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Money talks, UNCW listens

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STAFF WRITER

On Monday Nov. 8, a financial program called "Money Talks" was held in the University Union for all UNCW students. The event was hosted by the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, along with guest speaker Dr. Ed Graham, professor of finance.

The program warned students about monetary concerns after graduation, including the accumulation of debt from student loans and credit cards.

The information provided at "Money Talks" is invaluable for students who have to balance finances and pay tuition. College students are at a very high risk of accumulating debt and tarnishing their credit through loans and credit cards.

Dick Verrone, finance professor at UNCW, warns students, "Credit cards get students in trouble more than any other single aspect of personal finance. Most do not understand the terms and ways a card company can increase the interest rate."

"Students should have one credit card to use in true emergencies.

Multiple credit cards are not a good idea unless the student is really disciplined. Use a debit card instead," Verrone said.

The Nellie Mae Foundation, one of the largest student loan programs in the United States, reported in their 2002-2003 National Student Loan Survey that undergraduate student loan debts have risen 66 percent since 1997, and are averaged at about \$18,900 per student.

Because federal loan amounts have remained primarily consistent for the past decade, students are depending on outside sources of money to pay their tuition and living expenses.

The College Board Foundation reported that in the years 2002-2003, 25 percent of students said they relied on credit cards to help pay their way through college. The College Board also accounts that student loans have once again proven popular among college students, which need not be repaid.

"Make a budget and stick to it. Put aside an amount to save each month, 10-15 percent of your income, and let this be your first monthly 'bill' you pay. If you don't save this each month, your money will quickly disappear without putting aside an amount to save. Build your savings, then invest systematically every month in equity mutual funds," said Verrone.

Students requesting information about personal finances or student loans should contact the Financial Aid Office at 962-3177.



Photo illustration by Nolan Dean | THE SEAHAWK

Many students will find it difficult to pay off loan debts after graduation. The average debt for a college student has risen 66% from 1997 to \$18,900.

Break-ins occur on UNCW campus

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On the morning of Oct. 31, several areas of the Warwick Center were broken into, according to the University Police.

A UNCW employee discovered the break-ins at 1:23 p.m. the same day. The Warwick Center Game Room, Dittos and the Seahawk Grille were all broken into and were found to have items missing.

"One of the building managers came in and found that the safe was gone," Lt. Mitchell Cook of the University Police said.

In all, three safes were stolen, as well as a utility cart, which was taken from the Seahawk Grille. The value of the stolen items totaled \$1,696.

The suspects gained entry to the Warwick Center by breaking windows and prying open doors. Broken windows and doors were found at Dittos, as well as at the other locations.



Dan Hacker | THE SEAHAWK

Three safes were stolen from the Warwick center over Halloween weekend. The Game Room, Seahawk Grille and Dittos were all broken into.

According to Phil Cooney, the associate director of the University Union, the Game Room was closed for two days in order to clean up after the break-ins and reopened on Nov. 3. Currently, the UNCW police are still investigating the case

and have not yet named any suspects.

What would you do? Break-ins like the one at the Warwick Center may leave many wondering what to do if they

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A little different: Non-trads increase

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The week of Nov. 8-12 is Non-Traditional Student Week at UNCW. Non-trads make up about 22 percent of the UNCW student body, up from 12 percent in 1978.

Non-trads are an extremely diverse group according to the Office of the Dean of Students. The non-trad could be a student who enters college a year or more after high school graduation or one who works to support themselves or their families. Non-trads may be married or divorced. They may presently serve in the armed forces. They may be veterans.

Anyone who feels they do not fit the traditional college student

profile is a non-trad.

"It's not a label," said Dana K. McKoy, commuter and non-traditional student services coordinator. "It covers a wide range of our population." Most non-trads are commuters.

On the UNCW campus, the non-trad has a place of his or her own called the Seahawk Perch, located in the Student Union, Room 101. It has an information and help desk and a Non-Trad Room with a television, two computers, a microwave and free coffee.

The information desk is staffed by students and is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Jennifer Reingle, a junior, is working the help desk for a second

year. "It's great. I really enjoy talking with the students," she said.

Reingle also runs the Commuter Coffee Break held there every Wednesday morning. The Coffee Break is hosted by different departments, such as Campus Ministry, Student Recreation, or Health Promotions. Free coffee, tea, donuts and bagels are available.

The Non-Traditional Student Service has been in existence for some years, but it was not until 1999 that it actually had a physical space of its own, the Perch.

"This service originally came into existence because of a need," said assistant dean of students Kate E. Temoney, whose office oversees

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