

\$35 M building in planning, causing recent controversy

By Neal Brown
STAFF WRITER

The North Carolina General Assembly voted to fund a \$35 million appropriation for a new building, which will house the North Carolina Center for Health and Wellness, as well as the academic department for the health and wellness promotion major here on UNC Asheville's campus, according to Chancellor Anne Ponder.

"This is the largest appropriation in our university's history," Ponder said.

Along with the \$35 million from the general assembly, the university plans to raise an estimated five to seven million dollars in private funds, according to Ponder. Joe Kimmel, a local entrepreneur, gave the university a two million dollar gift and Ray Elingburg, UNC Asheville alumnus, gave a gift of \$100,000.

"Additional funding is required because the appropriation did not cover everything that the university wanted to do," Ponder said.

Along with the building's health and wellness purposes, it will have 11 classrooms, teaching and research labs, group aerobics room, a dance studio, a wellness café with an outdoor terrace, conference room for meetings and seminars and a teaching kitchen for classes on healthy dining and cooking, according to Ponder.

"It is a highly functional multi-purpose area," Ponder said.

Though the university has not named the new building, it will be located up the hill from the Justice Center and connected to the health and fitness center by an enclosed walkway, according to Merianne Epstein, director of public information for UNC Asheville.



TREY BOUVIER - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Chancellor Anne Ponder discusses the new health and wellness building, which might cost the university \$35 million and will include several classrooms, research labs, aerobics rooms and a new cafe.

The building contains a multi-purpose convocation center, named Kimmel Arena, seating about 3,600 people, according to Ponder. Graduation ceremonies, major speakers, especially on topics of health and wellness and men's and women's basketball will be held in the arena.

"At UNC Asheville, we can never afford to do anything for only one reason," Ponder said.

As excited as students are about the new building, some have voiced concern over the building's purpose, according to Ashley Gray, graduating senior and interdisciplinary studies student. Gray

said she is concerned athletics will take priority in the building because basketball will share the space.

"The space is not being effectively and efficiently used to the best of its ability to foster healthy living for all of the UNC Asheville community," Gray said.

Other students are not concerned about athletics overshadowing the buildings purposes, according to Omar Ahmad, a junior health and wellness promotion student, as well as a member of the track and field team. He does not see basketball dominating the theme of the arena because its uses are diverse.

The building itself and the other components located within have many uses, according to Bill Haggard, associate vice chancellor for student affairs.

"The academic research and service components are extremely important," Haggard said.

Some students are concerned that a climbing wall is not included in the new facility, because members of the university promised her and other students a climbing wall, according to Gray.

"I was promised a climbing wall during my freshman orientation here," Gray said.

It would be easier if a climbing wall was on campus because it saves the students from making a trip to a downtown facility, according to Ahmad.

"I see our outdoors program and how much of an impact they have on the community, and it seems that a climbing wall would have been appropriate to put in the new facility," Ahmad said.

The university provides students

with transportation to downtown facilities where they can climb, according to Ponder.

"There are available climbing venues in downtown Asheville and in the surrounding areas, both inside and outside," Ponder

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At UNC Asheville, we can never afford to do anything for only one reason.

ANNE PONDER
Chancellor

said.

Students can go downtown to a facility, but climbing downtown is expensive, according to Gray.

"I personally pay a \$10 membership fee and an \$80 fee every three months for an unlimited bouldering pass (climbing without a rope) at the Climax facility," Gray said. "If a person needs full instruction in order to climb, it costs \$35.00 a session."

The reason the climbing wall is not in the new facility is because it is an issue of priority, according to Haggard. The climbing wall is important, but the university and the administrators must make

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ASHLEY GRAY
Senior Student

responsible decisions about how resources are allocated, according

to Haggard.

"I know that what always happens is that the vision for the facility is bigger than the budget," Haggard said.

Another point of tension with students is the role that the student body's voice has played in the building's process, according to Gray.

"Everybody that is involved in this new building is considered a stakeholder, and I believe that one of the stakeholders should be the student body," Gray said.

The more informed students are, the more they have a voice in the process. If administrators had held a forum it would have helped, according to Ahmad.

"I think it saves the problem of students having to figure it out when it is honestly too late to do anything about the plans," Ahmad said.

The university should have done a better job of updating students and faculty about the building, Ponder said.

"If there was one thing that I would have wanted us to do better, it was that we could have updated all of our constituencies more frequently," Ponder said.

However, the building is turning out nicely and will change the life of this university, according to Ponder.

"I imagine with a combination of research, fitness components and multi-purpose spaces that this will be a part of every student's experience here," Ponder said.

The building is turning out just as planned, according to Keith Ray, chair and associate professor of health and wellness.

"I feel like it is even better," Ray said. "We have really started to fine tune the whole project."

LoveFest

Castrovinci said. "We wanted to do something a little catchy."

Castrovinci also hopes to make LoveFest an annual tradition, similar to GreenFest.

For the third consecutive year, condom fairies from PAWS, the peer education program on campus, handed out free condoms. In the past, the activity is always in conjunction with Valentine's Day, and this year the condom fairies were present during LoveFest. This aspect of LoveFest resulted in mixed reactions from students.

To Joe Wilkerson, a sophomore environmental studies student, LoveFest means free condoms.

Though Wilkerson personally does not take offense to the practice of giving out free condoms, he understands the concerns of others.

"Some people might say that giving out free condoms is like giving clean needles to heroin addicts," Wilkerson said. "It's an enabling habit."

For many students, moral values play a role in their objections to

LoveFest.

"There are people who think we need to encourage abstinence until marriage," Wilkerson said. "They feel strongly that by giving condoms to irresponsible teenagers, we're encouraging irresponsible behaviors."

"

It's important at our age to know about condoms and different birth control options.

BOBBI CASTROVINCI
LoveFest Organizer

Randy Cockerell, freshman student does not find LoveFest offensive to his personal beliefs.

"It's something that can't hurt. I mean, it hasn't been a huge presence on the UNC Asheville campus," Cockerell said. "I got a Facebook message from one of the organizers, an offhanded message about it. It's not a bad thing, it's just not a big thing

either."

Other students echoed Cockerell's sentiments, saying that they did not feel very informed about LoveFest.

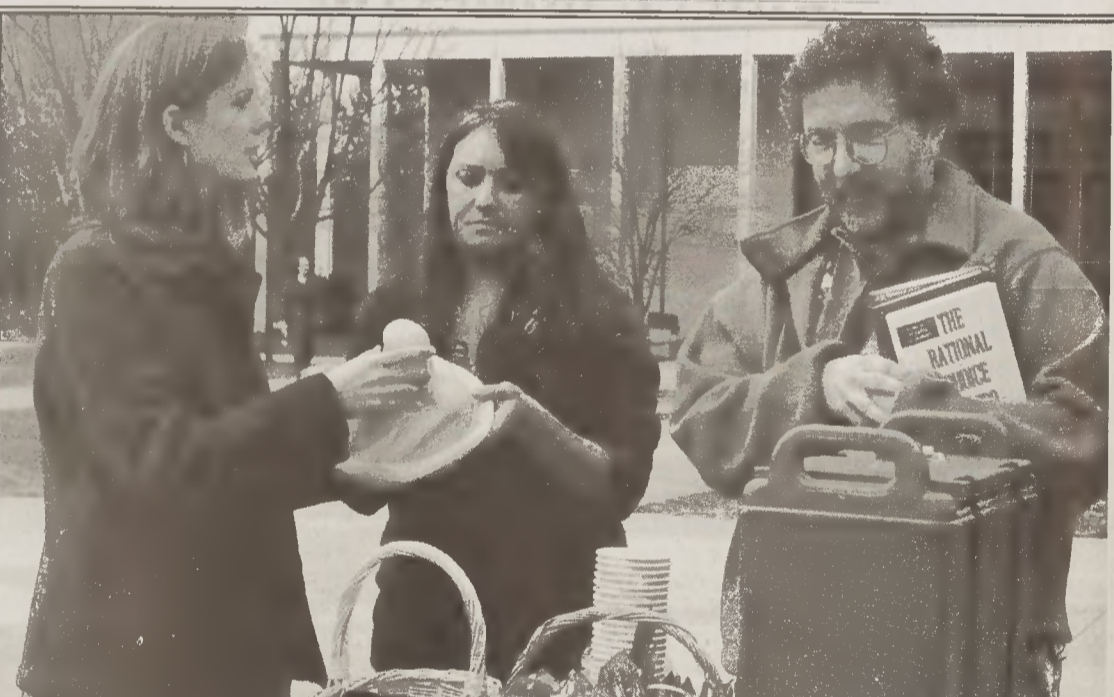
"(Condom fairies) ran by and threw condoms and wished everyone a happy Valentine's Day, and they sat in a booth in Highsmith," said Dylan Moore, freshman student.

Other than that, he did not know much about LoveFest's purpose.

Despite some lack of knowledge about LoveFest, many others showed up to the activities. The various campus organizations who sponsored LoveFest includes SGA, ASIA, GSA, NSCS, UCMC, ASHE and PAWS.

Wilkerson managed to enjoy the fun that LoveFest hoped to present.

"If a fairy handed me a condom, I'd want to have sex with the first thing that walked in front of my eyes," Wilkerson said.



SHANNA ARNEY - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Mass communication students junior Ashley Horne and senior Courtney Willis try to convince Mark West, a mass communication professor, to try on the Jimmy Hat, a condom-shaped hat during the LoveFest kickoff on Monday. SGA members and condom fairies instructed students on how to properly use condoms during the Condom Olympics. Winners of the contest received free pink LoveFest shirts.

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Climate

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

earth's atmosphere, preventing heat from escaping and disrupting natural climate cycles. The problem lies in where these gases come from, she said.

"Our entire society is based on industrial processes that emit greenhouse gas emissions," Singer said. "Our systems of agriculture and manufacturing are extremely oil intensive, as are our systems of transportation, construction and energy production."

Others agree with Singer, saying humans cause much of the known attributions to climate change.

"Emissions of carbon dioxide and methane are very thermally active. They absorb a lot of infrared radiation and keep it in the atmosphere, radiation that would otherwise leak out into space," said Jason Schmeltzer, chemistry lecturer. "Human activities generate a lot of these gasses. The greenhouse effect being

caused by these gasses is very real and pertinent and attributed to humans."

Other factors that contribute to global warming besides humans are not as well known, according to Schmeltzer.

"There could be natural cycles in the Earth's orbit or other terrestrial natural cycles that we as humans don't know anything about," Schmeltzer said. "It has only been in the past several hundred years where we have been taking accurate and reliable measurements."

The rising temperatures affect more than just melting ice. Weather conditions worsen as the planet becomes hotter, according to Schmeltzer.

"More severe weather events like hurricanes and heavier precipitation are thought to be linked to global warming," Schmeltzer said.

The extreme changes in weather

constitute the largest threat, according to Masi.

"Drought in areas like Africa that are already prone to drought is one extreme. The other extreme would be more intense hurricanes," Masi said. "With the drought, you are leading to a problem addressing hunger in the long run."

In 1906, the global average surface temperature spiked from 56 degrees Celsius to 92 in 2005 and the average global sea level rose at a rate of about 3.1 mm per year, from 1993 to 2003, up from about 1.8 mm per year in 1961, according to the IPCC.

Despite the growing consensus on climate change and the dangers around it, many remain opposed to the idea.

"Large and politically-powerful corporations like ExxonMobil have executed a very successful disinformation campaign around global warming, similar to the

efforts of the tobacco industry in questioning the links between smoking and lung cancer," Singer said.

Economic incentives make slowing or stopping global warming difficult, according to Schmeltzer.

"The more industry you have, the more money that can be traded back and forth and more goods and services can be provided," Schmeltzer said. "If that is the cause of global warming, to simply stop on a dime or to even cut back on it on a major scale could lead to economic downfall."

For more information about climate change, visit www.risingtidenorthamerica.com

To read the most recent IPCC global warming report, visit <http://www.ipcc.ch/spm2feb07.pdf>