

# The BLUE BANNER

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## The News in Brief

By Lisa Gillespie  
MANAGING EDITOR

### UNC schools required to decrease textbook costs

The Board of Governors approved a plan to reduce textbook costs for students that must be implemented by all UNC schools, using a book rental system and bookstore buy-back.

Western Carolina University and Appalachian State already have textbook rental programs, which some fear may force faculty to use the same book for several years.

Nationally, textbook costs have tripled from 1986 to 2004, according to a study by the federal Government Accountability Office.

### Governor admits to inadequate aid

Louisiana Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco announced Tuesday that she will not run for a second term. After Hurricane Katrina, Gov. Blanco received criticism from politicians and community leaders that she was too overwhelmed by the catastrophe and only helped a small amount of people with her Road Home aid program.

Democrat Senator John B. Breaux is drawing attention from Democrats because of his close ties with both parties and some hope he will bring more support to Louisiana from the Bush administration. The October primary leaves many unanswered questions, according to critics. Six candidates currently bid to replace Blanco.

## Film festival brings disability stigmas to light

By Annabelle Hardy  
STAFF WRITER

The month-long Difference as Disability 2007 Film Series culminates this weekend with the fourth and final installment of an afternoon of films and conversation about disability issues.

"The festival is important because disability needs to be recognized on campus. There are instances and times when it's not and disability is in every person's life," said Garrett Male, sophomore environmental studies student and president of Equal Access, a campus organization sponsoring the month-long film series.

Sunday's film "Best Man" is an award-winning documentary that was also included at the disability film festival at the University of California - Berkeley. The movie is the sequel to the Oscar-winning documentary "Best Boy" and follows the story of Philly Whorl, a mentally disabled man who transitioned out of his parents' home to an adult living facility at age 52, according to film critic Robert Horton.

Equal Access members decided a film festival would be a good way to engage people in thinking about the issue because the films create a visual and tangible point of connection with the concept of disability, said Male.

Watching the films might also help people in the campus community to look at the issue of disability and how it affects them personally and how it affects the university, Male said.

Disability awareness is about recognizing that disability is everywhere, according to Male. People have a tendency to think about disability as a physical issue, but scholars in the field of disability studies maintain that disability is a reflection of a social system that is not equipped to adequately meet people's needs, Male said.

"If people with physical, mental and emotional disabilities are considered as a single group, it would be one of the largest minority groups in the country," Male said. "It's likely that if you don't have some kind of disability, someone



Heidi Kelley, professor in the sociology department, sits at her desk in her office below the Dining Hall. Kelley teaches a class called "Body, Disability and Culture," offering students a different look at disabilities in society. Equal Access is a student organization dedicated to the same thing, and members hope to get the campus community involved in their cause by showcasing films throughout March. The Disability as Difference 2007 Film Series includes "Best Boy," "When Billy Broke His Head," "The Wood Diary," "Escape Velocity" and "Best Man."

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GARRETT MALE  
Sophomore Student

you know does." Supporting an inclusive and comfortable environment for students with disabilities is a key component of being a diverse campus, according to Grace Silvia, senior interdisciplinary student. "There are two parts to making

the campus truly integrated, fair and friendly to students of all different kinds of minorities: recruitment and retention. Retention includes accommodations and includes attitudes of other students," Silvia said.

Senior biology student Sydney Polak has Tourette's Syndrome and sometimes feels disconnected from students who may not understand some of the subtler manifestations of the syndrome.

"I would like for people to understand about me. I have problems with my nervous system, and when I sit down for too long, I can have problems with my legs and I don't want time getting up. I have a hard time to say that I'm just pretending, but I feel like that is happening sometimes," Polak said.

"I would like for people to understand about me."

SYDNEY POLAK  
Senior Biology Student

Equal Access has existed on campus for a number of years, but the group is much more active on campus this year, according to Male. The organization seeks to educate members of the campus community on issues related to disability and to provide a community of support for people dealing with disability issues, Male said.

With more than 20 members, the organization already has a number of events proposed for next year,

which include hosting another film festival, inviting a disability rights scholar and activist to campus and co-sponsoring a broad-based diversity and anti-oppression training program in conjunction with a variety of other campus groups.

"We're excited about these programs," said Male, who is in the process of submitting budgets for next year's programs. "We're hoping the university gives us the money to make it happen."

The final installment of the Disability as Difference 2007 Film Series will take place Sunday at 3p.m. in the Whitman Room at the Ramsey Library. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, see [www.unca.edu/equalaccess](http://www.unca.edu/equalaccess).

## Students spend spring break rebuilding

By Neal Brown  
STAFF WRITER

Members of the Key Center organized a group of about 50 people to travel to New Orleans over spring break to help with reconstruction of homes demolished by hurricane Katrina.

"The Key Center has a number of functions, the main thing is to try to encourage and assist students, and to some extent faculty, but mostly students in making connections in the community and becoming involved in civic engagement and service learning," said Merritt Moseley, professor of literature and the professor of the Key Center.

Forty-six students went on the trip, accompanied by three UNC Asheville staff members, according to Moseley. After receiving their security deposit back, students only had to pay \$35, which covered lodging, food and a contribution to Habitat for Humanity of New Orleans, according to Moseley.

"I would say 50 people was just right. I was proud because there were teams there from universities like Michigan State that has an enrollment of about 60,000 and UNCA's was the biggest team," Moseley said.

Students took the opportunity to take part in various reconstruction activities like landscaping, painting, roofing and many more, according to Jason Tuell, junior political science student and an intern for the Key Center.



Junior Lydia Zimmer stirs paint while working on a house in New Orleans. Over spring break, 46 students traveled down to New Orleans to work on Katrina-damaged houses. The Key Center sponsored the event.

"Each one of us was engaged at some point with a different project," Tuell said.

Student affairs provided a chartered bus for the trip, which took about 14 hours to get to New

Orleans, according to Moseley.

Some of the students on the trip agreed that they enjoyed the experience because it gave them an opportunity to make a difference in someone else's life, according

to Tuell.

"It is a worthy cause and volunteering is definitely worth our time," he said. "When we get an

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## New curriculum earns grant for UNC Asheville

By Christa Chapelle  
COPY EDITOR

UNC Asheville received a \$300,000 grant from a liberal arts foundation to examine its new LSIC introductory course, while also giving students an opportunity to give feedback and win prizes.

"One of the promises that is a part of creating the new curriculum was that we were not making intellectual resources in order to improve and enrich college students' education, according to their Web site. They usually give grants to private colleges, according to Katz.

"The Teagle Foundation typically funds these kinds of projects through grants awarded to private liberal arts schools, so it's unusual when UNCA would be able to participate," Katz said. "On a few occasions they have allowed public liberal arts schools to become part of a

principal investigator of the study at UNC Asheville.

"We're looking at a couple of things," Katz said. "We want to see if students' experiences in courses that feature active learning experiences are related particularly to student engagement."

The Teagle Foundation, established in 1944 by Walter C. Teagle, serves to promote liberal education by providing financial and intellectual resources in order to improve and enrich college students' education, according to their Web site. They usually give grants to private colleges, according to Katz.

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