

THE BLUE BANNER

Features

Mmmm... "The Simpsons" still on top
■ see page 3



Sports

MLB player visits Bulldogs
■ see page 4



Campus

Student ready to change the world
■ see page 6



Volume 36 Issue 6

The University Of North Carolina At Asheville

October 17, 2002

Student diversity calls for campus-wide effort

Christina Clayton
News Reporter

The ongoing struggle to improve diversity at UNCA proves to be a project that needs the help of all students, faculty and administration.

"It has to be a campus-wide effort," said Scot Schaeffer, director of admissions and financial aid. "We have to come together and find solutions to the problem."

UNCA graduates a large number of its minority students.

However, few new minority students enroll, so UNCA cannot increase or sustain the population, according to Dwight Mullen, special assistant to the chancellor for diversity and multicultural affairs. "With the African American population, we're just going in the wrong direction," said Mullen. "Even though our numbers are as high as they've ever been for Asian and Hispanic populations, we're not making much progress."

Students, not only administration, must help combat the lack of student diversity at UNCA, according to Schaeffer.

"We have gone into negative critical mass," said Mullen. "Critical mass is a number that is self-sustaining for a healthy community, but we are at negative critical mass which means we have gotten into numbers that we can't sustain. Rather than attracting people, the numbers are actually causing people to leave."

Some UNCA students are already taking action. Sean McDonald, a junior ethics and social institutions major, currently helps recruit students from the Cherokee Indian reservation.

"We have the chance to enhance our school by diversifying the campus," said McDonald in an e-mail. "This is not limited to multicultural and ethnic people. We need to have a balance of society at UNCA, not a certain type of student."

Diversity is important because of the atmosphere it brings to the university, not because of population statistics, according to Mullen.

"To have a mix of students from



COURTESY OF ISA

One of the campus diversity groups, the International Student Association (ISA) held a fashion show on the quad last semester at UNCA. University officials believe improving diversity in the UNCA population must involve the help of students, faculty and administration.

all regions, ethnicities, genders, religions and ages really provides enrichment to the education environment outside of the classroom," said Mullen. "You can have a liberal arts education without a diverse population."

Other recruiting efforts also began at UNCA. The university participated in a college fair by the National Scholarship Service earlier this semester.

"It's a college fair geared specifically toward African American students," said Schaeffer. "I spoke to about 60 students, and they will be receiving follow-up calls from (myself) and other people on campus. We are working more closely with the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program out of Asheville High School," said Schaeffer.

"It has to be a campus-wide effort. We have to work together and find solutions to the problem."

-Scot Schaeffer
director of admissions and financial aid

AVID works with mid-level students (low B to C average) from middle school through high school and provides them with the skills they need to succeed in college.

In his third month as director of admissions and financial aid, Schaeffer believes UNCA needs to take a different approach when recruiting students because of UNCA's low minority population. "When we talk to students who are of diverse background, we have to be honest and tell them that they are going to be part of the solution," said Schaeffer. "They have to be willing to be a change agent. The more students we get here that are of that mindset will help the critical mass develop."

Federal Law required universities to enact race-based recruiting programs. After lawsuits in California and Michigan several years ago, laws no longer enforced those programs, and minority populations at campuses all over the United States dropped, according to Mullen.

"They found that you can't really talk about having a diverse population without having strategies de-

signed to meet these sub-populations of students and their expectations," said Mullen.

Recently, however, universities returned to recruiting programs designed to target certain populations.

Along with other recruitment efforts, UNCA also uses Spanish-language brochures.

Recruiters use second-language skills, and focus on areas with a high concentration of certain minorities.

"When the numbers get like this, things have to change," said Mullen. "We need more scholarship money and better recruitment efforts. Things have to change on campus, but I'm not really sure what would happen if our best dreams came true. Suppose we got all the stu-

See DIVERSITY Page 12

Credit cards, student debt focus of lecture

Heather Anderson
Guest Reporter

Accounting professor Gregory Bushong will host a workshop on Nov. 11 to address personal budgeting skills at UNCA, because of concern for the high level of student debt.

"I will be talking with them about personal planning and preparing a personal budget," said Bushong. "The Money Management and Financial Planning workshop gives students practical suggestions for improving their success. The workshop is part of a brown-bag lunch series at UNCA, intended to provide students with additional learning experiences."

"Students get in trouble with credit cards," said Bushong.

He did not have specific statistics, but Bushong's lecture is intended to help students expand their knowledge of planning a budget and personal borrowing.

"I can only touch on both of the topics due to time, but I could spend a few days on them," said Bushong. "I'll be covering the real cost of borrowing."

Bushong said he wants to help students stay out of debt, which for college students usually means credit card debt.

Students frequently receive credit card applications many times on college campuses.

"Throughout the year in front of the cafeteria there are representatives offering free gifts like T-shirts, sunglasses, CD's and other stuff only if students agree to first fill out a stack of forms," said undeclared sophomore Amy Murphy.

Student groups who bring companies onto UNCA's campus get paid or reimbursed from that company either through a flat fee or a percentage, according to UNCA assistant director of student life Rick Brophy. In addition, reservations are mandatory through the Student Affairs office.

"No one is allowed to just set up and solicit anything on our campus without permission from the Office of Student Life," said Brophy. Any outside vendor wishing to sell on this campus must be sponsored by a campus organization, either student or administrative."

In order to avoid discrimination, Student Affairs must be fair to all vendors. The Student Affairs office does not supply information on student groups to vendors, so they must wait to be contacted, not the other way around, according to Brophy.

"The main objections have been from student affairs staff," said Brophy. "We know the problems these credit cards cause students, and do not care for their practices." Local bankers say they are interested in college students as new prospects for credit cards.

"Certainly it's a small percent, but every year it grows," said Brenda Thomas, a Bank of America worker

See CREDIT Page 12

Ceremony at Warren Wilson to honor executed witches

Jason Moore
Guest Reporter

A ceremony created to honor the victims of the witch hunts during the Middle Ages will take place Oct. 29 at Warren Wilson College (WWC) in Swannanoa.

"It's a service that focuses on the fact that in the past a lot of women identified as witches were burned, tortured and marginalized," said WWC minister to students Andy Summers. Summers is a key scheduler of the ceremony.

While the ceremony primarily honors women, millions of victims of war and torture will also have a time of remembrance, according to Summers. Summers manages several campus human rights cam-

paigns and provides spiritual counseling to students.

The "Memorial for the Nine Million" recognizing persecution of suspected witches started nearly a decade ago, with help from Kim Duckett, a WWC sociology professor.

An ordained high priestess of the Dianic Wiccan tradition, Duckett founded Women's Holy Inspirational Spiritual Performance Events and Rituals (W.H.I.S.P.E.R.). She also usually attends the ancient Celtic New Year celebration, Samhain, on Oct. 31, All Hallows' Eve.

"The bottom line is there is more than one religion, and they are all valid and sacred," Duckett said in a 1999 Asheville Citizen-Times article, referring to criticism by Christian groups towards the growth of

local pagan communities.

People frequently use the term pagan to describe someone who does not follow a monotheistic faith like Christianity, Judaism or Islam. Neo-Pagan, a more general term, describes modern day followers of ancient deities and customs who often incorporate modern-day knowledge.

Wicca makes up one of the largest growing neo-pagan faiths with followers who generally use the term pagan in describing their faith, according to the Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance (OCRT).

The ceremony at Warren Wilson recalls a period known as "The



COURTESY OF VIRGINIA EDU

Trials and executions of suspected witches reached a peak between 1560 - 1650, resulting in an estimated 50,000 - 100,000 deaths.

See PAGAN Page 12