



# The News & Observer

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## UNC faces backlash over sealed School of Civic Life probe

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UNC-Chapel Hill spent \$1.2 million investigating allegations of misconduct surrounding its own School of Civic Life and Leadership. Then, UNC announced that no one would get to see what that investigation found. Not everyone inside the school is at peace with that.

The school, commonly referred to as SCiLL, is contro-

versial for two main reasons: the conservative values that informed its creation and the infighting and allegations that have swirled ever since, causing massive turnover in its faculty ranks.

UNC's chancellor, Lee Roberts, says the report — which he characterizes as a “series of allegations that were made by various members of the faculty, really about each other, and about hiring processes” — cannot be released because “the

entire thing is personnel information.” At a recent Faculty Council meeting, however, incoming faculty chair Michael Gerhardt, who served as a consultant on the investigation, confirmed that it calls for “serious corrective action.”

What that action may be, or if it will be taken, has not been clarified by UNC. The university's deputy general counsel, Kara Simmons, said at the Faculty Council meeting that because those actions would be



JON GARDINER UNC-Chapel Hill

Jed Atkins, director and dean of UNC-Chapel Hill's School of Civic Life and Leadership in the College of Arts and Sciences.

led to individuals, they would also count as personnel information.

Raleigh law firm K&L Gates conducted the investigation. The attorney who led it, Nathan

Huff, also represented powerful Republican Senate leader Phil Berger, The Assembly reported. The firm is closely controlling

SEE CIVIC LIFE, 4A

### PRACTICING AT SUNDOWN



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Jose Arias Garcia, a first-year student at UNC-Chapel Hill, practices dribbling a soccer ball as the sun begins to set at Hooker Fields on Tuesday, April 14, 2026.

## House passes aviation safety bill after fatal collision

BY ESTHER FRANCES esther.frances@newsobserver.com

RALEIGH

The U.S. House of Representatives on Tuesday passed a bill that would require upgraded collision detection and helicopter route design enhancements to make aviation systems safer.

The bill comes after a Black Hawk helicopter and an American Airlines flight fatally collided last year near the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport in Washington, D.C. Capt. Rebecca Lobach, a Durham native, was piloting the helicopter and died in the collision.

A total of 67 people, which included all passengers and crew members on both aircraft, died in the collision.

H.R. 7613 is known as the ALERT Act, which stands for the Airspace Location and Enhanced Risk Transparency Act of 2026. The bill would work to make aviation systems safer by requiring upgraded collision detection technology by 2031.

It would also permanently close the route that the Black Hawk took, as well as require an

SEE SAFETY, 5A

## Suspect admits to killing Raleigh teacher, warrants show

BY LEXI SOLOMON lsolomon@newsobserver.com

RALEIGH

The man accused of fatally attacking teacher Zoe Welsh in her Raleigh home in January allegedly told police he'd “killed a lady,” according to newly released search warrants.

Ryan Camacho, 37, is charged with first-degree murder and first-degree burglary in the Jan. 3 incident, The News & Observer previously reported. Welsh, who taught science at Ravenscroft School, was fatally wounded about 6:30 a.m. that day after she called 911 to report a man had broken into her Clay

Street home through the front window.

The killing has raised questions about treatment options for people with mental illnesses who interact with the criminal justice system in North Carolina.

The N&O found Camacho had a lengthy history of break-ins, assaults and trespassing, and had twice been declared incompetent in Wake County. He'd been in court as recently as December, when Judge Louis B. Meyer III denied a motion to have him committed despite finding he was incapable of helping with his own defense in a break-in case.

Welsh reportedly told the

dispatcher she recognized Camacho from previously seeing him at Fred Fletcher Park, which bordered her home in a neighborhood off St. Mary's Street. She was able to describe the suspect's appearance and outfit before being attacked, according to court documents.

### BRICKS FOUND IN JACKET POCKET, WELSH'S HOME

It's not clear how Camacho allegedly broke the window at Welsh's home, but a search warrant indicates officers found “blood and human tissue” around the window, and a brick was found in Camacho's jacket pocket. Investigators also found three bricks inside Welsh's



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Ryan Camacho, 36, who is charged in the killing of Raleigh schoolteacher Zoe Welsh, makes his first court appearance on Monday, Jan. 5, 2026, at the Wake County Justice Center in Raleigh.

home, according to the warrants. Welsh said on the 911 call she'd been hit with a brick, The N&O previously reported.

Officers briefly detained an-

other man in the hunt for Camacho after a K-9 track led them to a Cleveland Street

SEE WARRANTS, 5A



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