

# A run through the mind of a streaker

By Ryan Van Winkle  
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SYRACUSE, N.Y. (CPX) - I can remember only one piece of advice before everything falls into madness: "Look into the eyes; maintain eye contact." I am stark naked and nervous when Joel screams, "Let's go! Naked guys, naked guys running at you!" We're heading fast down the street, pounding the pavement in a fleshy madness. "Don't look away," I think. "No fear. No fear."

It's Halloween, and, despite the cold, grain alcohol and adrenaline are warming parts of me that have never seen the sun. We're huffing fast down the street, past people dressed as President Clinton, Monica Lewinsky, flappers and pirates. Joel's thin, graceful frame is directly in front of me. His arms are flailing and his bare feet thundering across the ground as the crowd cheers.

Some gasp, others laugh. Some move out of the way quickly. Some are frozen in place, prompting Joel to shout at them, "Naked guy touching you!" Men scream from a dark porch. "Put some clothes on! Freaks! We don't want to see you!"

Such criticism, not to mention the risk of arrest, social rejection and catching cold, has never stopped Joel before. Not as he ran naked through

restaurants, not as he ran the length of an 8-mile-long golf course, and certainly not as he ran in the buff by a group of speechless first-year students watching a movie outdoors during orientation weekend. "Because it was freshmen, they're insecure and aren't going to boo," he said. "It's the upperclassman, getting ready to go into the capitalist, greedy society that can't deal." Joel's reveling in this moment, too. He bounces on the balls of his feet, yelling "Freedom!" at gawkers.

While shrinks could debate his motivation, latent desires and personality traits for months, even years, it's now easy to see why Joel Colombero, a senior at Syracuse University, streaks: the adrenaline rush and the raw logic of this lunacy are so appealing. Though he has been streaking since high school, Joel said he doesn't try to compete with those who run onstage naked during the Emmys or creepy guys who have a thing for gray overcoats. "Most of the guys who have done stuff like that are really f\*\*ked in the head," Joel said. "I'm just a really normal guy. I don't smoke, I don't drink, and I don't do drugs."

While his claim to normalcy is dubious, many may find Joel's rationale for baring his bod in public impeccable and refreshingly honest. This is not, after all, a guy who hides his head while running naked down the street. "Hell yes," he replied instantly when

asked if he wanted his real name published. "I wouldn't talk to you if you didn't!" He wants us to know him, and he doesn't mind if we wander through the pale, white underbelly of his psyche for a while, a mind that only cops and counselors usually get to explore.

"It's an idealist thing," Joel said of his love for streaking. "Life is so monotonous. Sometimes you don't feel alive, and I want to make my life extraordinary. I've got to do something crazy sometimes, or I feel I'll become one of them."

"Them" being people whom Joel considers anal and prissy. He said he's found quite a few in Syracuse, a far more uptight place than his home of San Jose, Calif. Everybody at school, he said, is worried about passing the social grade and saying and doing the right things. So they do nothing, at least nothing exciting that is. "Do something, do anything," Joel says again and again. He has done a lot. He's double majoring in philosophy and television, radio and film. He's on the university's wrestling team and participates in several campus groups. And he's streaked dozens and dozens of times.

Joel got his start streaking during a California statewide swim meet when he was still in high school. Somebody joked before the meet that it would be funny if a swimmer's suit came off during a race. Joel thought so, too, so

he practiced diving repeatedly with his suit untied to make sure it would fall off at just the right moment. He convinced the team to let him swim the last leg of a 50-meter relay. He dove into the water, and his ploy worked.

"I almost drowned I was laughing so hard, swallowing water, the suit down to my knees like a parachute," he said. "But it really bothered me not knowing if anyone saw me." Plenty of folks among the crowd of 2,000 that gathered for the event guaranteed they had. Joel's team lost, many of his fellow swimmers walked away without saying a word, and his coach shed a tear, but a streak addict was born.

"I didn't want to hurt anybody," Joel said. "We had two squads at this meet. We really weren't supposed to be there at all. We had no chance of winning." These days his biggest ambition, as far as running around in the buff goes, is to streak through the Carrier Dome during a football game. That hasn't already happened because Joel said he's afraid of the response he'd get, which, of course, could mean the revocation of his diploma.

And it's a good response, laughter, cheering, pointing, whistles and catcalls, that makes a streak successful, Joel said. "It's all about the reaction," he said. "If I saw someone doing something crazy I'd love it. It transcends our fears. Let's us know that life isn't dismal. I don't do this be-

cause I want people to say, 'Oh I'm scared!' and then call the cops."

The least successful of his forays into public exhibition happened when Joel and his girlfriend decided to run naked into the middle of a party at his neighbors' house. "Real frat boy types," he said. There had been tension between the two houses all year that only intensified after Joel and his girl decided to give the neighbors something to get really mad about. The couple bolted into the crowd and started to use the dance floor.

Joel said people just turned and walked away, which is not a good response. "C'mon, let's party!" he cried, jumping up and down to excite the crowd. Someone turned off the music, silence. The neighbors made it clear that they didn't mind Joel's girlfriend being there, but they wanted him to leave, and quickly. Another bad response. Joel spoke to one of his neighbors later.

"He said, 'I just cannot understand that. Why? Why?'" Joel said. "Some people can't understand that I'm doing something out of the ordinary. They're so set in how they think things should be." Joel said cops seem to have the worst trouble breaking away from the norm, especially when they're busy upholding laws against public indecency. Joel has encountered the police twice. Once after running naked through a Denny's restaurant in California, and once

while zooming down the streets of Syracuse while wearing in-line-skates. That story, Joel says, is "the most legendary."

He used a rope to tie himself to a car, donned a ski mask, lit a cigar and stuck about a half dozen roman candles in this belt. The car took off, with Joel trailing behind, sparks from the candles flying into the air. "I heard cheers," he said, smiling. "It was like a whole bunch of people doing a wave up and down the street."

And then there was that stop sign. Joel, not wanting to crash into the back of the car, let go of the rope and skated right into the path of a police officer. "I'm naked and he's like, 'What the hell are you doing?'" Joel said. "All I could say was, 'Officer, do you want me to put pants on now?'"

Joel wasn't arrested that night. Funny how that happens, he added. Typically, cops get over their initial shock and anger and think his stunts are pretty funny. They know he's not out to hurt anyone, he said, and they usually smile knowingly when he explains, "I wanted to live a bit."

## UNC Students 'Patch' together film-making experience

By Amy Cappiello  
College Press Exchange

Campus Correspondent - UNC-Chapel Hill

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (CPX) - Word traveled fast that Universal Pictures' "Patch Adams" would be filming on the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's campus in May and June. Students, faculty, administrators and local residents eager to get a behind-the-scenes look at the cast and crew, especially funny man Robin Williams, clamored for a piece of the action. What many say they got was enough experience to help them decide that movie making has its bright moments but certainly isn't all it's cracked up to be.

Chosen to appear in the film after submitting a Polaroid photo of themselves, hundreds of extras getting paid only minimum wage spent one 14-hour workday shooting the film's final scene, which focuses on a graduation ceremony, and Williams' bare behind.

"I arrived at the set at 5 a.m. and pretty much hung out all day," said Laura Brayton, a senior biology major. "We spent hours outside sitting in folding chairs watching Robin Williams moon the world. It was really repetitive and boring." To make matters worse, the bright Carolina sun was scorching, especially for those donning long-sleeved, polyester duds suitable for the 1970s-era film about Hunter "Patch" Adams, an unconventional doctor who uses humor to treat his patients.

"I think the funniest moment of the day was when (Williams) came out and looked at all the extras and said, 'I'm so sorry they made you wear these clothes. They were ugly in the '70s, and they're still ugly,'" said Pamela O'Connor, director of press and marketing for the university's Center for Dramatic Art and an extra on the set.

One big condition the university set before allowing the filming to happen on campus was that its students get a chance to learn something from the process. So, besides serving as extras, students also were recruited to work in the casting, lighting, press and wardrobe departments. Many students said those jobs sounded far more glamorous than they actually were.

Without getting many details, Chris Bramley, a senior communications studies major, accepted a job working as an assistant to the casting staff. He thought his stint would be the first in a long series of moves in a successful film career. Then reality hit. "I never worked actually on the set," he said. "I was basically a gopher for the casting people during the extras' casting days in Raleigh and Chapel Hill. I was in charge of taking pictures of people who came through lines and of organizing people."

The experience helped him chart a different course for his career. "It definitely made me realize that I didn't want to go into the movie-making business," he said, quickly adding that a career in sports broadcasting now looks more interesting and promising. "(Film production) is so tedious. It was ridiculous hours. They wanted me

whenever it was convenient for them, no matter what else I had going on."

Despite any perceived down sides, the chance to work with the "Patch Adams" cast and crew provided the perfect training ground for those students determined to forge careers in film production. O'Connor said. "It was a great experience for them to get to have contact with Robin and all of the other actors in the film," she said. Despite the seemingly endless outtakes and long lines, many students agreed that the filming could, at times, be fun.

"I'm not sure I'd ever do it again, but it was definitely worth the time," said Cynthia Eakes, a junior history major who served as an extra during the movie's grand finale. "I got to experience movie-making first-hand. I wasn't aware of how much work it takes to make a movie."

University officials say they're pleased with the way the filming, which also pumped \$2 million into the local economy, turned out and that they will consider future requests. Offers are likely to roll in because North Carolina is now ranked third in the nation for overall film production, behind California and New York. According to the North Carolina Film Office, more than 400 feature films and six network television series, including Dawson's Creek, which is filmed in Wilmington, N.C., have been filmed there in the last 19 years.

That's just fine with Deborah-Anna Reznick, a Stanford economics major graduating in June and who came to hear her home state's pitch. She's from Concord, Mass., and fits what Massachusetts is after: someone who's seeing many of her fellow economics majors heading toward lucrative careers in consulting. She may go to graduate school some day, she said. "But teaching is so compelling on an ideological level. It sounds good to change the world, to give back."

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED: Applications for the Massachusetts program can be obtained by calling (718) 388-3300, extension 323. The application deadline is March 1. For information about California's teacher training package, phone 1-888-CALTEACH.

Those who accept the Massachusetts offer must commit to working in the state for four years, although not necessarily in the first set of co-operating districts that have offered jobs. Those districts are all urban, in the Boston area.

## Oh, your aching back? Check your backpack

By Amy Cappiello  
Campus Correspondent-UNC-Chapel Hill  
College Press Exchange

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (CPX) - Ever stopped to consider that your backpack might have something to do with your backache? Bags might come in an array of hip styles and colors, but with the number of back injuries rising in schools and on college campuses, physicians and chiropractors say it's important for students to consider function over form.

In 1997, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated that more than 240 children were treated in hospital emergency rooms for back pain related to their backpacks and book bags. More common is the gradual emergence of pain that comes after years of putting undue stress and strain on the lower back, a predicament many college students report they now face.

Chas Gaertner, a chiropractor who has set up shop near the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, estimates that most of his patients are much younger than the typical crowd hanging out in chiropractic offices. He said about 80 percent of his patients are either in their teens or 20s. Their troubles are mostly posture related, Gaertner said. He blames many of the ailments he treats on book bags, especially those that are overloaded. "I've treated kids in the 4th and 5th grade that had backpacks bigger than their torso," he said. "I've weighed bookbags that are 35-40 pounds."

College students know plenty about over-packed sacks, too. Without lockers, they tend to cram anything and

everything they could possibly need in a day into one bag that they lug around on their shoulders. Laura Stoehr, a sophomore journalism major at UNC, schleps around on her small frame a bag that weighs at least 20 pounds. Aside from books, she also packs chapstick, a lighter, a sewing kit and plenty of gum and tissues.

"I've never used the sewing kit, but before I had it, I needed to sew on a button," she said. "I have terrible posture, and the book bag doesn't help," she continued. "But unless I start carrying around a little suitcase on wheels, there's not a lot I can do about it."

Zach Finley, a first-year law student at Harvard University, knows her pain. He lives about five minutes from campus and walks every day with a shoulder bag slung across his body. "Some days I have three classes, and I have to carry six books and some binders," he said. "It's not usually too bad, but on those days I have to carry six books, it's pretty trying. I would think my bag gets up to 20-25 pounds on the extreme days."

Gaertner warns that routinely lugging such a large amount of weight can alter a student's posture for the worse. A properly packed bag equals between 10 percent and 20 percent of its carrier's weight, he said. "Most people are creating a really bad alteration in their posture," he said. "They develop posture where they hold their head like a turtle or a vulture."

Good thing not everyone fills their bags to the brim. Kristy Cannaday, a senior economics major at Emory University in Atlanta, alternates between two backpacks, a trendy leather satchel and a plain canvas bag.

No matter which one she's using, Cannaday said she only carries the bare necessities. "Economics books are big text books, so I don't usually take them to class," Cannaday said. "I have spirals, a folder, my day planner, pens, pencils. That's about it."

Because bookbags are such an integral part of just about every student's day, The American Academy of Pediatrics offers several pointers on how to use them: Use a hip belt to take pressure off the shoulders, redistributing weight to the hip and pelvis.

Distribute your load by using all of a bag's compartments. Pace heavier books and items closest to the back, putting the center of gravity nearest the pelvis.

Tighten shoulder straps to draw the pack as close to the body as is comfortable.

Pick a pack that has padding in the straps and other areas that come in direct contact with the back to avoid jabbing and discomfort.

Sling bags with one long shoulder strap across the chest to better distribute weight. Students carrying traditional backpacks should use both shoulder straps to ease the load.

Students who insist on the ever popular one-shoulder look should periodically shift their bags, using different arms to carry their loads.

Lighten your load. Haul around only the things you need. That last bit of advice may be more difficult for some students to accept than others. "I carry a bus schedule, gum and the parking tickets I got reduced as kind of a personal victory," said Anna Pond, a senior at UNC.

## Want to teach? Signing bonuses are up to \$20,000

By S.L. Wykes  
Knight-Ridder Newspapers

Call it a gold rush, in reverse. Stanford University students who are considering teaching careers got pro sports treatment last week when Massachusetts educators came calling with \$20,000 signing bonuses.

Recruiting teachers from nationwide pools is increasing as districts face mounting enrollments and a graying teacher population. In recent years, New York City sent recruiters to Austria. St. Louisans have gone looking in South Africa. Texans have searched in California and Puerto Rico. Virginia officials loaded up a 32-foot recreational vehicle last summer and toured the East Coast.

But the hefty signing bonus is highly unusual. Massachusetts' bonus program is just the newest addition to a range of incentives that can include low-interest housing loans, discounts at restaurants, tax credits, free bank-

ing and job shares with full medical benefits. Stanford was the Massachusetts team's third stop in California. Previous stops were in San Diego and Berkeley. Another four dozen American campuses are to be visited.

California has been recruiting in other states, too, said Leslie Fausset, chief deputy superintendent for educational policy, curriculum and department management. "I certainly think giving incentives for people to go into teaching is a good thing, and certainly one of the superintendent's primary issues has been to raise the salary of teachers."

The first year of the Massachusetts program is set to put 50 teachers into a special training program this summer and into classrooms by fall. That small number won't be for want of interested applicants, said Massachusetts' Department of Education chief of staff Alan Safran. "We're getting hundreds of calls," he said.

The program will expand to draw

in 150 students next year, Safran said, to eventually provide the state with 25 percent of the new teachers it needs each year. Massachusetts teachers with a bachelor's degree can expect to make about \$26,000 annually. Teachers with master's degrees can make slightly higher.

Massachusetts is fighting against a system that easily can attract teachers to affluent districts but has a harder time luring them to very urban, high-need districts where salaries are not as competitive, said Ann Duffy, a consultant to the Massachusetts education department. "We have lots of qualified teachers, just not where we need them. The challenge in Massachusetts is how do we redistribute them."

Those who accept the Massachusetts offer must commit to working in the state for four years, although not necessarily in the first set of co-operating districts that have offered jobs. Those districts are all urban, in the Boston area.

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## Midshipman Could Be Expelled For Sexual Misconduct

College Press Exchange

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (CPX) - The Naval Academy is taking steps to expel a midshipman who has been accused of raping a female classmate. Michael Pilson Jr. has admitted to having sex in a Naval Academy dormitory, an offense punishable by expulsion, but says his encounter with another midshipman was consensual.

The woman, whose name has not been released, claims she was raped. The Academy is not seeking to expel her. The Washington Times reported Tuesday. Pilson says the woman made up the allegation to avoid being punished. He also contends that he has been treated differently than the woman because he is black, and she is white.

A spokesman for the university denied that race or gender play any role in the university's investigation of

what happened to the woman one night last July. Academy officials say they will not discuss the case further because of privacy regulations.

A military judge threw out three criminal charges against Pilson, rape, burglary and conduct unbecoming an officer, in October because he decided the woman had been intoxicated at the time of the alleged attack and could not recall events in detail.

Nevertheless, Vice Adm. John Ryan, the academy superintendent, recommended Jan. 9 that a midshipman who is believed to be Pilson be expelled for sexual misconduct. Navy Secretary Richard Danzig ultimately decides whether a student should be expelled.

Pilson's attorney is fighting the recommended expulsion, which could result in Pilson having to pay the Navy \$70,000 for educational costs.