 60-59.

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