

# Students boycotting South Carolina beaches over flag controversy

by **Katrice Franklin**  
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VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. — South Carolina's Confederate flag controversy is bringing hundreds of college students to Virginia Beach's resort strip this spring.

More than 1,000 Duke University college students plan to plant themselves on the Beach's Oceanfront in May for their annual end-of-the-year, post-finals party.

The 18- to 21-year-olds are changing their party plans to give the boot to one of Virginia Beach's top competitors — Myrtle Beach, S.C.

The university's NAACP chapter is challenging all students to avoid South Carolina's shore and join with the national chapter's efforts to boycott the state for refusing to remove the Confederate flag from its state capitol.

While the students are not the customers that Virginia Beach usually targets — 25- to 44-year-olds with families and annual incomes of more than \$45,000 — Beach leaders and hotel owners said they welcome the young people. They might not spend a lot and pump up the city's tourism dollars. But they're worth far more than the money they'll contribute to the economy. They signify a different image than the one created by events in 1989.

A decade ago, Greekfest, a college party of more than 100,000 black stu-

quite a turnaround in my view." Jimmy H. Capps, president of the

roughly the same distance from Durham, N.C., to Myrtle Beach, she said.

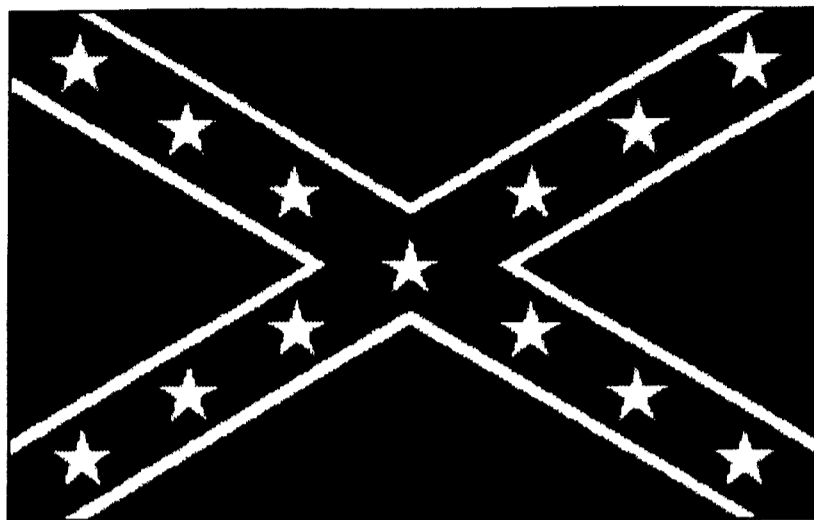
"It's also got the same atmosphere," Matthews said.

Ash Ward, president of the Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce, said the strip has no record of the students ever coming. But of the scheduled 591 groups that planned to travel to Myrtle Beach this year, 26 have canceled. Ward estimates a loss of about \$933,000, or nearly one-half of 1 percent of the nearly \$200 million a year that Myrtle Beach collects from the tourism market.

"Duke University is a top-notch school," said Beach hotel owner Robert Vakos. "I can't image those kids being real hell-raisers coming out of there. Are they going to jeopardize their lives by trying to do something stupid? I doubt it."

James Ricketts, director of the Beach's Department of Convention and Visitor Development, said the city has also made an effort to learn how to deal with youth. Several city leaders attended a youth conference in Atlanta last year with officials from places like Myrtle Beach and Atlanta to talk about the behavior issue.

"The Beach is open to anybody," Ricketts said. "Our visitation is made up of a number of ethnic groups, single to married, to senior citizens to young folks."



dents at the beginning of the school year, turned into riots, arrests and claims of police brutality.

The Labor Day weekend melee triggered racial complaints and accusations that the city did not embrace black college students. The riots also tarnished the Beach's reputation among college students at many schools.

"This is a positive sign," said Oral Lambert, the Beach's chief of operations, when asked about the Duke students. "This is an indication that Virginia Beach is not looked upon as being negative. That's the image that many people want to stir up. This is

Beach Hotel and Motel Association, said he's thrilled about the business.

"We're not that busy in the middle of May, and we want to rent hotel rooms," Capps said.

Twenty-year-old Duke student Kameron Matthews, who is leading the effort to bring the students to Virginia Beach, said she had never heard of Greekfest and is not concerned. All Duke students want is to tan on the beach and go to the clubs and bars. And for that, the Beach's resort strip is ideal, Matthews said.

About 13 of the university's organizations have agreed to abandon Myrtle Beach. The travel time is

# Congress looking for way to slow increases in college tuition

by **Tony Pugh**  
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WASHINGTON — Flush with money from smart investments, administrators at Williams College last month did the unthinkable: they froze the school's annual tuition for the first time in more than 40 years, albeit at \$31,520.

That was a rarity among prestigious private schools. Officials at the college in Williamstown, Mass., hope the price freeze will engender good will and attract more top-notch sons and daughters of money-conscious parents.

But experts say that's unlikely, mainly because of an attitude prevalent among the wealthy, which holds that a school charging less than its competitors must not be as good. So the Harvards and Princetons of the world continue to hike tuition each year, with little adverse impact on their ability to attract superior students.

That so-called "luxury mentality" is just one of many factors that have driven tuition to unprecedented heights over the last 20 years, analysts say. This year the average combined cost of tuition and fees at public four-year institutions is \$3,356; it is \$15,380 at private ones.

Average tuition for a full-time resident undergraduate student rose 44 percent from 1990 to 1996, according to the General Accounting Office. In the same period, the cost of living, as measured by the consumer price index, rose only 15.4 percent, and median household income rose a mere 13.8 percent.

One result of skyrocketing tuition is that college has become all but unaffordable for most low-income families and many middle-class ones, forcing both to borrow heavily, and often crushing students with debt for decades.

No one is quite sure why education costs have grown so much faster than inflation.

The National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education essentially threw up its hands with its final report in 1998, noting that colleges and universities have made little effort to explain their finances. "As a result, there

is no readily available information about college costs and prices — nor is there a common national reporting standard for either," the commission report said.

But academia's veil of secrecy may be lifting slowly under growing pressure for accountability.

The Senate Governmental Affairs Committee examined the trend of rising college costs at hearings Wednesday and Thursday, February 9 and 10. College administrators, professors and other education experts acknowledged their failure to justify tuition hikes, and some recommended steps to take, but no one had a definitive answer on why college costs keep rising so fast.

The colleges' own bills are driven by expensive factors such as complying with regulations, recruiting faculty, acquiring technology and building facilities. All are partly to blame, said William Trout, president of Rhodes College in Memphis, Tenn., and chairman of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

Costs per student soared 57 percent at four-year public institutions from 1987 to 1996, and 69 percent at private schools, Trout said.

Most four-year institutions will continue to see annual increases, "probably at rates averaging as much as one or two points over inflation," said William Massey, a professor at Stanford University and a prominent education consultant.

Meanwhile, a uniform system for reporting an institution's costs, prices, and subsidies is being developed by the National Association of College and University Business Officers. A task force of experts has been working longer than a year to devise a standard disclosure format, said Gregory Fusco, the consultant heading the project.

Many tuition-paying parents voice frustration and confusion over a related phenomenon: why, they wonder, does tuition keep going up even as federal student financial aid tops \$41 billion a year?

"We appear to be pouring more money into the system only to have it mopped up by tuition increases," said Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine.

# High price offered for donor's eggs raises ethical questions

by **Marilee Enge**  
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SAN JOSE, Calif. — An infertile couple seeking an athletic young woman to donate her eggs is offering \$100,000 — an amount thought to be the highest price yet in the escalating market for donor ova.

The offer, which was made in an advertisement in the *Stanford Daily* student newspaper, again raises questions about the ethics of paying large sums to women who meet certain physical and intellectual criteria.

The highest known previous price for donor eggs was \$50,000, offered last year by an infertile couple seeking a tall, athletic top student with high SAT scores at a number of prestigious schools, including Stanford. But the latest offer shocked even veteran fertility practitioners.

"That's the highest asking price for donor eggs that I've heard," said Shelley Smith, director of the Egg Donor Program, a center in Los An-

geles. "It's double [the previous record]."

A Southern California recruiting service called Families 2000 has placed the full-page ads for the past few weeks, said Peter Castorena, director of marketing for the *Stanford Daily*. The service, which says on its Web site that it was founded by Christian women who struggled with infertility, placed similar ads in Stanford's student newspaper last year, Castorena said.

"Give the Gift of Love and Life," the advertisement reads. "Very Special Egg Donor Needed." The notice goes on to say that the donor must be under 30, Caucasian, and an athlete, and adds: "Proven college level athletic ability preferred."

In addition to the \$100,000 compensation, "all expenses will be paid."

Louisa Tromel, director of Families 2000 in Newport Beach, Calif., said the family did not want to speak publicly. "I can't make any comments," she said.

The practice of using donated eggs

and sperm to conceive a child is well-established, but the astronomical prices offered by wealthy couples cre-

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-Margaret McLean, professor of ethics, Santa Clara University

ate a commercial transaction, rather than a medical one, said Margaret

McLean, a professor of ethics at Santa Clara University.

"There are standards for what is a worthwhile child. That troubles me greatly," she said. "If you have money you can have this ideal child. It renders children an article of commerce as well."

Fertility clinics on the West Coast pay egg donors a standard fee of \$3,500, according to Smith. She said many of her donors are "real humanitarians" seeking to help infertile couples, and she rejects potential donors who are just interested in the money.

"I wonder, with these fees, why they have to do that," she said. "We have girls from Wellesley and Smith and Stanford. We have Ph.D. candidates at USC. We've got people who are drop-dead gorgeous and have master's degrees."

Five- and six-figure donor fees strike Smith as coercive and cold. "Suddenly it's about buying eggs rather than a woman wanting to create a dream for somebody else."

# Anti-discrimination exhibit uses vivid demonstrations

by **Lynn Franey**  
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WARRENSBURG, Mo. — Blindfolded participants are divided into groups by eye color. Some are forced to kneel, others to stand with their hands against a wall. Two tormentors yell at them, scaring them with a shouted "bang" to symbolize the shooting of another member of the group.

This is the introduction audiences get at Central Missouri State University's Beyond Words 2000 anti-discrimination museum.

The purpose of the first skit is to give museum-goers a taste of the fear and lack of control felt by Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

In other exhibits, the museum gets audiences to consider the feelings of the disabled, elderly, teenagers, non-Christians, ethnic minorities, and multiracial families, as well as homosexuals.

"I hope this opens people's eyes to the things people say that they think are normal but that really hurt people," said Heather Kinion, a Central Missouri State student who is in some of the museum's skits. In one role, she plays a white woman with a biracial child.

This is the fifth year for the

university's Museum of Oppression, which won the regional 1998 Innovative Program Award from the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.

About 1,500 people go through the museum during the week it is open in February each year, said Beth Tankersley, head of the university's Office of Community Awareness. Her

*"This is a good way to have students evaluate their attitudes. It makes them realize that attitudes are buried very deeply."*

-Dawne Buchanan, education instructor, Central Missouri State

office works with student and community groups to present the museum.

In the ballroom of the University Union, tour groups move from station to station. At one, they watch a videotape of a black woman saying sarcastically that black people want to be undereducated, underemployed, and disliked. At another, they hear an audiotape of a man berating a woman, blaming her for his violence toward her. At a third, a student speaks from the perspective of a Jew

made to feel like an outcast during the Christmas season.

In past years, the museum has focused on historical discrimination, such as the Holocaust and slavery. But this year's museum focuses on contemporary examples of prejudice, with posted newspaper articles detailing recent hate crimes and a wall map pinpointing several hundred hate

groups, including Ku Klux Klan chapters, Christian Identity factions, and several black separatist organizations.

Tammy Long, executive director of the Greater Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center, brought chamber staff to the museum Monday morning, February 7. She was surprised to learn that hate groups exist today, especially the 17 identified in Missouri.

"This brought things into perspective in the year 2000. We can relate

to things that people say today that they don't consider racist but really aren't good comments to be making," Long said.

One white student, visiting Monday with her communication class, told her classmates that the exhibits reinforced her belief in equality, an attitude she adopted after growing up with a racist father who wouldn't let her watch *The Cosby Show* or any other television shows that featured black characters.

Dawne Buchanan, an education instructor at Central Missouri State, brought her class to see the museum Monday, Feb. 7. Two white university students said the exhibits made them rethink their prejudice against immigrants who don't speak English.

"This is a good way to have students evaluate their attitudes," Buchanan said. "It makes them realize that attitudes are buried very deeply."

This year's theme is knocking down the wall of discrimination by replacing words of hate and acts of harassment with expressions of love, peace, acceptance, and unity.

In the final exhibit, a television plays tips for creating a harmonious world: "Remember what it feels like to be different," "Don't hold back compliments," "Stretch your cultural comfort zone."

# Leaders of student strike held without bail

by **Tracey Eaton**  
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MEXICO CITY — The leaders of a strike that shut down Mexico's oldest and largest university for nearly 10 months were ordered held without bail Monday, February 7, as authorities debated what to do with more than 700 jailed protesters.

To Mexican authorities, many of them are hoodlums, accused of such serious crimes as "terrorism" and "sabotage."

But to supporters, they're "political prisoners," angry urban rebels in a less than democratic nation run by the same political machine since 1929.

"Let our rage explode in the hands of our oppressors!" one strike supporter declared in a message posted on the World Wide Web.

The strikers occupied Mexico City's National Autonomous University of Mexico, or UNAM, in April after university officials proposed raising the yearly tuition from a few cents to about \$140.

The dispute simmered for months. Then at dawn Sunday, Feb. 6, 2,662 federal police officers swept in and re-took the campus, arresting hundreds of strikers.

By Monday, Feb. 7, Mexico's attorney general's office was reporting that it would formally charge 745 people, including 83 minors. Some officials continued calling for leniency as authorities set up a hotline for relatives wanting to know the status of those arrested.

Three top leaders of the protest, Alejandro "El Mosh" Echavarría, Alberto "The Devil" Pacheco, and Mario "The Cat" Flavio Benítez, were ordered held without bail on Monday, Feb. 7.

Their supporters said the charges against them — ranging from terror-

ism and inciting a riot to sabotage and destruction of public property — were "invented" and groundless accusations.

"Is it terrorism to defend free public education in a country with 100 million poor?" read a statement posted on the strikers' Internet site. "Please, don't believe what the media say. Take to the streets and raise your voice."

Few heeded that call Monday, Feb. 7, in Mexico City. The streets were quiet as about 200 strike supporters met privately to decide what to do next.

There was no immediate word on when the university would re-open. Authorities began cleaning up the campus Monday, Feb. 7, and began assessing the damage. Mexican newspapers showed photos of classrooms and hallways littered with broken chairs, equipment, and stray dogs.

Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, who is vying for the Presidency in Mexico's July 2 election, criticized Sunday's raid of the campus, saying authorities ought to be addressing the root causes of such conflicts.

Cardenas and other left-leaning politicians contend that as long as power is so heavily concentrated in one party — the governing Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI — there will be political tension and the potential for violence in Mexico.

For the strikers, the dispute may have begun over the proposed tuition increase, but it quickly grew larger than that. It became a protest against the PRI, free markets, and political corruption.

Yet the strike never had widespread public support. University officials in January held a straw poll to test the support for a plan to negotiate with the strikers and re-open the school. More than 90 percent of about 150,000 students who voted in the poll backed the plan.