



Alcohol Use Sparks Controversy

By ELI HORNSTEIN

On Saturday, October 18, students were found drinking alcohol at an IVIZ in Hunt. A student or group of students reportedly mixed soft drinks with liquor.

An SLI on duty found students with alcohol in the residence hall rooms. Some students were found to have consumed alcohol by breathalyzer tests. Harry Tucker, director of Campus Resources conducted the investigation.

According to Chancellor Gerald Boarman, although the full scope of the problem is not known and may never be, "I'm not naïve enough to think that students don't drink, but it's usually one student or a student and a friend...my trust and the standards of this institution have been breached by this absolutely deliberate attempt to involve this many students."

Despite the wide scope of the incident, Boarman stressed that punishment and restrictions will be on a case-by-case basis, "I see this as an aberration, and I don't like to take action against the whole."

In the wake of the initial series of rapid responses, some students have leveled accusations of unfair application of disciplinary standards. These students asked for an investigation into not only the drinking, but into allegations of possible favoritism. In response, Boarman stated that, "no one has been let go."

Boarman added that what students see as unfairness may stem from a misunderstanding of the disciplinary procedures at NCSSM.

"Initial investigation is made by SLIs or security personnel, who make a preliminary report," Boarman explained. "Mr. Tucker then does a very thorough report, including each and every rumor and each and every student who was involved; this report is not yet complete."

Students officially charged in the investigation with a violation of the Student Code of

Conduct were afforded full due process, including appeals.

Students found guilty may face

any of the sanctions set down in the student handbook, available on At-A-Glance.

SG Constitution Under Review

Recent events have brought to light a problem with the Student Government Constitution adopted last school year.

"Because last year's constitution wasn't approved by the Chancellor's office, as is required by the UNC Board of Governors, SG will now be operating under the 1998 constitution," stated Kevin Cromwell, Director of Student Services.

A committee with representatives of each of the three branches of SG

will work on possible revisions to the constitution. The committee members include Kevin Kimball, Alex Lew, Hetali Lodaya, Sydney Ness, Ashwin Peres-da-Silva, Cindy Wei, and Jennifer Zhu.

In the 1998 constitution, any amendment or institution of a new Constitution can be made in several ways: a petition of one-quarter of the student body and SG approval by a strong majority, a petition of one-half of the student body and a majority vote at a meeting of the student body at a meeting where half of the student body is present, or if two-thirds of the student body signs a petition for a change in the constitution.

According to Cromwell, all current SG officers will be retained in their positions until an amended, or new, constitution is approved.

Have you been affected by this article? Do you have something to say about it? Email stentorian@ncssm.edu with your input.

Problems in Economy to Affect NCSSM

By ALEX LEW

Homeowners are defaulting on their mortgages. Shareholders are losing thousands of dollars as they read the newspaper over the dinner table. Governments around the world are trying unsuccessfully to put things back on track again.

The thing is, NCSSM students aren't homeowners, and have no bad mortgages to stop paying. Students at the school are somewhat removed from the process. They do not feel the economic crisis in the same way that millions across the country are feeling it.

The economic meltdown affects them in other, smaller ways.

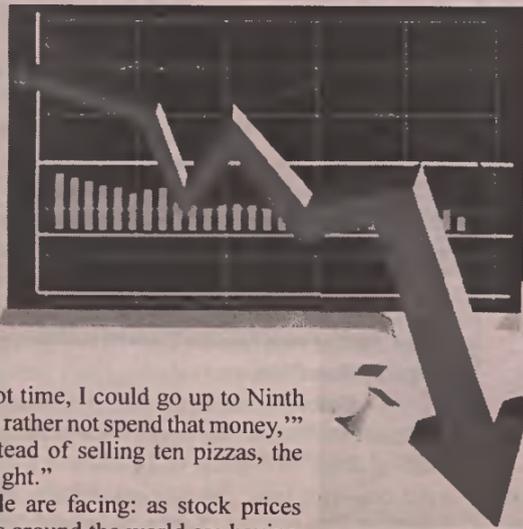
For instance, in the coming months, Economics instructor James Litle predicts that the PFM will be seeing a bit more business. The free food, he says, will be a big plus in this time of economic hardship.

"People will say, 'Yes, I've got time, I could go up to Ninth Street to get something to eat, but I'd rather not spend that money,'" Litle said. "Or at Happy Half, instead of selling ten pizzas, the pizza guy will only be able to sell eight."

It's a reality that many people are facing: as stock prices plummet and money is lost, families around the world are having to tighten their belts and reign in their everyday spending. Students who used to eat out every week may find themselves dining in, and the arguably overpriced vending machines will probably be seeing less business. That said, a meal here or there is altogether not that important. NCSSM's students will almost certainly feel the biggest effects of the economy's downturn in other ways.

"It's probably going to influence some college choices, because it will impact people's ability to pay for college," Litle said. "It may affect NCSSM students less, because you've got a tuition grant, which makes it easier. But for the people thinking about going to Harvard and Yale—how much financial aid are they going to give to someone in [the middle class]? Financial aid is going to be harder to come by."

One of the reasons that this aid will be hard to find is that the Federal Government might have to cut its budget, too.



Congress has been spending a lot of money to try to find fixes to the recent economic meltdown, and as such, will have to compensate for those expenditures by spending less in other areas like education and federal student loans. Just this month, the President signed into law a \$700 billion bailout bill, and House Democrats are looking at a \$150 billion stimulus package as a short-term solution.

Some are unhappy with the amount of money the government is pouring into short-term solutions.

"The \$700-billion bailout plan is like a band-aid that we're putting on the problem," said junior Markus Le. "At some point, it will burst off and we'll be stuck where we started."

In order to understand the effects of the economy's recent plummet better, it is necessary to look at the cause. While the origin of the current situation is certainly disputable, most agree that the subprime mortgage crisis was a major contributor. Subprime mortgages, or mortgages sold to people with low credit scores, are not altogether bad, but when combined with predatory lending practices and adjustable-rate mortgages, they can have a very negative impact.

One of the bigger problems occurs when banks, eager to make a profit, convince homebuyers to pay beyond their means and take out a \$250,000 instead of the \$150,000 loan they had wanted to buy.

Banks believed this sort of predatory lending would make them a profit, but when the homeowners couldn't make their payments and started defaulting on their mortgages, banks lost that money.

Banks, having lost millions due to bad mortgages, can no longer make other loans as easily. When companies can't take out loans, it hurts their employees the most.

With unemployment up, tax revenue is down, and the state, too, has to make budget cuts. Governor Mike Easley, predicting that tax revenue will be 3-4% lower this year, is calling for a statewide 4% spending cut. This cut, applicable to all state agencies, may also end up affecting NCSSM.

"Governor Easley is telling [educational] agencies that he is holding back 3% of their state budget in case NC's economy continues to decline," Ed McBride, NCSSM director of operations, said in an email interview. "It is better to withhold budget funds now and plan for the budget reduction rather than have to make a huge budget cut near the end of the year."

McBride said that one area the school would explore would be a freeze on filling vacant positions. Another might be that faculty and students travel less.

While the specifics are a bit hazy, one thing is sure: students, too, will feel the burden of the economic meltdown.



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