

# The Banner

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## Multicultural program gets new coordinator

By Amanda Osteen  
Staff Writer

The number of students of color attending UNCA has dramatically declined this semester.

"They don't leave for academic reasons, they leave for social reasons," said Octavia Wright, the coordinator of multi-cultural student programs.

Wright said she hopes to change this. New to the campus this year, Wright came from Radford University in Virginia where she worked for housing.

"I've always been looking for an opportunity to expand my horizons professionally," said Wright about her new position.

Wright said she aims to increase diversity on campus.

"My goal is to establish closer relationships with the faculty in terms of educating the students in diversity and multicultural issues," said Wright.

"This office exists to help diversify the campus community in co-curricular ways."

She has already begun to plan for the African-American Heritage Month in February.

"I think we can do a lot more together when we collaborate," said Wright.

Wright said she also hopes to build stronger bonds with the community outside the campus.

"These bonds will establish a stronger foundation for the students of color who decide to attend UNCA," said Wright.

"Students who come to college need to feel a strong connection to the campus in order to feel that the campus is truly there for them," said Wright.

"We want them to feel that comfort when they get here."

Wright said she hopes to help

establish the kind of community connections that will ensure this kind of campus environment.

Part of creating a comfortable campus community is providing a variety of organizations for all students.

"Churches, social organizations, groups and things they can participate in are all important elements," said Wright. "Students of color need to feel like UNCA is going to provide programs and events designed for them, and they also need to see these things out in the community."

UNCA needs to build a stronger foundation as far as creating better quality programs for students of color.

Wright says students will feel more comfortable going here.

"That will eventually feed upon itself, to help us in our future recruitment in students of color," said Wright.

Wright said it is unfortunate that the number of incoming freshmen and transfer students of different races are so low this year.

"We've heard that in the past we've been able to attract numbers in the high teens and twenties as far as African-American students," said Wright.

"This year we only had about six or seven who did enroll."

Wright said the number of African Americans living on campus is also low.

"The number of international students has also declined," said Wright.

Wright believes the answer to this problem is in "building that social climate."

"I think there needs to be a huge level of commitment shown by the administration to make this happen," said Wright.

Wright and her intern, Rita

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## UNCA workers form union

By Johanna Luks  
Staff Writer

Spurred by frustrations with the UNCA administration, some UNCA staff members have organized a chapter of UE Local 150, a union for North Carolina public service workers. UNCA union members cited the lack of communication between faculty, staff and the administration, and an increase in parking fees as the motivation for their interest in the union.

"I felt like the administration has been turning a deaf ear to staff and their concerns," said Randy Marrs, photographer for printing services.

The administration "really doesn't ask for staff input. We're supposed to be here for the students, and we have to defer more or less to the faculty," said Jay Gertz of government documents in Ramsey library.

Administrators said that effective communication is a priority to them as well.

"A lot of people may feel like there is information that is not being communicated to them in an effective way, and that keeps them from doing the best job that they can probably do," said Arthur Foley, vice chancellor of financial affairs. "I think that's not unique to UNCA, and it's a challenge to all administrators to try to keep the communication flowing from both administrators to the workers and from the workers to the administrators."

The \$10 increase in employee parking fees infuriated several staff members, according to Marrs.

"What really set me off was that (the administration) increased the parking this year to \$70, which was a \$20 increase from two years ago. That was the straw that broke the camel's back. There was no implication they were



PHOTO BY SARAH LACY

UNCA worker Jared Gudger landscapes in front of Justice Gym.

going to increase it or why it was like the Godfather telling you, 'you are going to do this, no questions asked,' and that really ticked me off," said Gertz.

Whether or not the administration asks staff for input in a decision such as this depends on the nature of the decision, according to Foley.

"At UNCA there are a lot of committees and councils that act in advisory capacities, so often times there are mechanisms by which people are able to at least participate in the information gathering part of the decision-making process," said Foley.

UNCA union members are hopeful that the union will help resolve some issues on campus.

"There's very low morale on campus right now with the staff and faculty. Hopefully the new chancellor is going to be a real leader. I don't feel like that's what we had before with Chancellor Patsy Reed. I don't think she was a leader at all, and I don't think her primary concern was with the staff," said Marrs.

There is a council of staff members that meet with the chancellor, according to Foley.

"For the past year now we've had an organization called Chancellor Staff Advisory Council (CSAC), and any staff member can certainly talk to any member of the CSAC council," said Foley. "They all have someone that's an elected representative to raise issues with the administration or the chancellor if there is a concern."

The UNCA chapter of the union has improved em-

ploy relations, according to Marrs.

"The people who have joined have more security knowing that they have the union behind them and knowing that the union is trying to change people's lives for the better," said Marrs.

"This is a different union. It's more of a people's union. The union doesn't do these things for us as we're doing them for ourselves."

Under North Carolina state law, unions cannot bargain with the UNC General Administration or individual campuses, according to Foley and Marrs. This includes bargaining over wages, hours or working conditions. North Carolina statute prohibits union members from going on strike, according to Foley.

"We lobbied the general assembly, and we're working

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## UNCA seeks foreign connections

By Breandan Dezendorf  
Staff Writer

John McDonald, associate professor of French, is going to Saumur, France as part of the Sister Cities International Organization in September to discuss overseas internship possibilities for UNCA students.

McDonald is leaving Asheville with Beverly Cutter Modlin, the vice chancellor for university relations, on Sept. 16, and is returning on Sept. 27.

"My idea was this might be an opportunity for some (French majors) to do internships the way some of the people who major in management or economics do internships," said McDonald.

The Sister Cities International program was set up by former President Dwight E. Eisenhower in 1956 to promote community partnerships and opportunities abroad for citizens as well as further international economic ties between the cities and countries involved in the exchange, according to the Sister Cities web page. The organization started as a part of the National League of Cities. In 1967, it developed into its own not-for-profit organization due to growth.

"First and foremost, it's an opportunity for French majors," said McDonald, "but I would hope that we could make it an opportunity for other kinds of majors who are interested in it."

Some French speaking or

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## UNCA bookstore joins forces with online seller



PHOTO BY SARAH LACY

Efolett's slogan, "Get out of line," faces students as they wait in line at UNCA's bookstore.

By Sarah Lacy  
Staff Writer

UNCA students can order new and used textbooks over the Internet due to a partnership between the campus bookstore and a national online college bookstore.

The UNCA bookstore has become a partner with efolett.com, the world's first and largest online seller of college textbooks, according to an efolett.com press release.

"Follett Higher Education group first began selling textbooks over the Internet in 1995, when they created 25 Web sites for the 25 schools for which they managed the campus bookstore," said Pam Pesavento, contact for efolett.com. "So, they've been involved in internet commerce or retailing textbooks for a long, long time."

Follett went online because they saw an online market with college students, said Pesavento.

"College students spend a great deal of time on-line," said Pesavento. "They are very Internet savvy and computer savvy. Follett predicted that the Internet was going to be a growing way that college students would want to do business."

According to Pesavento, students like

their "click-and-order" strategy.

"We are combining the ease of the Internet with the service that only a local campus bookstore can provide," said Pesavento.

"An example of this service is the manner in which students are able to exchange books, according to Pesavento.

"For instance, if you buy your books from us and you're one of the campuses where we have a partnership, if you exchange classes and need to exchange books, you don't have to go through shipping them back to somebody," said Pesavento. "You can just walk in and exchange or return them right on campus, right on site."

Follett is pleased with the amount of traffic efolett.com has received, according to Pesavento.

"The site has been extremely popular," said Pesavento. "We can't give a number, but Follett is very, very pleased by the response from the students."

Mike Small, director of the UNCA bookstore, said he became interested in finding out how the bookstore could offer online ordering by learning about all the other internet commerce groups.

"It all started with just being aware of all of the Web site ordering and e-commerce that's going on the Internet," said Small. "I wondered how we could offer online textbook ordering through the bookstore."

Small said he was interested in how efolett.com becomes partners with the bookstores.

"When this efolett.com information first came out, I started to read with interest about how they planned to become partners with stores and to have a Web site with them," said Small. "I liked that option better than not having anything to do with the ordering."

Anybody ordering from Varsity (another online bookstore), Varsity fills the order. We wouldn't have any part of it."

He was also interested in efolett.com because Follett sells used books.

"Another reason I was interested in Follett is because they are a big used book company," said Small. "We get the majority of our used books from them."

According to Pesavento, an advantage of having a partnership with efolett.com is the students' option to pick the books up at their local campus store.

"Students have the option of having their books shipped to them or walking into the campus bookstore and picking them up," said Pesavento.

"There is no shipping charge if the student picks the books up at the bookstore," said Small. "I thought that was an attractive option. With the other online book ordering companies, you have to pay a shipping charge."

The UNCA bookstore has filled 20 orders for students on the efolett.com Web site, according to Small.

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