

Mercury Menace



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The Blue Banner

Donation gives students chance to travel

By Paige Reinhard
STAFF WRITER

More students at UNCA may get the chance to travel abroad, thanks to an anonymous donation of \$500,000.

"The donor has asked that the money be used for students who could not afford to have an international experience any other way," said Alex Comfort, associate vice chancellor for development.

In a press release circulated Feb. 15, the donor said international

travel is an important experience for students.

"We are now a world civilization. UNCA students need the exposure and opportunity to begin to experience and understand cultures beyond our state and country," wrote the donor, in press release. "So much of industry, major news and changes in the global economy come from beyond our borders that our students must get the breadth of experience that international travel pro-

vides to succeed."

A percentage or fraction of the donation will be used each spring.

A small group of U.N. representatives will decide which students receive the money.

"Each Spring three university officials will meet to decide," Comfort said. "The three will be, at least for now, the Director of International Programs, Linda Cornett, the Director of Study Abroad, Pete Williams, and the Director of Financial Aid, Beth

Bartlett."

One of the problems facing some students who wish to study abroad is the cost of the actual travel.

"Exchange programs are such that the students pay their tuition and fees here," Williams said. "But nothing covers the travel costs, those are always additional. And certainly, that's what we're hoping, that some of the travel costs will be helped out by having these funds."

Students who want to benefit from the endowment need to prepare a presentation for the group, according to Comfort.

"Generally what will happen, it won't happen quite this way this year, but students will be asked to do some thinking about this and present this committee with some desired learning objective that they're going to get out of the experience," Comfort said.

Many students consider studying abroad during their undergraduate

careers.

"I've always wanted to go to Greece because my dad is from Greece and my family's over there. So, if I could go to school over there, I'd love it," said Kimberly Tzakos, freshman student.

Knowledge of the donation may lead to more students becoming interested in studying abroad, according to Williams.

"I think once students hear that it's available, it may perk their interests," Williams said.

Spiritual vs. secular takes head globally

By Lisa Gillespie
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

A secular vs. spiritual politics debate develops after the publication of drawings depicting Muhammad wearing a bomb-taped turban with an ignited fuse.

"This is a politicized issue. It is not an issue of the prophet, the problem was that the portraits of the Prophet were so sarcastic, it is a case of blasphemy that was politicized," said Samer Traboulsi, assistant professor of history. "If you go to any bookstore, you would find negative literature on Islam. Politicians use these sensitivities for their own agenda."

Earlier this month, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, current secretary general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), urged European Union countries to outlaw "Islamophobia" and to create a set of guidelines for media to ban defaming or criticizing Muhammad.

"The only way the EU can get around it is to apologize, but then they still have the freedom of speech issue," Traboulsi said. "Fifty-seven countries of the Muslim countries have sent a proposal to the United Nations to stop any slander of religion in the press. If they manage to get support from other third-world countries that are more religious, there is more of a chance of to get laws passed."

Jyllands-Posten, a Danish newspaper, first published the cartoons in September.

Newspapers in several other European countries which reprinted the drawings, sparked protests across the Islamic world.

"I think they should have been published because it is a part of freedom of speech," said Andrew Serri, sophomore student. "When people publish pictures or other Christian caricatures, there is not a big uproar and people see it as expressing their opinion. They are using it as an excuse to protest the wet and fuel people's hate."

A draft declaration by the World Council of Churches, representing more than 500 million members of mainline Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox denominations, urged Christian leaders to develop contacts with moderate Muslim counterparts to break "the psychosis of fear" growing in both faiths.

"Denmark has apologized,

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BRIAN DAVIS - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Senior philosophy student Konstantinos Harlan and John Post, junior history literature student, protest recruiter's from the National Guard at UNCA's annual Career Center's Summer Job and Internship Fair on Tuesday. UNCA's Socialist Unity League held the protest.

Students protest recruiters

By Lisa Gillespie
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Protesters chanted "Stop Bush. Stop bombs," "Rise up, rise up, the people are fed up" and "No war. No way. No fascist USA," in a response to recruiters from the National Guard at the annual Career Center's Summer Job and Internship Fair on Tuesday.

"People sit here and say that freedom of speech is great, but how is that not intimidating for someone that wants to join, when they are standing right in front of the recruiters," said Jonathan Mickey,

sophomore student. "It's definitely keeping people from going up there, which is sad. But, it is great that the voice is there."

The National Guard table had 50 to 60 people ask questions, according to Sgt. Mark A. Radford, during the protest.

"It was inappropriate at first, only because they blocked complete access to our tables. We couldn't talk to anyone and a few tried to steal some of our items," Radford said. "The police showed up 45 minutes into it and let the public have unrestricted access. We are

going to be back because no matter what the political belief is, it's good to see people expressing their opinions freely."

The UNCA Socialist Unity League held the counter-recruitment protest in an effort to kick the National Guard recruiters off the UNCA campus. Protesters immediately declined to an interview.

"The military should be barred from recruiting here because the military has unfair employment practices, they bar homosexuals from the military, which is inappropriate," said Nick Heling, junior

protester. "In public universities, they should not be allowed to recruit because of these discriminatory practices."

After the league blocked access to the recruiters' table, they were threatened with the possibility of arrest and the revocation of their status as an official university student organization, according to Kati Ketz, member of the standing committee.

"I fully support their right to protest, we just have to make sure the recruiters table is made accessi-

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Art show plans to tackle stereotypes

By Kristen Marshall
STAFF WRITER

As the Sex Workers Art Show makes its way across the country, it plans a stop at UNCA, generate student conversation and educate the community, in order to dispel social, gender and economic stereotypes.

"It's people who have done sex work or who are still doing it and have made a career out of talking and writing about the social implications of it and how it's alternatively demonized," said senior Laura Friederich, co-president of Alliance. "Their goal is to bring an entertaining show that will shed some light on the complexities of the issue."

Annie Oakley, founder and director of the Sex Workers Art Show, said the show has been well-received in many different venues.

"It is my hope that the show can be a part of the ongoing dialogue, on and off campus, around issues

of race, class, gender, sexuality and privilege," Oakley said.

While Alliance initiated the performance, many other student groups and departments gave their support, including the Feminist Collective, and the departments of Art, Drama, Health and Wellness, Literature and Language, Political Science, Sociology, Women's Studies and the Arts and Ideas program.

"I think the student reaction will be mostly positive just because we are at a university, and people in this environment are used to thinking about things," Friederich said.

Sophomore student Aly Curly said the UNCA campus is open-minded and willing to understand issues.

"We want to understand and get on their level," Curly said.

UNCA sociology lecturer Keith Bramlett agreed.

"If nothing else, it should demystify the sex industry to some degree, which is often shrouded in

mystery," Bramlett said.

The cast of the Sex Workers Art Show includes notable filmmakers, novelists, hip-hop poets, burlesque dancers, prostitutes and activists who tour the country to enlighten society about a complicated industry.

"In our country, we police sexuality," Bramlett said. "And certainly sex workers are policed and exploited, and I think we need to have a better understanding of that exploitation."

Most UNCA students are excited about the upcoming performance, expressing how important it is to be informed about stereotypes.

"Education smashes bigotry," said sophomore student Colin Spindler.

Sophomore literature student Britt Garrett said that, while stereotypes held some truth, people pay too much attention to them.

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CONTRIBUTED BY ANNIE OAKLEY

The Sex Workers Art Show travels around the country to educate and dispel stereotypes.

Chancellor announces changes to faculty

By Anna Lee
STAFF WRITER

Chancellor Anne Ponder announced recent events and decisions pertaining to fees, growth, tuition, new buildings, programs and new staff job positions at a meeting Feb. 16 with faculty and staff.

"I really enjoyed the opportunity to have with the chancellor communicating with the university community," said Bruce Larson, economics professor and director of the Center for Teaching and Learning.

Ponder said she also initiated some recent changes to charges for double rooms on campus and to senior fees.

"It doesn't feel good to be approaching the time that we would want to celebrate with students about their achievements and to have multiple offices on campus charging multiple amounts of money," Ponder said.

After a transition period, students will pay \$20 per semester for four years instead of paying multiple fees to multiple offices their senior year.

"Twenty dollars will allow students to get a free cap and gown, free transcripts for life, all the career development advice that they can use and no charge for graduation," Ponder said.

All double rooms offered by the university will cost the same amount, according to Ponder.

"The university had put itself in the situation where people who were less affluent would be in the worst residence halls, and this could have been an invisible barrier and a problem for retention," Ponder said. "It could have, and likely did, affect disproportionately some of our ethnic and racial minorities. This will eliminate that invisible barrier, and we are pleased."

Ponder said while the campus is seeking more information and advice about changes, they are also making decisions and moving forward with those changes.

"We are repairing this airplane while we are flying it," Ponder said.

Ponder said she plans to hold further meetings, like this one, to keep faculty and staff updated on the information.

"It is my hope that when we have come to rely collectively on a regular habit of gathering on consistent and accurate communication and systematic opportunities for engagement, input, and exchange, we will know for ourselves what it means for ourselves to be truly a part of this university," Ponder said.