

Rock the Vote encourages voter participation

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Despite a long trend of low turnout at the polls, a Rock the Vote event at UNC Asheville recruited new young voters, according to event organizers.

"I was so happy, because I think it's really hard to turn people out to events at UNCA," said **Katja Greeson, president of UNCA College Democrats.**

College Democrats and Underdog Productions organized Rock The Vote, which brought prospective voters to the UNCA Quad Oct. 7. Attendees could register and sign cards pledging to vote in the upcoming election. About 35 people registered to vote at the event, according to Greeson.

Several candidates and campaigns running in the election spoke to the audience about the importance of voting and asked for support in November.

"It's encouraging to see young voters get out," said **Patricia Kaufman Young, a district court judge.** "It's encouraging to see young individuals get involved in politics. You are our future."

Also present at the event were representatives for Rep. Heath Shuler, U.S. Senate hopeful Elaine Marshall and several other judicial candidates. In addition to the speeches, the campaigns set up tables with information about the candidates.

"We need you, and the people here in the mountains, to help take this message out across the state," said **Susan Dodson Smith, a former UNCA adjunct professor and spokeswoman for the Marshall campaign.**

An invitation to the event was extended to College Republicans, but the organization did not respond to the offer.

"By inviting the College Republicans, we were opening it up," Greeson said.

The events featured performances from local bands Common Foundation and Bo Diddly. The performances helped draw in a more diverse audience to the event, according to Greeson.

"The tone of the event shifted, which



Sally Garner/staff photographer

Beth Porter, environmental studies student, registers to vote at Rock the Vote. Organizers said 35 people registered to vote at the event. Candidates Patricia Kaufmann Young (bottom left, district court), Susan Fisher (middle, N.C. House) and Steve Cogburn (right, clerk of superior court) spoke at the event.

