



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

UNIVERSITY Gazette

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CAROLINA FACULTY AND STAFF NEWS

SEPTEMBER 25, 2019

\$25 million gift helps secure graduate students' future



A transformational \$25 million bequest to the UNC College of Arts & Sciences ensures a bright future for graduate students. The gift from an anonymous donor will enable the College to compete for the most promising graduate students for generations to come, an advantage that also benefits the faculty who teach and mentor as well as the undergraduates who are taught by these superlative scholars.

“Our graduate students are at the heart of Carolina’s culture of collaboration. From our research labs and classrooms to our art studios and athletic fields, graduate students push boundaries and explore new ideas in their research and teaching,” said Interim Chancellor Kevin M. Guskiewicz. “We are grateful for this donor’s overwhelming generosity and commitment to supporting our graduate students and enabling them to pursue academic excellence. This will help us to better train the next generation of innovators and leaders.”

Nine graduate programs in the College of Arts & Sciences rank in the top 30 programs in the nation, according to U.S. News & World Report. The College is home to one-quarter of the University’s graduate students. These students contribute to excellence at the College, helping departments recruit and retain top-tier faculty, raising the quality of undergraduate instruction and magnifying the inventiveness and originality of Carolina’s research and impact on the world.

The gift will create fellowships for graduate students.

See GIFT **page 7**

Carolina to lead \$20 million project to test a reimagined internet

Carolina will lead a \$20 million project to create a platform for testing novel internet architectures that could enable a faster, more secure internet.

With leadership from researchers at the Renaissance Computing Institute, Carolina and its partners will build a platform, called FABRIC, to provide a testbed for reimagining how data can be stored, computed and moved through shared infrastructure. FABRIC, funded by the National Science Foundation, will allow scientists to explore what a new internet could look like at scale, and help determine the internet architecture of the future.

A series of government-funded programs from the 1960s through the 1980s established the computer networking architectures that formed the basis for today’s internet. FABRIC will help test out new network designs that could overcome current bottlenecks and continue to extend the internet’s broad benefits for science and society. FABRIC will explore the balance between the amount of information a network maintains, its scalability, performance and security.



See REIMAGINED INTERNET **page 7**

Anticipated FABRIC topology at the end of construction.



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Meet Kristina Herrera of BeAM, who helps people use the Makerspace.



4

Don't be surprised to see Chief David Perry rolling across campus.



ONLINE ONLY

Operational Excellence marks its first anniversary.



THEWELL.UNC.EDU

The Well continuously updates its website between print issues. To stay in the know, be sure to check out our website and follow us on Twitter @TheWellUNC



UNIVERSITY Gazette

The University Gazette is a University publication. Its mission is to build a sense of campus community by communicating information relevant and vital to faculty and staff and to advance the University's overall goals and messages.

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Make changes through your department's HR representative.

The editor reserves the right to decide what information will be published in the Gazette and to edit submissions for consistency with Gazette style, tone and content.



JON GARDNER

Carolina PEOPLE

Kristina Herrera

BEAM MAKERSPACE
TECHNICAL SUPERVISOR

2 years working at Carolina

WHAT'S A TYPICAL DAY LIKE IN YOUR JOB?

In the Makerspace, people are always making different things. I'm bouncing between helping students with their course projects, fixing the embroidery machine or teaching a student how to do maintenance on a 3D printer.

HOW DOES YOUR WORK SUPPORT CAROLINA'S MISSION?

We are a center for creativity for all students, faculty and staff. It's not just a resource for students. We want more staff and faculty to come to the Makerspace. You can use it in your research, but you can also just use it for fun. We really want to be that resource to provide development and growth for folks, and we want to give them the opportunities to learn new skills and apply them for the greater good.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR WORK?

I really love working with students, and it's so fun to have a big staff. We have about 50 students who work for BeAM, and it's really fun to help them grow their skill sets and their competence. It's great to see someone go from being nervous about making something to being a "super user" and then watching them help others in the Makerspace.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF MAKING ON THE PEOPLE WHO USE THE SPACE?

You can utilize the design process as a part of making, so learning how to iterate and work quickly through failure is something important that we try to promote. This is a safe place to fail. That builds resiliency and confidence. Using the Makerspace creates opportunities and it's free, except for your time. For faculty, we are seeing researchers come in and rapidly prototype pieces that would usually take weeks.

WHO IS A MAKER?

Everybody's a maker. We used to ask in interviews, "What was the most recent thing you made?" and someone once responded with "breakfast." I think that really highlights that, as people, we're all creative and we all make stuff. Why? It's fun. For example, I like to knit. I like the gratification of working on something, and then being able to see the fruits of my labor. I love sharing that with students.

Carolina People is a regular feature in each issue of the Gazette that asks one of your fascinating colleagues five questions about the work they do for the University. Do you know someone with an interesting or unique job at Carolina? Please email your suggestions to gazette@unc.edu and put Carolina People in the subject line.



FOCUS CAROLINA

Every day, Carolina faculty members engage in groundbreaking research, innovative teaching and public service that impacts in our community and the state, nation and the world.

Tune in to Focus Carolina during morning, noon and evening drive times and on the weekends to hear their stories and find out what ignites their passion for their work. You can listen to WCHL at 97.9 FM or 1360 AM. The interviews will also be available anytime online at gazette.unc.edu under the Focus Carolina tab.

Focus Carolina is an exclusive program on WCHL, sponsored by the University.

UPCOMING FEATURES



MOHIT BANSAL
Airs week of Sept. 23

Mohit Bansal is an assistant professor in the computer science department in the College of Arts & Sciences at Carolina. He is also director of Carolina's Natural Language Processing Lab. The lab's research interests are in natural language processing and machine learning.



MARK TOLES
Airs week of Sept. 30

Mark Toles is an assistant professor in Carolina's School of Nursing. He studies gerontology and the quality of care in nursing homes. Toles continues to develop and test Connect-Home, a transitional care intervention for older adults as they move from skilled nursing facilities back to their homes.



FOCUS ON DEEN FREELON

At Carolina's Hussman School of Journalism and Media, Deen Freelon studies how people express their political opinions through social media, email and forums. The associate professor also examines large digital data sets from social media platforms such as Twitter and analyzes what is being said and by whom.



One area of my research focuses on communication between citizens about politics on the Internet. As (people) who have been on the Internet are probably well aware, there's a lot of that on social media.

When politics are at the top of the agenda, a much broader audience engages in these conversations. To understand such trends, Freelon studies massive data sets from social media.



I write software to be able to do things like analyze very large amounts of Twitter data, tens of millions of tweets or other types of posts. I also look at very large data sets that consist of news transcripts and news articles to try to get insights out of those.

One of the variables Freelon discovered was the types of people who responded to different news outlets.



One major difference is that, when you look at people who respond to Fox News, those are primarily conservative. The remaining news outlets, which are the New York Times, The Washington Post, Yahoo News and CNN — the vast majority of respondents were left-to-center there, and that's not super surprising.

In Freelon's classes, a hot topic is recognizing misinformation or disinformation, which can be hard to do immediately.



What I've told my students is (that) you want to understand that most pieces of information that you receive on a daily basis, the factual nature of this information is contingent. What that means is that anything that you see or hear today has the potential of being disproved tomorrow.

Freelon believes that it is unfair to insist on journalists being 100 percent correct 100 percent of the time.



What's really important is to not understand this as being some sort of malicious fake news or journalists trying to deceive people, but simply as part of the process of journalism, which includes mistakes because we're all human.

One of the concerns surrounding media today are tools that manipulate the speech of people in videos to create "deepfakes."



Imagine the ability to program in a video somebody saying something or doing something that wasn't actually what they said or did on the basis of existing video that's sort of shoehorned into these words that are typed on the keyboard. That, I think, is going to have a lot more negative impact than what we've seen.



Graduate students form the base of research mission



Suzanne Barbour

Suzanne Barbour, who most recently served as dean of the University of Georgia Graduate School and has received 20 awards for teaching excellence, is the new dean of Carolina's Graduate School. She also will join the School of Medicine's biochemistry and biophysics department as professor. Her appointments were effective Sept. 3.

Barbour shares her vision for The Graduate School and her views on the importance of graduate students at a leading research university in the Aug. 15 edition of the school's newsletter.

What interested you the most in becoming graduate dean for Carolina?

A Carolina has a well-deserved reputation for excellence in graduate education, and I am excited about the prospect of helping the University's creative and dedicated faculty, staff and administrators to build on this excellence. I also see opportunities to expand the mission of The Graduate School to serve more of the "adult learners" who return to graduate school to recredential and refine their skills —

sometimes through degree programs and increasingly through certificates, micro-credentials and other non-degree options. Carolina is poised to make significant strides in the area of digital learning, a content delivery mechanism that will serve both degree and non-degree seeking students well. Finally, I have a family connection to Carolina, as my brother earned his Ph.D. here (in chemistry) nearly three decades ago.

In what ways do graduate students contribute to the mission of a research university and, specifically, Carolina?

A If the research mission is a pyramid, graduate students are its base. Their contributions are fundamental — from the unique questions and approaches they bring to the table; to the technical work they do in laboratories, clinics and field sites; to the papers, presentations, expositions and performances they deliver that both inform others in their disciplines and further elevate the reputation of this great University. When coupled with their impacts on instruction and service/outreach,

these contributions make graduate students the lifeblood of Carolina.

What will be your main focus in your first months as dean of The Graduate School?

A I am looking forward to getting to campus and meeting the faculty, staff and students at Carolina. I hope to spend the first few months making a tour of campus to get a sense of the culture, opportunities, challenges and needs of all stakeholders involved in graduate education. Conversely, I hope my tour will provide the Carolina community with insights into the expertise and experience that I bring to the table. What I hope will ultimately emerge is a shared vision for the future of graduate education at Carolina. I look forward to brainstorming with the talented team in The Graduate School to develop strategies to enact that vision. Dean Steve Matson has left very big shoes to fill. Through our shared vision, I hope to both continue and build on his outstanding work.

— Deb Saine, *The Graduate School*



Short time, long list of priorities for new police chief



David Perry

David Perry has led Carolina's police force just a short time, but he has a long list of positive things he wants to do.

A 25-year law enforcement veteran, the new assistant vice chancellor and chief of UNC

Police began work Sept. 3. "The first 15 days have been fantastic and I'm looking forward to the next 15 years after the reception that I've received," Perry said. Perry tells *The Gazette* about his approach, and he unveils how he will literally roll through campus.

How do you define community policing, and how does it work at a university?

A Community policing is (the guiding principle behind) a highly engaged and motivated police department that monitors the pulse of the campus community. It includes things not only related to law enforcement but also the rhythm of campus and understanding how it works and its needs.

It's not complicated and starts with officers being visible and participating not just in police activities, but also community activities. Doing things like stopping for a cup of coffee with faculty, staff or students. Traditional activities are great, but I believe in building on those with programs or services that truly benefit a specific community.

At other universities, how did you build trust and communicate?

A By figuring out the rhythm of campus. Connecting with campus partners and leaders, both formally and informally, is also extremely important. I believe in management by walking around. You cannot learn in any environment by maintaining a schedule; walking into an office every day and sitting at a computer answering emails. That's not how I think. To make true connections, you have to go where people are, in Facilities Services, in Rams Head, in South Building and campus-wide.

I'll have a new gadget to help me cover more territory quicker. Students are going to see me on a Segway between class changes, interacting with them. I'll be able to move quickly and be close to the people who matter. It's an outstanding community interaction tool that's worked marvelously for me at all types of events.

Do you have a timeline for your work here?

A Absolutely, but it's not set in stone. I know within a certain time period I will have met with all my staff and will have hopefully connected with many of the campus leaders and community partners. I'll start to get a feel of the important community events, meetings and things that are happening within our Chapel Hill community.

What are your priorities coming into the job?

A I'm focusing on a long list of high priorities, practices, policies and general orders, using my experiences in campus public safety and higher education. A great deal centers on activities that police departments might undertake that could create concern, like vehicle chases, high-profile investigations, the use of weapons and training for those things that, through my experience, you want to make sure are in line with accreditation standards and with best practices around the country.

You said that you want to focus on student wellness; what does student wellness mean to you?

A For our part, student wellness means the police department doing their part to facilitate student success. Resiliency is a big piece of

today's student experience. We want to make sure that they receive the attention, care and resources they need to deal with the high stress of being a student and navigating university life.

I've met students like Student Body President Ashton Martin. It was an important meeting to set the course, based on her expectations during her administration. I've interacted with students as I've been around campus and, for the most part, they express feeling a sense of safety. But, they're not familiar with many UNC Police officers. I want to work on that. I want students to be able to walk up to a police officer, have a conversation and know their name.

How is policing a university campus different from or the same as policing a town or city?

A Compared to a traditional municipal or city law enforcement agency, there are many similarities in what we do, but a campus police officer is better equipped to deal with people because of the emphasis on customer service and the expectations that parents and students have.

We are not only law enforcement officers trained to serve and protect and save lives, but we're also there to be counselors, in a way, who interact with students to advise them and spend time with them, to be a part of community activities and be ingrained in the University culture. We take it a step further. We're traditional police officers responding to calls for service, but we also can stop and invest time with faculty, staff and students we're here to serve.

— Scott Jared, *University Gazette*

News hub, weeknight parking, workplace accommodation share Employee Forum agenda



Rudy Jones reviewed the Count Me In campaign.

Employee Forum delegates heard about a new online destination for faculty and staff news, received helpful tips about weeknight parking, and learned about a program for employees to voluntarily self-identify a disability and receive accommodation. Presenters shared these updates and items of interest at the Sept. 11 meeting:

NEW POLICE CHIEF

David Perry, assistant vice chancellor and chief of UNC Police since Sept. 3, introduced himself to the forum. Before coming to Carolina, Perry was the chief of the Florida State University police.

THE WELL

Tanya Moore, associate vice chancellor for University Communications, and Jane Calloway, director of internal communications, announced the Sept. 23 launch of The Well. Designed to be the University's primary method of internal communication, the website will provide faculty and staff with the latest and most important news they need, Moore said. In addition to news and standing

features like Focus Carolina and Carolina People, The Well will be updated daily with In the Know, a list of five bits of information employees need to know, from construction updates to tips from human resources, ITS and more, Calloway said. The Well will expand its reach with an email news digest in the coming months.

WEEKNIGHT PARKING

Cheryl Stout, director of transportation and parking, responded to questions from delegates about the plan for weeknight parking that went into effect this summer. In response to concerns about the costs of weeknight parking for members of the Commuter Alternative Program, Stout said all CAP members receive 12 free daytime passes and 20 free weeknight passes each year. Stout also explained that employees with dental or medical appointments can receive medical appointment passes to park free near the medical facility they will be visiting. Permits can be picked up in person at the transportation and parking office at 285 Manning Drive; Dogwood Deck pay operations office, 2nd level; the hospital parking office across from Women's & Children's Hospital or at the Ambulatory Care Center lot entrance on Mason Farm Road. Employees may also submit an online request at move.unc.edu/events/request-forms/patientparking-request for an employee patient permit, allowing three days for mailing.

COUNT ME IN

Rudy Jones, associate director of the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office, reviewed the Count Me In campaign his office initiated this spring as a way to promote the self-identification of disabilities among Carolina employees. Jones said self-identifying a disability serves two main purposes: making sure Carolina is complying with federal regulations and ensuring that the campus community is welcoming and inclusive for all. Information shared with the office will be kept confidential, Jones said, but supervisors may be contacted if a workplace accommodation for a disability is needed. Employees can learn more about the campaign during the 2019 Fall Empowering Carolina Seminar to be held at the Carolina Club in the Hill Alumni Center from noon–2 p.m. Oct. 30.

IN OTHER ACTION

- New forum treasurer: Ayla Ocasio, an accounting technician in statistics and operations research, was appointed to fill a vacancy as the forum's treasurer.
- Proposed policy for paid parental leave: The forum unanimously approved a resolution in support of a policy proposal for paid parental leave that Interim UNC System President William L. Roper is expected to present to the UNC Board of Governors later this month. Read the resolution at employeeforum.unc.edu/resolutions/resolution-19-04
- Recognizing housekeepers: In support of International Housekeepers Week (Sept. 8–14), the forum approved a proclamation recognizing "the invaluable contributions" of housekeepers. Read the proclamation at employeeforum.unc.edu/proclamations/proclamation-19-02

— Gary Moss, *University Gazette*

Discussion on public discourse program, data science dominates Faculty Council meeting

Discussion of the UNC Program for Public Discourse and a data science study dominated the Faculty Council's first meeting of the academic year on Sept. 13.

The public discourse program is intended to enhance existing courses and new ones being developed for the new IDEAs in Action curriculum, said the program's acting director Chris Clemens, senior associate dean for research and innovation in the College of Arts & Sciences.

Clemens called it a "uniquely Carolina" program that will also provide students with "campus life experiences" — such as a student fellows program, guest speakers and a new student periodical dedicated to public discourse. (Clemens submitted a statement about the program and a frequently asked questions sheet for the meeting.)

"I think it is indisputable that discourse in this country is broken," Clemens said. "Whatever the cause of this, Carolina is uniquely suited to address the problem, and I believe it is our responsibility as a public institution to do so."

The program was first proposed in 2017 by some members of the UNC System Board of Governors and University trustees.

History professor Jay Smith submitted a resolution to Faculty Council to delay the implementation of the program. Smith and

others opposed to the program said that there has been a conservative political agenda behind the program's development from the beginning. Faculty Council voted to postpone consideration of the resolution until October.

A private donor provided the program's seed funding of \$1 million, and its early models, based in part on site visits by University leaders, were Princeton University's James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions and Arizona State's School of Civic and Economic Thought.

Clemens and the program's faculty committee said that the program has shifted dramatically away from those models and is now meant to encourage "socializing debate and democratic culture."

"Origins are not destiny," said Chris Lundberg, associate professor in the communication department who is among five faculty members on the program advisory committee. "I didn't know what the donor's original vision was, but I knew what our vision was."

Lundberg said the changes in the program are reflected in its evolving names: Center for American Values and Civil Discourse to Program for Civic Virtue and Civil Discourse to UNC Program for Public Discourse. "The faculty has shaped the vision

and direction of this in ways that are significant. In many ways, this is a win for faculty," Lundberg said.

Interim College Dean Terry Rhodes said she is scheduling roundtable discussions in the coming weeks to explain more about the program and to hear from faculty their ideas on how best to support discourse across the curriculum.

Before the public discourse discussion, Faculty Council heard a report on the Data Science Initiative feasibility study, introduced by Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Robert A. Blouin. The study's goal is to determine which entity (center, institute, school) is most feasible to house a campus-wide initiative on data science. "We are moving too slowly in this space," Blouin said. The University's peer institutions are "already out of the gates and running in this space. The concern I hear is that we need to accelerate our pace."

The council also welcomed four new staff members: David Perry, assistant vice chancellor and chief of UNC Police; Barbara Stephenson, vice provost for global affairs and chief global officer; Suzanne Barbour, dean of The Graduate School; and Charles Marshall, vice chancellor and general counsel.

— Susan Hudson, *University Gazette*

 CALENDAR

OCTOBER 10-13



The 12th season of the Process Series: New Works in Development kicks off with a festival for new and newly translated plays from around the world on four consecutive nights. The staged readings will take place at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 10-12 and at 1:30 p.m. Oct. 13 in studio 1010 in the Center for Dramatic Arts. **“Dust”** (Italy) explores the dynamics at work in violent couples’ relationships. **“Hotel Good Luck”** (Mexico) is a dark comedy about life and death in parallel universes. **“Inching Toward Yeolha”** (South Korea) is an allegorical satire exploring the tensions between tradition and innovation. **“iPlay”** (Austria) is a playful, contemporary meditation on the hold the past has on us and how it prevents us from facing the future. For more information, visit comm.unc.edu/event.

OCTOBER 10



Poet, teacher, arts advocate and **North Carolina Poet Laureate Jaki Shelton Green** will be at Wilson Library to read her poems and discuss her work. Green is the first African American and the third woman to serve as the state’s ambassador for poetry and the spoken word. This program is presented in conjunction with the exhibition “Enriching Voices: African American Contributions to North Carolina Literature,” on view in the North Carolina Collection Gallery at Wilson Library. The event is free and open to the public with a reception at 5 p.m. and the program following at 5:45 p.m. in the Pleasants Room in Wilson Library.

THROUGH OCTOBER 18

This year, **Campus Flu Clinics** will be held 9:30 a.m.–4 p.m. through Oct. 18 at nine walk-in locations across campus. There’s no co-pay for University employees on the State Health Plan. No advance registration is required, but employees should bring their health plan card and UNC One Card to the clinic. More information is available at flu.unc.edu.

SEPTEMBER 26-29



Don’t miss your chance to see the newly imagined theatrical adaptation of **“Native Son”** at PlayMakers Repertory Company. The novel by Richard Wright has been adapted by Nambi E. Kelley to introduce a new generation to the story of Bigger Thomas in 1930s South Side Chicago, where systemic oppression and poverty are everyday occurrences. Student tickets at \$10 and faculty and staff receive 10% off. Other ticket prices start at \$15, with performances Thursday through Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and on Sunday at 2 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 29

Explore the stories of well-known and underrated black directors and videographers at the **2019 Diaspora Festival of Black and Independent Film Kick-Off** hosted by the Stone Center. The documentary shown will be “Lorraine Hansberry: Sighted Eyes/Feeling Heart” by director Tracy Heather Strain. The film details the artistry of Hansberry, the first black woman to have a play (“A Raisin in the Sun”) produced on Broadway. The event begins at 4 p.m. at the Varsity Theatre.

GOT NEWS?

The *Gazette* welcomes your story ideas and calendar announcements. To make sure your information reaches us in time for the next issue, please submit it at least 10 days before our publication date.

The next Gazette will be published Oct. 16.

To announce events occurring Oct. 17–Oct. 30, please submit your information no later than Oct. 7. Email us at gazette@unc.edu.

GIFT from **page 1****VITAL CONTRIBUTORS**

“Graduate students are vital contributors to the University,” said the donor. “They carry a heavy academic load, along with teaching and mentoring duties. A strong research university cannot thrive without the support of first class graduate work. Financial support is frequently the determining factor for top graduate scholars, particularly those wishing to avoid debt. This support will help them focus on why they chose to pursue an advanced degree. The level of graduate support is frequently a significant factor in attracting and retaining first class professors. Without privately funded graduate fellowships, Carolina would be unable to sustain a reputation as a leading public research university.”

Once realized, this gift could support more than 200 graduate students annually. Recipients of these graduate fellowships will teach or mentor undergraduate students in the classroom or a research setting. They will receive a stipend during the academic year and will be eligible for a summer stipend and funding to use for travel or to participate in academic conferences.

STUDENTS SUPPORTED BY FELLOWSHIPS

Katrina Morgan, a 2018–19 Thomas S. Kenan III Graduate Fellow and a doctoral candidate in mathematics, helped found Girls Talk Math, a program that invites North Carolina high school girls to a two-week camp that explores mathematical concepts. Morgan wouldn’t have been able to do this without support. “Private funding greatly reduced my monetary concerns and allowed me to focus more completely on my research, job applications, student organizing and outreach activities,” she said.

Sonny Kelly, 2018-19 James Lampley Graduate Fellow, doctoral student in communication and performance studies, and North Carolina playwright, actor and teacher, was able to focus on developing his one-man show, “The Talk,” thanks to fellowship funding. Written by Kelly, and directed by Professor



Sonny Kelly was able to focus on developing his one-man show, “The Talk,” thanks to fellowship funding.

Joseph Megel, “The Talk” chronicles the difficult conversation a father must have with his son in a racially divided America. To date, Kelly has performed “The Talk” in theaters, classrooms, places of worship and community centers throughout the Research Triangle and other cities, including Washington, D.C.

This generous \$25 million bequest will enable the College to direct funding to even more students like Morgan and Kelly. Graduate research and projects have the power to impact lives in North Carolina, the nation and the world.

“The donor has spent time with many of our outstanding graduate students over the years and knows their impact on Carolina’s excellence,” said Terry Rhodes, interim dean of the

College of Arts & Sciences. “This generous gift helps us meet a critical need. Our department chairs cite increased graduate student support as one of their most urgent priorities.”

— *University Development*

The most ambitious university fundraising campaign in the Southeast and in University history, **For All Kind: the Campaign for Carolina** launched in October 2017 with a goal to raise \$4.25 billion by Dec. 31, 2022. Investments in graduate student support are one of the College’s highest priorities in the Campaign for Carolina.

REIMAGINED INTERNET from **page 1**

“The internet has been a great enabler for many science disciplines and in people’s everyday lives, but it is showing its age and limitations, especially when it comes to processing large amounts of data. If computer scientists were to start over today, knowing what they now know, the internet might be designed in different way,” said Ilya Baldin, director of Network Research & Infrastructure at RENCI, who will serve as one of five principal investigators on the project.

“FABRIC represents large-scale network infrastructure where the internet can be reimaged, and a variety of ideas can be tried out and compared. If FABRIC allows the research community to come up with ideas on how to reimagine the internet based on a new set of architectural tradeoffs, then everybody wins — researchers and citizens alike,” said Baldin.

INTERNET FOR THE UNDERSERVED

Today’s internet was not designed for the massive data sets, machine learning tools, advanced sensors and Internet of Things devices that have become central to many research and business endeavors. FABRIC will give computer scientists a place to test networking and cybersecurity solutions that can better capitalize on these tools and potentially extend the internet’s benefits to people in remote or underserved areas.

“We look forward to FABRIC enabling researchers throughout the nation to develop and test new networking

technologies and capabilities,” said Erwin Gianchandani, acting assistant director for computer and information science and engineering at the National Science Foundation. “This project will lead to novel paradigms for next-generation networks and services, giving rise to future applications advancing science and the economy.”

As the project’s lead institution, Carolina will oversee the effort while also contributing to software development, supporting hardware deployment and assisting with outreach efforts.

FLEXIBLE LEVEL OF CONTROL

FABRIC will consist of storage, computational and network hardware nodes connected by dedicated high-speed optical links. In addition to the interconnected deeply programmable core nodes deployed across the country, FABRIC nodes will include major national research facilities such as universities, national labs and supercomputing centers that generate and process enormous scientific data sets. Such flexible level of control over the network functions will allow experimenters to test their new architectures at scale. All major aspects of the FABRIC infrastructure will be programmable, so researchers can create new configurations or tailor the platform for specific research purposes, such as cybersecurity.

“We don’t know what’s the right balance between smarts, or how self-knowledgeable the internet needs to be, and scalability and performance,” said Baldin. “What we are offering is an instrument where these questions can be studied and

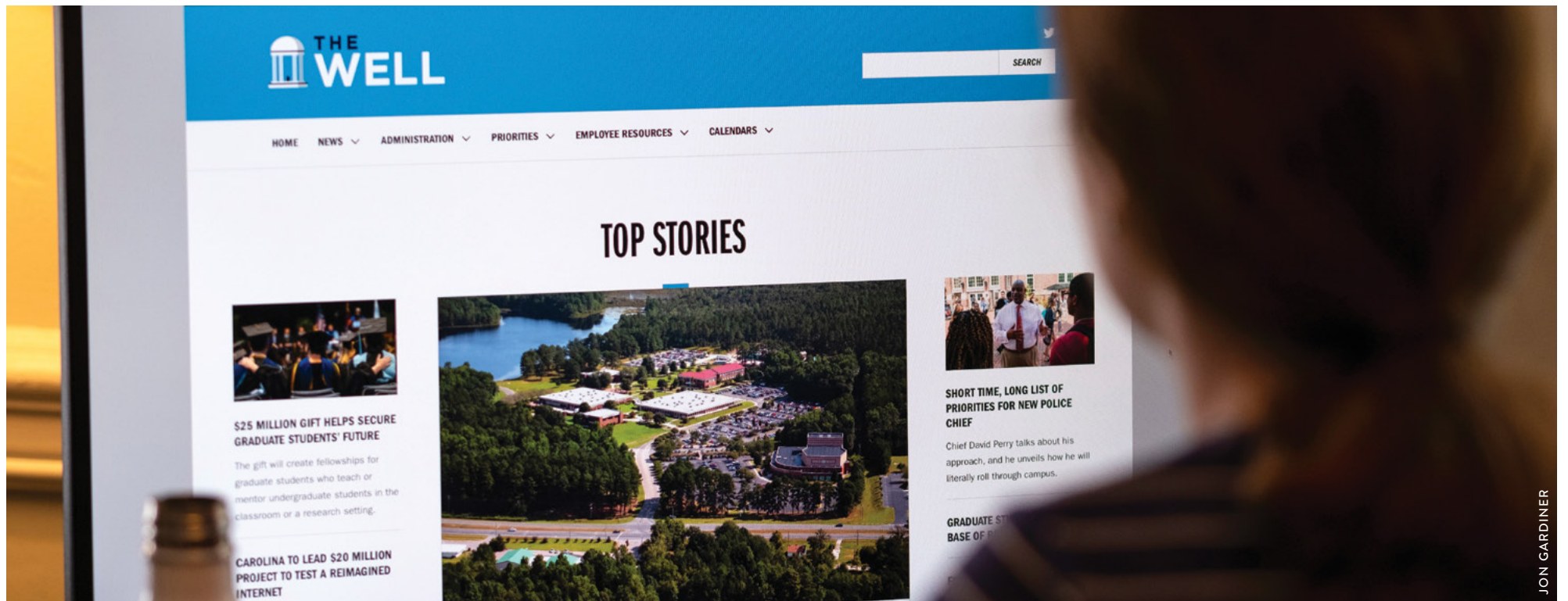
researchers can make real progress toward envisioning the internet of the future.”

Collaborating organizations include the University of Kentucky, the Department of Energy’s Energy Sciences Network, Clemson University and the Illinois Institute of Technology. Contributors from the University of Kentucky and Energy Sciences Network will be instrumental in designing and deploying the platform’s hardware and developing new software. Clemson and Illinois Institute of Technology researchers will work with a wide variety of user communities — including those focused on security, distributed architectures, scientific applications, and data transfer protocols — to ensure FABRIC can serve their needs. In addition, researchers from many other universities will help test the platform and integrate their computing infrastructure and scientific instruments into FABRIC.

The construction phase of the project is expected to last four years, with the first year dedicated to software development and finalizing technical designs and prototyping. Subsequent years will focus on rolling out the platform’s hardware in participating sites across the nation and connecting it to major national computing facilities. Ultimately, experimenter communities will be able to attach new instruments or hardware resources to FABRIC’s uniquely extensible design, allowing the infrastructure to grow and adapt to changing research needs over time.

— *University Communications*

VC for Communications Joel Curran answers questions about The Well



The Well (thewell.unc.edu) launched Sept. 23 and is optimized for mobile viewing.



Joel Curran

Q: Tell us about The Well.

We are very excited about The Well. It is one of the most significant updates in decades about how we share information with our faculty and staff. It offers a contemporary and intuitive storytelling architecture that I believe will be both fresh and familiar to our more than 12,000 faculty and staff.

We know much has changed in how we all seek and receive information each day (every minute), as well as the vehicles that deliver that information to us. Much like the ways the news industry has been moving to more digital news delivery formats, the Gazette has also gradually moved online.

The Well is our shift to a modern digital format. The spirit of the Gazette will live on through the outstanding stories readers will find throughout The Well. The same team of talented writers who write for the Gazette will continue to produce content for The Well. And, like the Gazette, many of the stories on the The Well will also find their way to the massive storytelling engine at unc.edu and can be discovered by anyone outside our campus community.

Q: How did the idea for The Well come about?

We know that employees get news and information from a variety of sources, including the State of North Carolina, the UNC System, our Human Resources office and other benefits providers. University Communications wanted to provide one place where faculty and staff can find timely updates related to their jobs, along with top news and inspiring stories that are traditionally featured in the Gazette.

Q: How did you get input from faculty and staff for the new site?

University Communications partnered with the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) to survey all employees to learn what types of news are of interest to them and how they want to receive that information. OIRA also facilitated focus groups so that we could go deeper into the results. And a steering committee of faculty and staff provided input about the content on the site.

Q: What were the key takeaways from the research? Did anything surprise you?

We learned a great deal about how our community wants to hear from the University and the types of stories and information they want to read. The top takeaways were: employees want one place to read University news and information; they want that place to be online; and they want to receive an email with top news.

We had always planned to include a regular email newsletter but were concerned that many on campus feel they already have too many updates in their inbox. Surprisingly, the overwhelming consensus was that people prefer email for updates. We hope our employees will find the newsletter content compelling enough to read when they see it in their inbox. We will continue to publish the print edition of the Gazette until the newsletter launches later this fall.

Q: The Gazette has a long history on campus — why is now the time to move away from it?

Most print media publications have migrated to a digital-first format, meaning they break news and publish the majority of

their content first via their online and social media platforms before those stories reach print. It reflects the mobile nature of our world and the fact that readers now demand real-time news. Our readers — the campus community — have told us they, too, prefer to consume information in real time.

Q: Who was involved in designing the new site?

Many people in University Communications contributed to the new site, including the Gazette staff, UNC Creative and our content team. We are also grateful to our partners in OIRA, ITS and many others who helped us reimagine this new news delivery system.

Q: What features should faculty and staff look for on The Well?

I encourage employees to check out “In the Know,” five things to know each day about important University issues and news you need to get through your day. In the navigation bar, you’ll find links to business applications, calendars and human resource updates. We’ll also curate top news from schools and units so that you can stay informed about what’s happening across campus.

Q: Why is communicating to faculty and staff important?

Our campus community has always expected and enjoyed hearing about newsmakers among the faculty and staff on our campus — research, accomplishments, milestones and more — as well as insights into University priorities and plans. Today, we live and work in an even more complex environment and The Well will try to help ensure our employees feel connected with their community in a real-time way.

Q: How will communications to faculty and staff continue to evolve?

We will continue to seek feedback from our employees about what they want to read and how they would like to receive information. As technology continues to evolve, we want to ensure we are keeping pace and finding new ways to engage and communicate with our faculty and staff. 