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The Daily Dispatch: GOOD NEWS & GOOD NEIGHBORS: From fields of Vance County to ambassador to Spain

By The Editorial Board
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It always feels good to come across the “local guy/gal does well” stories.

An article about Richard “Duke” Buchan III earlier this week certainly fits that bill.

Buchan, a Henderson native, has been tapped by President Donald Trump to serve as the United States’ ambassador to Spain and Andorra. That’s quite a journey from his family’s farm in Vance County. But those roots, perhaps, helped propel him to where he is now.

“Family, integrity, and hard work were reinforced daily,” Buchan told an investment-related publication in 2007. “It wasn’t unusual for us in the summer to work from 6:30 in the morning until late in the summer evening.”

Even as a boy, he was curious about the world in which we live. A 2012 Carolina Arts and Sciences Magazine article states Buchan was fascinated with places beyond the tobacco fields near his Vance County home, absorbing photos and words in his World Book Encyclopedia.

He developed an interest in Spain, after his high school Spanish teacher urged him to spend a summer abroad there.

The combination of a strong work ethic and an interest in broader horizons help trace the arc to where Buchan is now.

A Vance High School alumnus, UNC graduate and successful investment manager, Buchan has many friends and family still in the area. Those who know him speak highly of his character and admire the fact that he has never forgotten his roots.

Former high school classmate John Wester described Buchan as “the most likable person.” Wester also touched on Buchan’s innate curiosity and desire to understand. “If he asked a question, he genuinely wanted to know the answer to understand, and he listened,” Wester said. “His work ethic is exceeded by his intelligence.

While his appointment still must be confirmed, we hope that will just be a formality. Buchan brings formidable talents to the post and will represent the United States — and, of course, Vance County — well in this position.