

Sun-e Briefs • January 2010

Sun-e Briefs are a service of the Sunshine Center made possible through a grant from the Knight Foundation. This monthly news update will keep you in the open-government loop by bringing you news about access issues from across the state and updates on the Sunshine Center and North Carolina Open Government Coalition. Coming to you from Elon University, home of the Sunshine Center, we think you'll find **Sun-e Briefs** a valuable addition to your inbox. If you would like to contact us to let us know about a story or to remove your name from our list, please write ncopengov@elon.edu.

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Sunshine Center in Action

Save the date for the NCOGC Sunshine Day – NPR's Totenberg to deliver lecture

The North Carolina Open Government Coalition will hold its 2010 Sunshine Day on Tuesday, March 16 in Greensboro. The event, highlighting the year in open government in North Carolina, is scheduled to be held at the International Civil Rights Center & Museum, and registration will open in the coming week. Highlighting the day will be NPR Legal Affairs Correspondent Nina Totenberg, who will deliver the Joseph M. Bryan Distinguished Leadership Lecture, sponsored by the Elon University School of Law.

Coalition closing in on challenge grant, president appeals

The North Carolina Open Government Coalition needs your help to continue promoting transparency in government throughout North Carolina and raising public awareness of access laws and issues. While the NCOGC has raised more than 80 percent of required matching funds for a challenge grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, it remains a few stubborn steps from what has become an elusive finish line in the shaky economic climate. The balance must be raised in the coming months to ensure the coalition can continue operating at its current level.

For every dollar you give, a dollar will be matched by the Knight Foundation. Please see this important appeal from NCOGC Board President Hugh Stevens at: <http://www.elon.edu/e-net/Note.aspx?id=942099>

Please provide your crucial support and make gifts payable to the "North Carolina Open Government Coalition." Mail your gift to:

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Access in North Carolina Update

Archdale police dash-cam video yet to see sunlight

A Superior Court judge ruled Jan. 22 that footage from an Archdale Police video camera showing events leading up to the fatal shooting of a University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill student will remain sealed. WRAL News and several other media outlets asked that the video be made public. N.C. Public Records Law does not automatically exempt such videos from Public Records Law, and judges may release them at their discretion.

See the full WRAL News report at:

<http://www.elon.edu/e-net/Note.aspx?id=942704>

For further details on the shooting, visit the News & Record at:

<http://www.elon.edu/e-net/Note.aspx?id=942705>

Police ordered to release 911 tapes in Jackson case

A Mecklenburg judge ruled Jan. 20 that police must release all 911 tapes and police radio communications associated with former Officer Marcus Jackson. Jackson, 26, was arrested last month after several women accused him of sexually assaulting them during traffic stops. Police had moved to block the release of emergency communications.

See full coverage by the Charlotte Observer at:

<http://www.elon.edu/e-net/Note.aspx?id=942633>

Burke County Schools can't archive e-mails that don't exist

Although all incoming and outgoing e-mails in the Burke County Public Schools system are archived on a database, only three of seven board members have school e-mail accounts. Despite having a system in place, the county faces a dilemma in complying with the public records law.

See the Morganton News Herald commentary at:

<http://www.elon.edu/e-net/Note.aspx?id=942611>

New policy at Pitt County Schools will likely make some records more costly

The Pitt County Board of Education should tread carefully as it seeks to update its policy governing public records requests, says the Greenville Daily Reflector. The Board's policy has remained in place since 1996, but recommendations may see the cost of some records increase by more than 5 cents per page, although others may be reduced by as much as 12 cents.

Read the Greenville Daily Reflector commentary at:

<http://www.elon.edu/e-net/Note.aspx?id=942610>

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