

Young Voters Important in '08 Presidential Race

By HILLARY SEYBOLD

Voting is a milestone event for every 18 year old: the verification of adulthood, a full induction into the people of our democratic nation. This year, an unprecedented number of voters aged 18-29 are taking advantage of this opportunity to have their say in our government, particularly in the election of our next president.

Perhaps it is the possibility of having the first woman or African American president sworn into office, or perhaps it is the omnipresence of pressing social, economic, and global issues which is drawing in so many young voters. Regardless of the reason, it is certain that the impact of this normally overlooked demographic on the results of November's elections will be significant.

May 6th, the date of North Carolina's Democratic primary, brought much excitement to NCSSM, and the state as a whole. Senior Christine Sun said, "After I had voted, it made me feel excited, like I had really made a difference; I felt accomplished." Although it might seem like an obvious source of pride for most young people, participation in the democratic process

is historically rare among voters in our demographic, and primary elections and caucuses are notorious for attracting relatively few voters -- typically only 10 percent of voters under thirty participate in primaries in this state.

This year, however, at least 15 percent of voters under the age of 30 voted in the North Carolina primaries, according to the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. For an event which usually experiences less-than-mediocre

turnout, these are very impressive numbers. In fact, every state experienced a significant increase in the youth attendance this spring as our newest voting-age generation assumed its role in the democratic process.

In attempts to reach out to the younger voters, contenders for the presidency are utilizing novel, primarily electronic, methods of communication

feel as if they are being personally reached.

Just by doing some light research online, one can, as Sun said, know enough to make an informed decision when voting. Also, there seems to be a revival in the good old "spirit of the democratic process," in that today's young voters take pride in their opportunity to vote. Senior Stephen Johnson said, "I wanted to exercise my right to vote because I feel that's the right thing to do for myself and for my country."

Most people feel at least moderately informed regarding each candidate's platform and about currently debated issues. The nontraditional aspects of this year's democratic candidates have attracted special attention from the younger set of voters.

Thus far in the election process, it seems as if the influence of voters under the age of 30 will help place a Democrat in the White House this coming fall. General trends in primary results have shown that young voters are more supportive of Democratic candidates than Republican runners; they seem to be aligning with the Democratic party's looser stance on platform issues such as abortion, gay rights, the war in Iraq, and environmental policy.

The impression made by the youngest demographic of voters this year will ensure that their vote will be a significant factor in the upcoming election. This year, voters under the age of 30 will be recognized as members of a significant voting block that wields unprecedented political power. No matter what the outcome of the presidential election, hopefully this new positive attitude toward will remain among our nation's young people.



Picture by Dakota Williams

Primary Election Day in Durham brought Former President Clinton to NCSSM's doorstep

including Facebook and YouTube, as well as stepping up traditional campaign activities. This foray into new media is producing a slant among young voters towards the younger candidate. Senior Garrett Schlesinger felt that Barack Obama has definitely been reaching out more to students, and noted that the amount of campaigning Obama has done on Facebook is startling. However, communication is not as effective as the candidates would like it to be; some young voters don't

Student Leadership Changed for Coming School Year

By EDINA WANG

Along with plans for school expansion, an increased number of courses and students, and changes in faculty and staff for the coming school year, some of the student leadership positions on campus will also experience changes.

Attaché sponsor Cindy Crabtree said in development, it is always a constantly changing world. While there is no set number of Attachés, they try to cap it at 13 students. For the next school year, 10 Attachés will continue the work service of helping with special events, fundraising, and helping Development grow in endowment. "Students see the development aspect as the party people, but that couldn't be further from the truth," said Crabtree. "We expect more of our Attachés than many other leadership positions. To be an Attaché, your behavior has to be the best of the best."

Crabtree also emphasized that Development is a student-friendly environment. "This is your school, tell us what you would like to see happen. Every student is welcome down this hallway," said Crabtree.

Only three years running, the Lit@Com Liaisons are the newest leadership group on campus, the number of members growing from five in the

first year to seven for the 2008-2009 year as interest for the position grows each year. "This program is really evolving. We are always really excited about people who want to do this job," said librarian Barbara Newnam. "One question we hear a gazillion times is, 'I can't print.' Liaisons help teach people how to do a lot of things."

The Lit@Com Liaisons come up with many new ideas every year to increase student participation. Newnam said that one idea that worked well this school year was the teacher readings. "It was a positive and constructive event involving literature that students and teachers really enjoyed," said Newnam. "We look forward to the Liaisons' creative ideas for next year."

While the MPC program will not experience any changes, the MPCs will continue helping the NCSSM community to better understand multicultural issues and respect for them through programs such as mixers, a gingerbread house contest and the MPC newspaper Nosh and News. "Every year the MPCs do some amazing programs as well as an amazing job serving the community in ways to help them become more culturally aware. We have some great programs planned so keep a lookout and keep the enthusiasm," MPC sponsor Leah Dula said.

For the 2008-2009 school year, the

14 PCCs will include the new addition of the On-Line Liaison. "NCSSM is adding an on-line component to our curriculum for students who were qualified to attend but couldn't because of lack of space or other reasons," said PCC Coordinator Joyce Rodman. "Students are being invited to take courses with us on-line, so Ms. Hudson, Dean of Counseling Services, suggested that we add a student to be our liaison with the new on-line students."

Rodman said that Counseling is not sure how the role will unfold since it is new, but they are excited about the possibilities. Counseling is encouraging rising seniors to communicate with PCCs regularly and ask them questions next year. A PCC will be on every hall next year and will speak at hall meetings throughout the year. "Use these folks to help you," said Rodman. "PCCs are a critically important extension of the Counseling Services Office and we couldn't function effectively without them. The most important thing is to talk to your PCCs."

RLAs will increase in number from 49 to 62, adding one additional RLA on the Beall and Bryan halls as well as on the Hunt halls. This change will give a student to RLA ratio of 10-to-1. "This change was made to better serve the students, adding more students for

accessibility and functionality. We definitely look forward to fostering great leaders that help present 'The Magic' of residential life," said SLI and RLA Coordinator Beth Walden.

SLI Lola Bryant feels this change will benefit all students on hall as well as help the RLAs. "It will lessen the daily duties of each RLA and allow each RLA a frequent rotation of duties," said Bryant. "This is something new that we are trying this year, and I'm excited."

Another leadership position that will also see an increase in members is the Student Ambassadors, as there is an increase in need for Student Ambassador work service. Next year will also be the first year with double-digits of male ambassadors. Student Ambassador work service will involve more projects in community outreach. "The projects will take up more in the week day and prevent idle time during the week," said Student Ambassador Coordinator Rob Andrews. "We're always adding new programs and revising existing programs so we can try to reach more students."

All of the sponsors of the leadership groups expressed their excitement for next school year's student leaders. "We're very excited about our new ambassadors and we hope they can fill in the big steps of the class before them," Andrews said.