

# THE DECREE

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NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE, ROCKY MOUNT, NORTH CAROLINA 27804

## BHM: Students Reflect on Historic Obama Presidency

With “Black History Month” in mind, Decree staffers conducted an informal survey of African-American, and African, students to elicit their reflections on Barack Obama’s eight years as president.

“To have an African-American in the White House was a blessing,” said Beverly Anaele. “It showed that Americans can see past the false perception of skin color and the stereotypes that come with it.”

Many students felt inspired by Obama’s election and his performance in office. He was seen as a trail blazer. “It meant a lot to me because it showed it’s possible to have an African-American as president,” Cy Andrews said. “It can be done. It really encouraged me. It was a very big deal.”

Justin Brown agreed that President Obama became a strong role model. “It gave the African-American community a drive,” he said, and a sense that “anything is achievable.”

James Parrish said Obama’s election filled him with excitement. “It made me think that I could be anything I wanted to be and I could one day tell my kids a

black man was president,” he said, noting that the president was quite inspiring. “Obama could have said walk to the moon and I would’ve been the first in line.”

“Hope” was a word used by Olivia Smith in reflecting on the meaning of Obama’s election. “Having a minority in office brought us closer to a more diverse government,” she said. “For my family and me, Obama gave us hope that we have a voice and a chance to make it to the top.”

Antonia Bunch was in fifth grade when Obama won his first term in 2008. She called it an unforgettable experience. “I was just starting to understand the history being made,” she said. “It was refreshing to see someone whose skin is the same color as mine accomplish something so spectacular.”

Sainabou Jallow described a similar experience. She spent election day 2008, surrounded by family, at an aunt’s house in the West African nation of Gambia. “We stayed up all night to watch it live on TV,” she recalled. “When he won, everyone was crying. I wasn’t quite sure why it affected the

adults so much, but I found myself crying too. Through the eight years of his presidency—two of which I spent as an international student in the U.S.—I’ve realized exactly why it was important.”

Obama’s history-making presidency was not lost on Veon Byrd. “We’ve come a long way since segregation and slavery,” he said. “Now we’ve had an African-American president for two terms.”

Brandon Leake was grateful to live at the time of the first African-American president. In thinking about the past eight years, he paid tribute to African-American figures like Dr. Martin Luther King who helped blaze the trail.

Of Obama’s presidency, J.C. Freeman said, “It made me proud to see a difference in the United States.”

Keilah Alston said, “What it meant to me is that it’s possible for blacks to have power in a system meant for us to ‘stay in our place.’”

Sidney McCall said that Obama was a transformational figure whose influence extended beyond American borders.

“Coming from a race of historically mar-

ginalized people, he overcame racism and prejudice to rise above the hatred and become one of the most memorable individuals in world history,” she said.

Like McCall, Jerome Little remarked on the adversity Obama faced during his time in office. “He had to deal with a lot of critics, mainly because of his race,” Little said. “But he continued to stay focused and determined.”

While acknowledging the history made by President Obama, some respondents noted that considerable work remains for achieving equality and harmony. “It (Obama’s presidency) meant that America is not how it used to be decades ago,” Jaylon Johnson said. “But even though an African-American was in office, it doesn’t mean racism is gone.”

Most interviewees praised Obama’s record of achievement. Many cited the Affordable Care Act, aka “Obama Care,” as his signature achievement. Others noted the draw-down in troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, the killing of Osama bin Laden, and improvements to the economy after he inherited a national recession.

“As president, you have to take on all the dirty work left by the previous president,” said Smith. “Obama came at a time of recession and left us with a lower unemployment rate and more consumer confidence.”

Bunch appreciated the decrease in the jobless rate that coincided with Obama’s tenure. “He lowered the unemployment rate, which affected my family tremendously,” she said.

Besides citing a decrease in the unemployment rate and other accomplishments, Ishmail Harris pointed out

that President Obama “maintained good relations with other countries.”

In her survey, McCall listed all the aforementioned accomplishments and enumerated others. “While no individual’s perfect,” she said, “I think President Obama’s two terms were successful. Not only did he bring America to the table on climate change, he legalized same-sex marriage, pardoned individuals who had received life sentences, regulated big banks and made countless agreements around the world.”

Among the criticisms leveled against the Obama administration, Jallow called attention to the high number of deportations that occurred during the president’s two terms.

Though a fan of Obama, Parrish was critical of the 44th president’s efforts in trying to help African-Americans. “I feel he didn’t do enough for the black community. When all the murders of innocent black men took place, Obama rarely spoke out about them,” Parrish said, expressing particular dissatisfaction with the response to killings in inner-city Chicago, Obama’s hometown.

McCall concurred that there were “hiccups” along the way, but feels that the president was calm and unifying in response to crisis. “People still lost their jobs, young African-Americans were racially profiled, shootings took place, and soldiers died, but in every dark moment the president brought us together.”

(This story was reported by Jessica Brown, Diamond Fogg, Sydney Jackson, Johnathan Pickler, Mary Reynolds, Santanlia Scoggins, Quinn Tobias, and Toni Tutt.)

## Manning Twins Exemplify ‘Student Athlete’

Brittany and Tiffany Manning enter their final season as members of the softball team and exemplars of what it means to be a Wesleyan student-athlete.

Identical twins, the Portsmouth, Virginia natives play side by side in the Bishops infield, room together, take the same classes and even share a major, criminal justice. After graduation, both hope to work in law enforcement. Brittany wants to work in probation/parole or the court system; a computer information systems minor. Tiffany said her “dream job” is to serve with the state bureau of investigation or FBI.

The two began playing on travel teams at age 12 after beginning with T-ball seven years earlier. For the Bishops, Brittany Manning (.403 batting average, 23 RBIs in 2016) plays shortstop, while Tiffany (13 RBIs) is the starter at third base.

Long-time coach John Brackett praised the two sisters for their contributions to the program. “They’ve been an absolute joy to coach,” said Brackett, claiming he could tell the two apart within days of their arrival. “Both Brittany and Tiffany have such great personalities. They always have a smile on their face. Not only are they talented softball players, but they’re two of the best students on the team.”

Second-baseman Peyton Hyler described “Brit” and “Tiff” as fine teammates and outstanding leaders. “They’re always the first ones to pick each other up,” she said. “They’re great role models to the underclassmen. Our friendship will always hold a special place in my heart.”

The Decree conducted an interview with the Manning twins prior to the season:

**Q.** Who was born first and is that sister more mature and worthy of additional respect?

**BRITTANY:** Tiffany was born first. I guess I would say that she’s a little more mature than I am. She acts like she’s way older than me when she’s really only two minutes older.

**TIFFANY:** We were two minutes apart so I always tease Brittany about being older than her. Both of us are mature, but my mom told us that when we were younger, I was more of the dominant twin and Brittany was more of the follower. I feel like in some respects that’s still true today.

**Q.** What was the toughest age for you two, as twin sisters?

**BRITTANY:** I don’t think there was an age that was really tough, but she may think a little differently.

**TIFFANY:** The toughest age was probably when we were six. In school we were always put in the same classes, but in first grade they put us in different ones. Brittany cried every day until they put us in the same class again.

**Q.** Of the two of you, who is your mother’s favorite?

**BRITTANY:** Tiffany is definitely my mom’s favorite because they act very similar. I’m more of my dad’s favorite.

**TIFFANY:** My mom always says she doesn’t have a favorite because she loves both of us the same, but I would say that I’m



Brittany (left) and Tiffany Manning.

Photo by G. Wallace.

usually everyone thinks we’re alike until they really get to know us.

**Q.** In what specific ways has having a twin sister helped you in softball?

**BRITTANY:** It’s definitely helped us because we could always practice at home together. Tiffany used to be a pitcher back when we were kids (by the way, she hated it) and we used to go to an empty field by our house and I would catch her. That was until the time she threw a really bad pitch and hit me in the leg. I never caught for her again after that. It also helps that we play right beside each other at shortstop and third base. She knows my range and I know hers, so we play really well beside each other.

**TIFFANY:** It’s helped in many ways. I know no matter what I do or how I play that she’ll always support me. She’s always my #1 fan and I’m hers as well. It’s also pretty cool that our positions are right beside each other. We can just look at each other and know what the other one’s thinking.

**Q.** What’s your sister’s most annoying habit?

**BRITTANY:** It’s when she takes a joke too seriously and then gets mad at me. We don’t talk to each other for a good 10 minutes and after that we’re fine.

**TIFFANY:** Sometimes she snores when she sleeps and it’s pretty annoying. And sometimes without even knowing it, we’ll put on the same T-shirt or same colored shirt and we have to play rock-paper-scissors to decide who is going to change.

**Q.** Who drives when you travel back and forth to Virginia?

**BRITTANY:** Tiffany always drives when we travel because I feel like I suck at driving. She likes to joke on me about it all the time.

**TIFFANY:** I drive everywhere, all the time. It’s because she doesn’t like to drive. One time when she was younger, she hit the gas instead of the brake, so our parents prefer that I drive.

**Q.** Try to think of a specific incident when another person assumed that, because you look like your sister, that you must be like her in other ways.

**BRITTANY:** Sometimes people assume that just because Tiffany and I are twins that we have the same taste in music, style, and things like that when we really don’t. We have two totally different personalities.

**TIFFANY:** At first everybody always assumes we’re alike because we’re twins. We do like most of the same things, but our personalities are completely different. I can’t think of a specific incident but

usually everyone thinks we’re alike until they really get to know us.

**Q.** Tell us the best story of mistaken identity.

**BRITTANY:** One time we were at the mall shopping and Tiffany checked out before I did. When I was finally ready to check out, I walked up to the register and the cashier had the most confused look on her face. Tiffany walked up behind me and the woman finally realized that we were twins. She thought that I was Tiff and that she had gone and changed clothes and was checking out again. It was pretty funny.

**TIFFANY:** During softball games, anytime someone gets to third base, they always ask if we’re twins. They say that everyone in the dugout tries to figure out if we are or not.

**Q.** What do you like most about your sister?

**BRITTANY:** I love a lot of things about Tiffany, but if I had to pick one thing, it would be her personality. She’s my best friend and she’s such a great person, inside and out. She would do anything for the people that she loves and that’s what I admire most about her.

**TIFFANY:** I can’t really choose just one thing because I love her so much, but I guess if I had to it would be the fact that she’s my best friend and she’s always there for me. It’s very comforting knowing that I will always have her by my side.

## Bishops Fall in First Round to Peace

Ferrum, Va.—William Peace avenged a recent loss to the women’s basketball team, eliminating the 4th-seeded Bishops from the USA South Tourney, 66-60, on February 18.

The Bishops shot just 29.7 percent from the field, eight percentage points lower than during their late-season surge. KeChae Parker led the team with 15 points; senior Alexis Fitzgerald scored 11 in the final game of her Wesleyan career.

Tyler Mercer, Susannah Sykes and Makayla Ray led the Pacers, all scoring in double figures. Ray was a force inside, making six of seven field goals and scoring 16 points.

Before the game, Coach Artina Trader had urged her team to play tough against Ray, a freshman, who made 8 of 10 shots in an earlier matchup. “We talked about forcing her into more situations where she has to shoot from outside, instead of getting layups,” Trader said.

The first-round defeat was only Wesleyan’s second loss in its last seven games. The team

finished 13-13 overall and 8-6 in the conference.

Besides improved shooting—36 to 38 percent field goal percentage—Trader credited tighter defense for her team’s success in February. “We changed defenses the second time we played a conference team,” she explained. “We’re a ‘man to man’ team, but in the second matchups, we often ran a 1-2-2 press to slow down the other offense as well as a 2-3 zone, and teams weren’t prepared for it. Zone defense forces teams into taking jump shots. So we had to rebound and allow only one shot.”

The Bishops earned the fourth seed with a thrilling victory, 80-76, over William Peace in Raleigh on February 12. In that game, NCWC’s deep bench wore down the Pacers, as the Bishops exploded for 35 points in the fourth quarter to erase an eight-point deficit.

“Our depth enabled us to play a few different lineups based on what we needed at a particular time,” Trader said. “To finish

the game at William Peace, we had four guards and a post-in. The plan was to go with a quicker lineup and see if we could negate their post play. With our deep lineup, we were fresher at the end of the game.”

Wesleyan players were clutch at the foul line, making 17 of 22 shots, as two Pacer starters fouled out and a third played the waning moments with four fouls.



Along with teammate KeChae Parker, Timyra Staton (above) was named a second-team all-conference performer after leading the Bishop to a fourth-place seeding in USA South basketball tourney. SI photo

# CAMPUS LIFE

## Bishops Resolve to Exercise, Eat Healthy Diet, Read, and... 'Grow Nice Facial Hair'

(This story was based on the reporting of Jessica Brown, Diamond Fogg, Sydney Jackson, Johnathan Pickler, Mary Reynolds, Santanlia Scoggins, Quinn Tobias, and Toni Tutt.)

Like the rest of America, many Bishops entered 2017 by resolving to eat a healthier diet, lose weight and improve their overall fitness.

Other resolutions ranged from reading more and dedicating more time to academics, to procrastinating less to helping others succeed.

Not all respondents see the benefits of making resolutions. Devin Young was one of them. "Call it pessimistic," he said. "But making promises is asinine because you never know what will happen over the span of a year."

Tisha Cuffee agrees with Young. "I don't believe in them," she said. "We do it to make ourselves feel better. Most don't follow their resolutions. I think it's just a waste of breath."

But Decree staff writers found that most members of the NCWC community were willing to share their goals for the new year. Of 50 students and staff surveyed, many mentioned resolutions related to health and fitness.

Mikah Sherbert wants to "lose weight in fat while toning my muscles." Confessing to a "terrible" diet, Keaira Miller hopes to "eat healthy" and lose weight, while Christina Lewis will limit her soda intake and Abbey Herring will snack less. J.T. Litchenberger intends to gain 20 pounds for football.

A participant in the college's "Biggest Loser" campaign, Jaime Pollard is taking steps to lose 30 pounds. Marcus

Rich will exercise more and "get fit," and Marcus Williams will "get in the weight room more often." Vickie Davidson believes that exercise will enhance her overall mental outlook as well as physical health. Chip Larkin is recommitting to an exercise routine. "Last year my exercise decreased in the second half," he said.

Matt Grantham intends to renew his exercise routine as well. "My resolution is to get back in a habit of daily exercise," he said. "Whether it's running two miles, lifting weights, or playing pickup basketball, I'd like to get back to a healthier routine of exercising each day."

Reading was another common response. Nick Mangoloris wants to read more books, while Trey Russell specified that he plans to do more out-of-class reading. "I read only a few books last year," he said. "That was disappointing." Courtney Moss hopes to become "a better reader. It will improve my experience at Wesleyan."

Many other Bishops want to raise their GPAs, surveys revealed.

"My resolution is to make school

my priority," said Justin Tankelewicz. "Last semester I put basketball and my social life ahead of school."

Diamond Allen wants to achieve at least a 3.6 GPA for the semester, in part to keep her scholarship.

Like Allen, Malique Judd has found monetary incentive for improving his grades. "I want to raise my GPA," he said. "My mom and I are in competition with each other over who's going to have the higher GPA for the semester. The winner gets \$50."

Lucas Koons and Codan Breckenridge were among the few respondents who want to save money, a popular resolution for Americans to set. Breckenridge intends to do so by driving less.

While fitness, academic, and financial goals were the norm, other Bishops set more personal ones.

Besides raising her GPA, Tyreckka Hawks has set other goals. "My resolutions are to start a new habit and learn a new skill," she said.

Andie Batt wants to create more. "I want to share my creations with others without fear," she said. "I want to be

comfortable with myself."

Noting the support he's received in recent years, Chris Sause wants to return the favor by helping others in 2017.

Like Sause, Kayla Laughinghouse has made serving others a priority; she plans to "encourage others daily."

Ian Boucher will strive to help others on a daily basis through his position as a staff librarian. "My resolution is to help more people understand that being able to find facts is the only way to begin making a positive impact on the world," he said.

Said Kayla Wygal, "My resolution is to be better than I was last year."

Fred Sanborn's goal is to "not dwell on things that bother me."

Alyssa Moss has resolved to "be a better mom."

Samantha Godsey wants to "grow closer to Christ."

James Parrish wants to cut down on his swearing. "It makes me sound ignorant and unprofessional," he said.

Estefany Hernandez wants to "be happy."

And Jared Johnson wants to "grow nice facial hair."

## NCWC to Reapply For Master's After It's Rejected

North Carolina Wesleyan will reapply with its accrediting body for approval of its first graduate program after it was rejected last fall.

The criminal justice program, offering one of Wesleyan's most popular majors, had wanted to introduce an online master's degree in fall 2017. Before that would happen, the college administration needed to get approval from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Last fall the college received word that SACS had denied its initial application. It intends to seek approval again so that the program can begin in fall 2018, officials said.

The Decree asked Provost Evan Duff to explain the SACS decision.

**Q.** Why was the program rejected?

**Dr. Duff:** When a substantial change is submitted to SACS, our accreditor can look at any aspect of the college including items that aren't part of the change request. SACS reviewed our 2014 and 2015 audits and found that our operational growth wasn't at the level it would like to see. Our representative stated that this was very common with small private colleges. However, what SACS did not review at the time was our 2016 audit because it wasn't finalized yet.

In 2014 and 2015 we made decisions (building a dorm, writing off bad debt, etc.) that we knew would impact this, but those decisions needed to be made for positive future growth. Our 2016 audit shows very positive operational growth and the same will be demonstrated in 2017. SACS wanted us to demonstrate this before it approved a major change in structure. We had a call with SACS on February 6 to discuss our 2016 and 2017 audits and additional financial information SACS will review next September when we submit our graduate program application again. At that time, we'll be ready to submit our substantive change for graduate programming for both our master's in criminal justice and our master's in business administration.

**Q.** The CJ master's had been approved by the faculty, administration and trustees. How much work had already gone into launching the program next fall?

**Dr. Duff:** The CJ department did do substantial work (a feasibility study) to make sure a master's program would be viable. It built the curriculum for faculty and board of trustee approval, but nothing was completed beyond that until we knew the program would be approved. Per SACS guidelines, we can advertise the program once the application is submitted. So, we did list it on our website and in a few updates, but we did not spend advertising dollars to promote the program. We do have a waiting list of students who are ready to apply when the program is approved.

**Q.** Other than the new audit reports, in what ways will Wesleyan's application be different?

**Dr. Duff:** We needed to establish and provide student learning outcomes for the program and provide information about what graduate courses our CJ faculty will be approved to teach. These were not reasons for the postponement of the application, but SACS did ask that we clarify the two items in future proposals.

**Q.** What are the chances of approval next time the college applies?

**Dr. Duff:** I feel confident our application will be approved with no issues the next time we submit it.

## Wesleyan Volunteers for MLK Day of Service

By Sydney Jackson  
Decree Staff Writer

Many would agree that the MLK Day of Service was an inspiring experience.

With almost 120 Wesleyan students, staff, and community members participating, the event was memorable, as Bishops completed service projects in and around the Rocky Mount area.

Dakota Casey was one of the Wesleyan students who ventured further out than Rocky Mount. He went to the Tarboro Community Outreach Center. This is not Casey's first time participating in the day of service. He reorganized shelves in the center's warehouse for about 2 1/2 hours. "I was satisfied to see all the hard work that got accomplished," he said. Casey shared that MLK day is important to him because "it's the one day you can set a sense of unity on campus."

Working with the college's Leadership Program, Haleigh Riesenbeck cleaned up trash at Rocky Mount's Battle Park. "I'd never been to Battle Park, so it was cool to see what the Rocky Mount people value," she said. While picking up trash, Riesenbeck saw a lot of debris left over from Hurricane Matthew. "MLK Day is a day where you truly realize how equal everyone is, which is something we don't think about very often," she added.

Stephanie Battle, dean of students for student success, went to Sunset Park. Her group cleaned up around the park, specifically the tennis courts. Battle explained that she brought her 9-year-old daughter with her. She said she was excited to give back to the community and happy that her daughter was able to have an experience such as this. "We all joined together for one particular cause," she said. "It really showed unity."

Beverly Anaele raked leaves at the home of an elderly woman, Mrs. Love. Anaele stated that "it was enjoyable. We all had a good time. Me and my roommate went together and it was nice to help out." There were 16 bags of leaves when they had finished the job. "MLK Day means giving back to the community that we live in. We all need to continue to show, share, and keep the dream alive."

Trey Jones, an African-American student and a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, performed his service at the Boys and Girls Club in Rocky Mount. The fraternity cleaned and reorganized a storage room in the art room at the facility. The brothers also cleaned out rooms in the gym to make space for sports equipment. "Since I'm in a fraternity, I'm used to serving," he said. "It comes naturally to me." Jones

stated that he loves helping out the community. "I wouldn't be sitting here today if it wasn't for MLK and what he did to stand up for our rights."

Before all of the service day activities started, the annual Unity Breakfast took place at the Dunn Center. This event has been held at Wesleyan for 29 years. Around 700 attended this year. President Dewey Clark was there, along with Rocky Mount Mayor David Combs.

The main speaker was Dr. Jason

Miller, associate head and director of undergraduate studies of the English Department at NC State University.

Miller talked about the importance of the speeches made by Martin Luther King Jr.

Kimla Brandt, technical director of the Dunn Center, shared that she has been a part of this event for six years now. She stated that this year was different, because Miller made his speech significant to Rocky Mount along with involving people from the community.

## Scout Project Brings New Golf Course to Campus

By Johnathan Pickler  
Decree Staff Writer

As Wesleyan's disc golf course becomes more popular, work is under way to complete and open a back nine by September 1.

The back nine will be called the "Blue" course. "It's in the early stages of design," said Eagle Scout Nick Clark, creator of the first nine holes. The new back nine represents a service project for local scout Sam Bittner, who is collaborating with Clark and his father, Wesleyan President Dewey Clark.

The front nine, the "Gold" course, has attracted many Wesleyan students since its opening last semester. Players have ranged from first-time disc golfers to veterans. Nick Clark came up with the layout of the course, which winds through pine trees on the east side of campus, near Nash Hall and the library. "I got some help from my friends that are interested in disc golf and we came up with this unique layout," he said. "We played several other courses and tried to make mine better."

Codan Breckenridge plays the course about once a week. "Hole 4 is definitely the hardest for me," he said. "It has low-hanging branches over the fairway, which makes a straight shot nearly impossible." Wesleyan's layout is unique, says golfers who have played other courses. "Every hole is basically straight across from the tee box," Breckenridge explained. "Another unique aspect is that it's a lot smaller than other courses. The size allows for quick games."

Disc golf enthusiast Jared Johnson plays about four times a week. "I feel like the Wesleyan course isn't too difficult, but there are a couple of holes that are tough," he said, noting that he likes "the awesome scenery with the trees, school buildings, sidewalks, and the fountain."

The par-28 course starts behind Nash Hall and ends by the library. For each hole, there is a cement tee block that indicates the par and distance, which range from 260 to 400 feet. At the other end, there stands a chain mesh

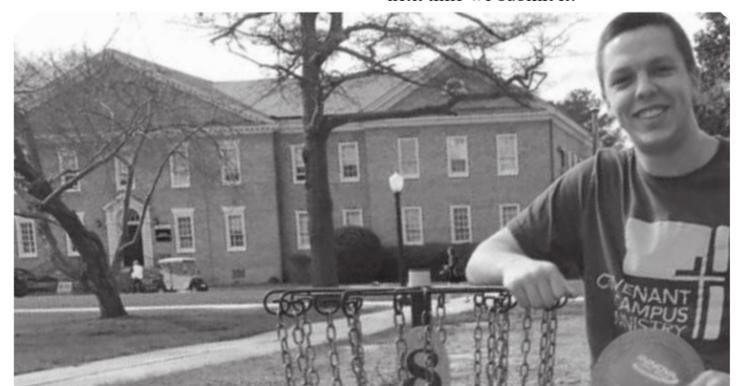
basket, which is mounted on a pole a few feet off the ground. Similar to the other golf, the goal is to record as few total shots as possible, with each hole ending with the player sending the disc into the mesh of the basket. The Wesleyan course becomes much more challenging on windy days, players noted.

Nick Clark started playing disc golf about five years ago. He usually plays about two times per week, he said. Hole number 9, the only par four on the front nine, is his favorite on Wesleyan's course. "It's very difficult," he said. "This hole is my favorite because there are no trees in your way and you can show off your accuracy and arm strength."

Clark designed and built the Gold course as a service project, a final step in becoming an Eagle Scout. "It's supposed to be something that is lasting, helps the community and takes teamwork to complete," he said.

Working as part of a six-member team, Clark spent 200 hours on the course. He said he raised about \$3,500 in private funds for the project.

The Taylor Recreation Center offers golf discs—different discs exist for different shots such as drives and putts—for students and other members of the Wesleyan community to use, free of charge.



Jared Johnson has enjoyed playing Wesleyan's new disc golf course; the back nine is in development.

Photo by S. Jackson.

## THE DECREE

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# SPORTS

## Men's Hoops Team Misses Tournament

Sophomore Justin Tankelewicz broke the program record for three-pointers in a season, making his 80th and 81st in Wesleyan's 94-76 win over Huntingdon on February 19 at home.

The previous record, 79 three-pointers, was set by former Bishop Bobby Jenkins during the 2001-2002 season.

Against Huntingdon, NCWC led from the tip-off as freshman A.J. Frye gave his team a quick 4-0 lead with back-to-back scores. The Bishops extended that lead to 17 at the break, 47-30, and then added another 47 points in the second half behind the play of Robert Wilson and Greg Joseph, who each notched double-doubles.

With leading scorer Adrian Moore sidelined by injury, Frye led all players with 27 points, with Wilson adding a season-high 25 points and 12 rebounds. Joseph finished with 15 points and 10 rebounds, while Tankelewicz scored 12 points.

The previous day Wesleyan fell to visiting LaGrange College, 84-64, in a critical league matchup. Moore led the team, tallying 24 points, 12 rebounds, and seven assists. Tankelewicz joined him in double-figures with 12.

Sunday's victory lifted Wesleyan's record to 13-12 overall, the program's ninth consecutive season with a winning record.

But one year after posting a 12-2 regular season mark, the team tumbled to 9th place in the USA South Conference, one game behind Covenant (7-7), which claimed the final berth in the tourney.

During the season Moore led the Bishops in most offensive and defensive categories: 20.8 points per game, 8.8 rebounds, 4.6 assists and 3.1 steals. One of two juniors on a team dominated by freshmen and sophomores, Moore was the only returning starter from last year.

The other junior, forward Malique Judd, called it "a pretty good season," but noted, "We dropped a lot of games" that the team was in position to win.

Next year he would like to see the Bishops play a more cohesive game. "We need to trust each other more, sharing the ball and not trying to do it all by ourselves," he said.

Frye, a center, agreed that the team underperformed. "The season hasn't gone as we planned, but it'll be good for us next year, having gone through so much as a young team," he said.

Like Judd, Frye offered a prescription for next season: "More ball movement and execution would make us better as a team," and so would "sitting down in a stance and really locking in on defense."

Tankelewicz saw improvement over the course of the season, a positive trend. He said it's just a matter of gaining experience. "We've really grown as a team and came together as one," he said. "We continue to improve every day and that's crucial for a young team."

(Johnathan Pickler and NCWC Sports Information contributed to this report.)



AJ Frye

SI photo

## Bishops Baseball Hopes to Build on Last Season's Success

The Wesleyan baseball team opened the 2017 season by winning five of six non-conference games, capped by a three-game sweep of visiting Maine-Presque Isle.

The Bishops unleashed a fierce offensive attack against the Owls, scoring 38 runs in the series. Staff aces Ryan Grant and TJ Wilkie were solid in winning the first and second games of Sunday's doubleheader. On Monday, in a 20-1 rout, the Bishops got five RBIs from Tony Sanchez, five hits from leadoff man Logan Andrews, and five innings of solid work from pitcher Nate Gardner.

The Decree asked Coach Charlie Long to preview the 2017 season:

**Q.** Your team took a big jump last year, posting 25 wins. What was the reason for the improvement over 2015, when you won just 10 times?

**A.** Leadership. We changed our approach and encouraged our seniors to take a bigger role in leading our program. They responded to the challenge. I also believe the facility upgrade with the new clubhouse played a major role. The guys now have a place to hang out and bond as a team.

**Q.** Will Chris Stout, a recent appointment to your staff, serve as pitching coach?

**A.** Coach Zach Alexander is our pitching coach with a major assist from Coach Stout. We've always had a coach in that role, but have relied on volunteers more often than not. I'm very excited about that area of our team. Both coaches are energetic and always wanting to learn more to help the guys.

**Q.** You lost one of your closers, Dillon Moore, and Bobby Mondoux, a starter/reliever. And Ciro Norzagaray gave you some innings. But you must be pleased with the pitching that returns. Talk about each of your top-of-the-rotation starters?

**A.** TJ Wilkie and Ryan Grant will head the rotation. TJ has a great breaking ball as well as a plus fast ball. I expect him to be in the top five in the league in strikeouts again. Ryan is very effective, especially when his off-speed pitches are working. His biggest attribute is his competitiveness. Richard Harrell and Nate Gardner also return as starters. The best thing about them is their ability to fill up the strike zone. Defenses love to play behind their type of pitching style.

**Q.** In the end-of-season tournament, it seems like pitching depth is key. After

your main starters, who will be the pitchers you'll need to come through with key starts in an extended tourney run?

**A.** JD Makauskas, Galen Beaver, and Jackson Moseley all have potential to be quality starters for us. JD had a great fall and seems more comfortable this season. His breaking ball is his most effective out pitch. Galen and Jackson are left-handers who have tremendous potential. Galen throws with a little bit of zip while Jackson works quickly with a good mixture of pitches. I think the future is very bright for all three of these guys.

**Q.** Who will close?

**A.** Joey Borgerding. Joey has the experience and he loves to compete. When his change-up is on, he's tough to beat. He has good life on his fast ball and he continues to work on improving daily. His slider can be a good out pitch as well.

**Q.** You share Nate Gardner, now the starting quarterback, with Head Football Coach Jeff Filkovski. What do you see as his role this season?

**A.** Nate is a tremendous athlete. He'll play a big role on our team. He'll probably be a weekend starter for us and will hit in the middle of our order as the designated hitter. He competes at the plate and is a tough out.

**Q.** Turning to hitters: You lost two of your sluggers, James Lovett and Ciro Norzagaray. Who will you rely on to produce runs?

**A.** The middle of our order will be solid. We have a lot of really good options. I'm not sure that we have one player that can put up the power numbers that Lovett put up last year, but I do believe we'll hit just as many homers as a team. Trey Croom, Jeff Knight, Tony Sanchez, Nate Gardner, Brandon Wheat, Nick Beaver, and Logan Andrews all have the pop to produce some quick runs.

**Q.** How does overall team defense look? What positions concern you most?

**A.** I think we'll be solid. I'm a little concerned about shortstop. We have several good candidates but we haven't really had anyone step up and take the position. I'm worried about the routine play and I prefer a "no contest" at the most important position on the field when it comes to picking the right person for the job. Our outfield will be good and we're very strong behind the plate. As far as arm strength, this is one of the best teams we've had.

**Q.** What are the main question marks as you begin the season?

## Freshman Frye Assumes Leadership Role

By Santanlia Scoggins  
Senior Staff Writer

Freshman center A.J. Frye impressed his teammates and coaches with his work ethic during a season that saw him lead the USA South Conference in field goal percentage.

"Honestly, I was just surprised, blessed, you know? It's kind of cool to lead the conference as a freshman," said Frye, who finished with a 63.6 success rate, more than a point ahead of Covenant forward Caleb Haynes.

Frye had set modest goals coming into freshman season. "I was just trying to make sure I did the best that I could," he said. For the year, he averaged 12.9 points and 4.7 rebounds per game, ranking second on the team behind Adrian Moore in both categories.

Coach John Thompson said Frye has gotten off to a strong start in his Wesleyan career. "He has met all of the standards," Thompson said.

Frye wasn't always a top athlete. After moving from Queens, New York, Frye attended J.T. Hoggard High School in Wilmington. He made the basketball team, but was later cut. "I just wasn't good enough," he said. On top of getting cut, Frye had a hard time adjusting to his new environment.

"I didn't really like it," he said, noting that he missed the pace of the big city.

But Frye soon learned to appreciate the South. "School is a little bit easier; it's slowed down," he said. He also likes the southern hospitality. Coming from New York, Frye said he's unaccustomed to the friendliness of strangers. In the North, he said, "If someone comes up to you, they're usually upset."

Frye rejoined his high school basketball team during his sophomore year when he played on the JV. In his junior and senior season, Frye played on varsity and his game flourished. "I kind of fit into the motions of it," he said.

Excited to embark on his collegiate career, Frye wasn't going to be alone coming to Wesleyan. Bishops teammate Mitch Layton and Frye knew each other from their high school playing days. "He's from North Brunswick, which is close to Wilmington," Frye said.

Frye has impressed his friend. "He's a great passer from inside the post now and his improved confidence has helped him as well," said Layton. A freshman forward, Layton saw much growth in Frye's game during the season. Frye added that his defense has gotten better due in part to his improved fitness.

In his first 10 games, Frye averaged about nine points per game. Over the last 15, he raised his average by four points. Intending to "stretch out our offense," Frye has also taken more 3-point shots and raised his 3-point percentage by 30 percent. "If you have a big guy that can shoot, then the defense has to spread out and it opens up the driving lanes," he said.

Frye is all about motivating his teammates to be the best player that they can be. "As a freshman, I just try to show that I work really hard so that maybe some of the older guys will be like 'If this young guy is working hard, then we have to work hard too,'" said Frye.

By working hard and remaining committed, Frye is seen as leader on the team.

"He's like a leader for the freshman

class," said Layton, who praised Frye for trying to lift up his teammates. "He's a great overall teammate."

Coach Thompson applauded Frye for his dedication to the game and his teammates. "He's very serious minded about what he's doing on the court and shows a desire to get better. That rubs off on the other guys," said Thompson. "The number-one thing is his willingness to work. AJ is a very diligent."

Frye is glad he came to Wesleyan to play hoops. He enjoys the college's family-like atmosphere. "Everyone is nice to each other and if you have a great game, everybody will come up to you and say 'Good game,'" said Frye. Frye relishes the opportunity to play before a packed house at home basketball games. "Everybody is hyped and the student section is always great," he said, singling out the Greensboro game, a 102-96 win in overtime. "The fans definitely played a big role in our comeback."

Frye has set big goals for his next three years at Wesleyan. "I think we have a great chance to win a lot of conference championships," he said, noting that there are only two juniors and no seniors on the team, and that all players are expected to return next season.

Once Frye graduates in 2020, he hopes to remain in athletics. "I'd like to become good enough that I can play overseas, but if that doesn't happen, then I'd love to coach or work as an athletic trainer," he said.

That's a while away. In the meantime, he looks forward to a bright future for the Bishops hoops team: "The conference tournament, March Madness. I think that would be pretty cool."

Before the season, the Decree conducted an email interview with Coach John Brackett.

**Q.** You were 14-6 in the conference and a solid 20-15 overall. Do you believe in "momentum" from the previous season?

**A.** I do believe in momentum from last season because we basically have everybody back, and last year's success gives us confidence for this year.

**Q.** You lost only one senior (though the player, Jasmine Edgren, was a

standout). You must feel pretty good about the number of returners this year.

**A.** We have 17 returners who went through all the wars last year, so I think that experience will be very beneficial.

**Q.** Talk about your starting pitching.

**A.** Logan Lowery is our top returning pitcher from last season. She was All-Conference last year and is such a smart pitcher. She has a variety of pitches, which include a killer off-speed drop ball. We have five other pitchers with two of them getting significant time in the circle last year. Shelby Godwin and Lindsey Sharpe have shown improvement this year; they throw very hard, but can keep you off balance with the changeup.

**Q.** Who will be your run-producers in 2017?

**A.** We have a number of players that have been swinging the bat very well for us this year. At the top of that list is Brittany Manning, who was All-Conference last year after posting incredible offensive numbers.

**Q.** Over all, what do you like most about your team?

**A.** I like our talent level, depth and experience.

**Q.** What concerns you and Coach Mills the most?

**A.** At the moment, our biggest concern is the health of two of our catchers but we should eventually get them back. We're blessed to have quality depth at that position, so we'll be fine.

**Q.** Which teams will be the ones to beat in the USA South Conference?

**A.** The USA South is a very strong and balanced conference. I feel the teams to beat are Ferrum, Meredith, Piedmont and Maryville. Ferrum is the defending tournament champions and has one of the best pitchers in the conference. Piedmont is the defending regular-season champion and is very aggressive offensively. Maryville finished second last year and puts a lot of pressure on your defense with their speed and "small ball" approach. And Meredith is more experienced this year and has a good hitting team.

## NC Wesleyan Ranked 1st in Pre-Season Poll

The Wesleyan softball team enters the season with high expectations following a 14-6 record in 2016.

Picked to finish 1st in a USA South Conference pre-season poll, the Bishops return most of their starting lineup as well as ace pitcher Logan Lowery. The only significant loss was outfielder Jasmine Edgren (.360 batting average, 20 RBIs; 2016 Wesleyan Female Athlete of the Year).

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Logan Lowery anchors the Bishops pitching staff.

SI photo

# CAMPUS LIFE

## Kathy Winslow To Retire after 20 Years at Library

By Mary Reynolds  
Decree Staff Writer

Kathy Winslow is retiring from Wesleyan after a career that saw a major expansion of the college's library and a dramatic increase in the facility's use of technology.

After 20 years in charge, she said it's time for a new director to take the reins. "I can see all of the things that need to be done and I can tell I'm slowing down," she said. "The college needs somebody with more time and energy, able to keep all those balls in the air." As the director of the library, she has been responsible for writing grant applications, training and hiring new staff, teaching, reporting to the administration, putting together statistics, budgeting and much more.

Dr. Molly Wyatt, associate dean of Academic Affairs, credited Winslow with bringing the library into the 21st Century by adding to its collections, leading a building expansion, increasing use of technology, and writing successful grants to fund a variety of initiatives. "She led the transformation of the space into a more modern student-centered library," Dr. Wyatt said, adding that the college will miss the meticulous approach to her work that has made her so successful.

Like Wyatt, Ian Boucher said that the library flourished under her leadership. "Kathy always has her eyes on the best possible future for the library," said Boucher, a librarian for four years. He says that working for Winslow "has been absolutely wonderful and I couldn't ask anything more from a mentor."

During Winslow's tenure, the library has expanded to 26,928 square feet, and increased its collection to 74,400 books; 208,000 eBooks; 41,000 periodicals and journals; and 20,000 films. The expansion also allowed the library to house the writing, math and media labs.

Following several delays—most of them budget-related—the college broke ground on the library expansion April 24, 2008. Construction began

two months later and the new library opened to the public March 20, 2009.

Winslow said it took time to find just the right design and appearance, as the builders needed to match the roof shingles, exterior bricks, and other features of the existing structure. "The board of trustees and even the architects had some concerns about the appearance," Winslow recalled. The Wesleyan community was "not going to be happy, had we put up a cinder-block building with big glass windows. You wanted the architecture not to be jarring. You wanted to match and blend with the existing structure, but still provide the opportunity for more light," she said, referring to the skylight that's a central feature to the addition.

The expansion added 12,475 square feet including the walkways, Winslow said.

Winslow, a graduate of Smith College with master's degrees from UNC-Chapel Hill and the University of Florida, came to Wesleyan in 1989. After working in a bank and teaching graduate students to analyze financial statements, she had decided to look for a new job. She ended up talking to a Wesleyan staff member, who informed her of an open teaching position in computer information systems. "I was familiar

with the technology and it sounded like an interesting challenge," Winslow said, noting that she taught classes in basic computer applications for seven years.

In 1996, there was an opening at the library. "I remembered how much I enjoyed working in libraries," said Winslow who was employed at the graduate library while earning her MLS degree from UNC-Chapel Hill.

She applied for the job and got hired. Then a year later, the director's position became vacant.

Winslow didn't apply for the job because she "thought they needed someone with more experience" but when she was asked to take the position, she did.

When Winslow arrived at Wesleyan, the library was only what is now known as the "quiet section."

At the time, there was six computers, print books, print and microfilm journals, and subscriptions to 525 titles. There were only 600 traditional students—very few of them from overseas—and four residence halls, and the Dunn Center was under construction.

Winslow has seen the campus become more diverse and technology-driven during her time here. In the library, two computer labs have been added along with the 16 computers in the collaborative zone. When she started at Wesleyan, the biggest draws were baseball, soccer, and volleyball for women. Later on, football and tennis were added. More international and more out-of-state students now attend Wesleyan, she said.

At the moment Winslow has no specific plans for retirement. Some ideas include cleaning her home, spending time with family, traveling, exercising more and reading. She hopes to travel to Sacramento to visit her first grandchild, who was born January 4th. She also has an interest in volunteering at local libraries and learning Spanish. "But who knows? I may just find I enjoy what I'm doing. Reading, writing, and getting sleep at night," Winslow said, laughing.



Kathy Winslow is retiring after a long career and many changes at Wesleyan.  
Photo by G. Wallace



Cast members work on music during a rehearsal for "Fiddler on the Roof" T. Tutt photo

## Wesleyan, Faith Christian To Stage 'Fiddler on the Roof'

Reported by Toni Tutt  
Decree Staff Writer

Collaborating with Faith Christian School, NC Wesleyan will stage perennial favorite "Fiddler on the Roof" on April 7-8 at the Dunn Center for the Performing Arts.

Danelle Cauley, a Wesleyan theater instructor, will direct the play, which was selected in consultation with Roger Drake, professor of entertainment/theater. "Roger and I chose the show because it has a large cast with many roles for all ages," she said. "It tells a timeless story with an important message and it's a much loved and recognized theatre classic."

While excited about the production, Cauley acknowledged the challenges in managing a diverse cast, with performers from two schools and the community.

"I always prefer working with as diverse a group as possible," she said. "I think it enriches our experience to have performers of various ages, cultural groups, backgrounds, and life experiences. I practice color-blind casting whenever it's possible for a show."

Cauley added that the cast will bring together actors with a range of experiences. "We have every experience level—

from folks who've never done a musical, to actors and crew who have done 10, 20, or even 30 shows," she said. "It's challenging, but a great way to build a community within the group. With such a small theatre department, NCWC couldn't put on production of this magnitude without Faith Christian."

It's been hard to schedule rehearsals for 60 actors with different school and work schedules, not to mention family obligations. Though she is working with a musical director, Kelly Hernandez, Cauley has filled many roles besides director. "Right now," she said earlier in the semester, "I'm the functioning producer, director, choreographer, costume designer, prop master, and publicist."

Cauley said she's enjoyed the collaboration with Hernandez as well as the actors.

"Kelly and I spent a significant amount of time in auditions working to make sure that each actor felt comfortable with each other and the material," she said. "No matter their skill level, this helps each performer to do well."

The director said she saw the "Fiddler" production as an opportunity for many local residents to get a taste of a theater. She noted that casting began with filling the two lead roles of Tevye and Golde. "Once we had cast Tevye and Golde, we began to put other actors into roles appropriate for their skills and availability," Cauley explained. "Before auditions, we promised that every FCS student, every NCWC student, and every home-school student would be cast in the show. We're ecstatic having talented actors to bring this amazing story to life onstage."

Following early rehearsals, performers expressed excitement, and a little anxiety, about the show.

Alysa Moss, mama in the rabbi's family, said, "The irony is my dad and I are they only two Jews in the show." Performing is second nature to an actor who's been doing theatre since 2002 in shows like "My Fair Lady," "Oliver" and "Sound of Music."

Alex Shiryayev's character, Fyedka, marries Chava in the show. "Honestly," he said. "I feel terrified and anxious about performing in this show. I don't want to mess up my lines." Among other roles, Shiryayev played the lead in "Dracula" and a cow in "Into the Woods."

Trey Russell is excited to play the role of Perchik. "It's been two years since my last show and each one gives me the chance to meet new people." He played Charlie Brown in "Good Man Charlie Brown." "I've been doing shows as a kid," he said.

As a production assistant, Wesleyan student Anna Dick is responsible for "calling lines," checking props, sewing costumes and communicating with the crew. "I'm having a hard time balancing time between rehearsals and the other duties. Despite the challenges, it's been a good first experience so far."

According to the Dunn Center web site, the musical concerns "a poor dairyman (Tevye) in Czarist Russia (who) struggles to protect his five daughters and instill them with traditional values in the face of chance and growing anti-Semitism. Rich in historical and ethnic detail, the story's universal theme of tradition cuts across barriers of race, class, nationality and religion, and will leave you crying tears of laughter, joy and sadness."

Audiences last saw Cauley's approach to musicals in spring 2015, when the Wesleyan Players and NCWC co-produced "The Music Man."

## Profile: James Mercer Joins Wesleyan to Direct ROTC

By Quinn Tobias  
Decree Staff Writer

At the beginning of a high school basketball game in Duplin County there was little evidence to suggest the future of NC Wesleyan's curriculum and the life of retired Lt. Colonel James Mercer would change. Refereeing the game were Kenny Dickerson, an employee at NCWC, and Mercer, director of the JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps) program at Wallace Rose Hill High School.

Dickerson knew Wesleyan was looking to re-establish its own ROTC program, and thought Lt. Colonel Mercer could be the man to run it. Dickerson, the coordinator of Employee Relationships and Internships at NCWC, has known Mercer for a long time, having refereed together for 20 years. Dickerson was attracted to Mercer's work ethic. "I've seen his interest and progression with ROTC," Dickerson said. "Lt. Colonel Mercer is very knowledgeable about the Army and the ROTC program."

Dickerson introduced Mercer to President Clark, who was looking to hire a full-time ROTC instructor to reinvigorate the program. "I felt like ROTC could be an important part of our campus," Clark said. "I was attracted to him because of his enthusiasm and passion." President Clark also acknowledged Mercer's leadership, varied career background, and his local roots as reasons why he is a great fit at NCWC.

After graduating high school, Lt. Colonel Mercer enlisted into the U.S. Army. He joined for the educational and financial benefits offered by Veterans Affairs. After his enlistment, Mercer returned to his hometown of Battleboro, one mile from his current job. He later earned an associate's degree from Nash Community College. Deciding to continue his education, he earned his bachelor's degree in behavioral science from Shaw University in Raleigh. Mercer

was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army National Guard after graduation.

During Lt. Colonel Mercer's time in the Army he was stationed at Ft. Bragg, Ft. Dix, Aberdeen Proving Grounds and Germany. He also spent 2003 to 2004 in Iraq as a logistician, whose job is to ensure a unit is supplied with the necessities to carry out its operation. While in Iraq, Mercer garnered several medals, including the Iraqi Freedom Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Humanitarian Service Medal and the Iraqi Campaign Medal.

Following a 25-year career in the Army, Lt. Colonel Mercer wants to share his experience and knowledge. "As a native of Rocky Mount, I'm excited to return home and I look forward to sharing my military experience with these young men and women," he said. "It's an honor to train, mentor and groom cadets from college students to future officers of the active-duty Army, National Guard and Army Reserve."

Wesleyan's ROTC program has been dormant since 2013.

Its absence was not lost on the students, many of whom wanted ROTC revitalized. This desire was acknowledged by President Clark. "The decision was prompted after interest was expressed by our existing students and high school prospects," said President Clark, who noted that Wesleyan students will benefit from numerous scholarship opportunities, "top-notch leadership training" and a wide array of career opportunities.

Since Wesleyan wants to increase enrollment, ROTC will make the school more appealing to a wider number of incoming students, according to Mercer. "The plan is to grow the program up to 40 to 50 people," Clark said.

According to Lt. Colonel Mercer, ROTC offers a path to students who fear the job market after graduation; if a cadet

can complete the program, he or she will be commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Army either as active duty, National Guard, or a reservist, based on an evaluation. "ROTC is a designed leadership-training program at the collegiate level," Mercer said. "We're looking for scholars and athletes that have the ability to become commissioned officers."

The program is open to all incoming freshmen, and students up to their junior year, Mercer said.

There have already been 30 current and incoming students accepted into the program, surpassing the initial goal of 12 cadets in the first year. Freshmen and sophomores can take the elective MSL 101 and MSL 102 courses with no commitment, Mercer said. But a junior must make a commitment and attend a four-week "Cadet Leadership and Assessment Course" during the summer.

Aside from the benefit of a job after graduation and skills not learned in traditional academia, scholarships provide further incentive, Mercer said. There are two-, three-, and four-year scholarships available that cover 100 percent of the tuition, room and board, and pay a stipend that increases as a student progresses through ROTC. To receive a scholarship, a cadet must qualify by maintaining solid grades and physical standards and accepting the four-year commitment post-graduation.

The U.S. Army is attempting to increase the number of troops from 800,000 to 1.2 million. "ROTC commissions need to increase," Lt. Colonel Mercer explained, in order to accommodate the changing landscape of the U.S. military. Mercer believes the change to the Trump administration is beneficial to the Army and ROTC because of the surge. Regarding the new administration, Mercer said he is confident that the new Secretary of Defense (Retired) General James Mattis will provide guidance for the military that is needed.



Lt. Colonel James Mercer is here to reinvigorate the college's ROTC program.  
Q. Tobias photo