

Research VP hunt narrows to 4

Finalists include Harris Pastides of the Arnold School of Public Health

BY ASHLEE RICKARD
THE GAMECOCK

Only four candidates remain in the final stage of selection for USC's new vice president for research.

About 25 applicants from all over the nation sent resumes to be reviewed beginning July 1.

Of those 25, "these four really stood out," said Provost Jerry Odom, chairman of the research vice president search committee.

"In the end, we decided to interview these first," Odom said.

He expects the position will be filled by the end of the semester.

The final four are USC's Harris Pastides, interim research vice president and dean of the Arnold School of Public Health; Jack E. Fincham, Pharmacy School dean at the University of Kansas in Lawrence; David E. Pleasure, senior vice president for research at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia; and James A. Weyhenmeyer, associate vice president for technology transfer and economic development at the

University of Illinois in Urbana.

USC's research vice president position is a demanding job. The vice president for research oversees all research endeavors at the university, which means working closely with the president and provost. Also, the vice president supervises the USC Research Foundation and carries out strategic research plans while keeping a close watch on the research projects and budget.

"There's a lot of responsibility," Odom said. "I can't tell you how important this position is in all aspects of research in the university."

Currently, the university has

partnerships with the Palmetto Health Alliance, Veteran Affairs Medical Center and the Greenville Hospital System. These partnerships, in addition to a doubling in funding for research during the past five years, will allow USC to move forward with new research in all areas of study while continuing research projects.

Additionally, ongoing discussions concerning collaboration with the Medical University of South Carolina will be spearheaded by the new vice president, Odom said.

Construction for a new research campus will begin in spring 2004 and will require the in-

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JERRY ODOM
CHAIRMAN OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

volvement of the new vice president, Odom said.

Odom reassures faculty, staff and students that recent and possible future budget cuts will not heavily affect research endeavors of the university because most research is funded by merit-based grants, not state money.

By focusing on nanotechnolo-

gy, clean energy, optoelectronics, water and the environment, and biomedical research, USC hopes to advance from last year's ranking of No. 55 into the Top 50 public research universities in the country as decided by US News and World Report.

"I have no doubts that it will happen," Odom said.

The last interview will be held Oct. 7. USC President Andrew Sorensen has requested that the search committee give him the names of the top three candidates.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecockdesk@hotmail.com

Isabel lets USC test system to predict floods

BY ADAM BEAM
THE GAMECOCK

Hurricane Isabel provided the first test for a new flood-prediction system that USC is helping to develop, and USC officials say it passed with flying colors.

The project, dubbed the Carolina Coastal Ocean Observing and Prediction System, or Caro-COOPS, is a joint research initiative among USC, North Carolina State University and the University of North Carolina Wilmington. It's designed to predict the severity of flooding from a major storm such as a hurricane.

While the project was created last year with a \$2.5 million grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, it wasn't until about six weeks ago that scientists were able to place measuring instruments off the South Carolina coast.

When Hurricane Isabel plowed into the East Coast last week, USC researchers were sitting in their offices in Columbia, viewing data that was being sent to them in real time from the measuring instruments to a satellite on top of the Arnold School of Public Health.

Dwayne Porter, one of the principal investigators for the project and an assistant professor at USC's school of public health, said the data received from Caro-COOPS allowed emergency workers to know ahead of time that flooding would be minimal on the South Carolina coast. Porter said the project's modeling efforts were

used extensively by the National Weather Service in North Carolina to predict flood levels.

"The report that we got from National Weather Service was that they were very pleased with what we were able to provide to them," Porter said. "Our tools were very beneficial to their planning process."

In August, moorings with sensors on them were deployed about 30 miles offshore, including one on a pier at the North Carolina and South Carolina border, one in the Charleston area, and one by Fripp Island, S. C.

Porter said the sensors monitor such factors as wave heights and speeds as well as the amount of salt in the water.

Porter said the project isn't intended to predict the path of a hurricane, only the possible flood levels. The information could aid in evacuation and preparation efforts before the storm ever hits.

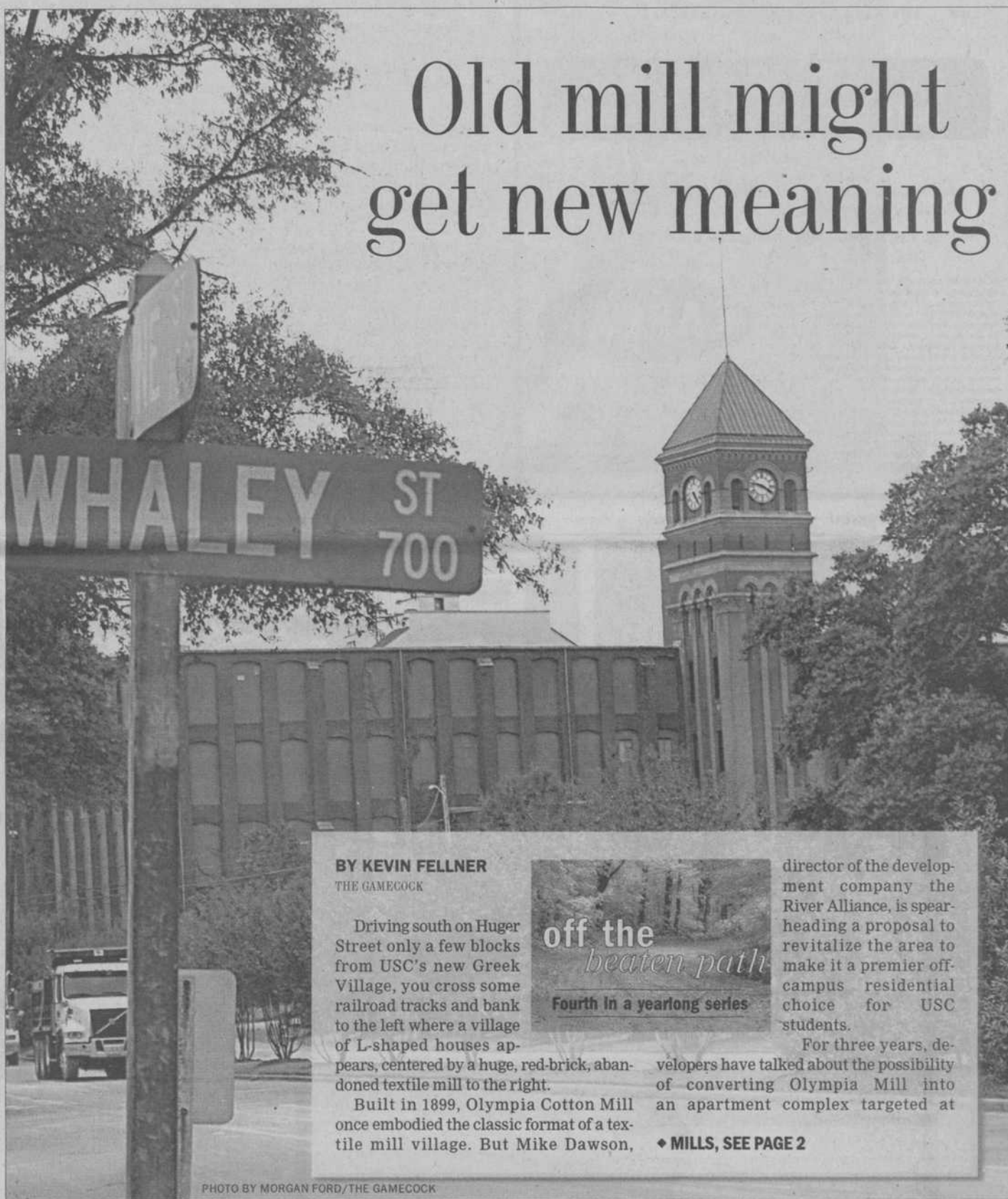
The project is working with the Charleston County Emergency Preparedness group, and Porter said Caro-COOPS plans to work with state emergency services as well as other local emergency agencies.

But the system isn't just for flood predictions. Porter said that when the seas are calm, the instruments also monitor the ocean's health pertaining to the well-being of certain fish species that are important to the state's fishing industry as well as recreational fishing.

The system can also monitor

◆ ISABEL, SEE PAGE 2

The project, dubbed Caro-COOPS, is a joint research initiative among USC and two N.C. universities.



Old mill might get new meaning

BY KEVIN FELLNER
THE GAMECOCK

Driving south on Huger Street only a few blocks from USC's new Greek Village, you cross some railroad tracks and bank to the left where a village of L-shaped houses appears, centered by a huge, red-brick, abandoned textile mill to the right.

Built in 1899, Olympia Cotton Mill once embodied the classic format of a textile mill village. But Mike Dawson,

off the beaten path
Fourth in a yearlong series

director of the development company the River Alliance, is spearheading a proposal to make it a premier off-campus residential choice for USC students.

For three years, developers have talked about the possibility of converting Olympia Mill into an apartment complex targeted at

◆ MILLS, SEE PAGE 2

PHOTO BY MORGAN FORD/THE GAMECOCK

Hoteliers file complaint to block USC inn

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLUMBIA — Local hotel owners have filed a complaint with federal officials in an attempt to block the University of South Carolina from building a competing facility.

The complaint was filed with the General Accounting Office on behalf of the Greater Columbia Hotel and Motel Association.

The complaint accuses the Justice Department's National Advocacy Center of violating fed-

eral law by agreeing to a development deal without going through a public bidding process. The GAO is the government's financial watchdog agency.

The complaint is just the latest move by local hotel owners who say a university-run hotel would be unfair competition with their businesses.

The proposed \$12.5 million, 117-room hotel project is the result of an agreement among the USC Development Foundation,

the National Advocacy Center and Columbia-based IMIC Hotels.

Federal law requires agencies to have competition for contracts. But the hotel, which would house prosecutors training at the National Advocacy Center as well as USC guests, was never subject to competitive bidding, said Patricia Wittie, who represents the hotel association.

U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson, R-Lexington, also wrote a letter to

the General Accounting Office questioning the legality of the agreement.

USC spokesman Russ McKinney said several developers were asked to give proposals for the hotel. And, he said, the Development Foundation is a private wing of the university and doesn't have to follow government procurement procedures.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecockdesk@hotmail.com

Machine to improve computing efficiency

BY Z'ANNE COVELL
THE GAMECOCK

USC's Computer Science and Engineering Department recently established a computing grid that is expected to provide a boost for USC's research projects.

Kirk Cameron, assistant pro-

fessor of computer science and engineering, said a computing grid is a collection of computers that is used as a single resource. The idea is that one computer has a certain amount of computational power, meaning it can do a certain number of calculations per second — and several of them

together can do more.

Cameron said a specific machine is not necessary to create a computational grid, but for high levels of computing performance, having a machine strictly designated for the purpose of grid computing is best.

"We purchased a machine that

is a dedicated machine that can be used for providing a base line system for computations and that can be used also with other machines to form a computational grid," Cameron said.

Cameron and his colleague

◆ GRID, SEE PAGE 6

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Weather

TODAY



High 86
Low 58

THURSDAY



High 84
Low 61