

Editorials

Phonathon

College wise to 'call' upon students

The first thing you see is a sign that says "Let's Beat the Wake-Forest/Davidson Challenge," on a plain wooden door. Once inside the multi-purpose room in the New Area, you'll see other boosters that say "We're glad you're here" and "Put a smile in your voice," amidst maroon and gold streamers and piles of blue and pink sheets of paper, and phones. At least 20 phones, probably more, that are owned by the college and are being used for Elon's sixth Annual Phonathon, a moneymaking project under the direction of Jerry Tolley.

For many students, a project like a phonathon may seem unclear. At its simplest level, a phonathon is like any other "athon"—a danceathon, for example, or a marathon where someone does something for a long period of time to achieve a certain goal. Much more goes into a phonathon than people will ever see.

Questions like: Who gets telephoned? What do you say to them? How do you say it? Where does the money go? are all logical inquiries. Because the Phonathon is unlike other college moneymakers (PRIDE II, for example, is limited to companies and "friends" of the college) and because it involves heavy participation from present students, it is, I think important that people be aware of the way it works.

In its purest form, the Phonathon is the easiest, most economical way for Elon to raise money. Now in its sixth year, the Phonathon enlists the aid of various campus organizations to call all alumni (both graduates and non-graduates) parents and friends of the college, the latter of which are people that have taken an interest in Elon and make annual donations.

This year's main goal is the Wake Forest/Davidson Challenge I mentioned earlier. That is an incentive to remind students that Elon has a chance to align itself with those two schools in the percentage of alumni who make annual donations to their alma mater.

During the three week period of the Phonathon, up to 11,000 alumni will be telephoned. As every student who has ever worked the Phonathon knows, there are varying degrees of generosity from those

who are called: some refuse, others are undecided and still others gladly agree to pledge anywhere from \$5 to \$500 depending on their history with Elon.

Tolley, who has directed the Phonathon for the last three years, says, "Anytime you call 10,000 alumni, you reach all kinds of people. Someone who flunked out may not be as willing to participate as someone who earned a degree, and others who did flunk out and had a good time while they were here might go ahead and give anyway."

Tolley says that of all the alumni, people who graduated in the 1930s and 1940s give more than people who graduated after those dates. "There is no special area that we contact," says Tolley. "However, most graduates are on the East Coast, especially the Piedmont area of North Carolina."

It may seem as though some student dials the number, asks for a donation and then hangs up. Never.

Long before the Phonathon starts, Elon mails two letters to alumni to ask for money. Depending on their response, another letter goes out in January to let people know about the upcoming phonathon. Once it gets under way, students follow a particular script which asks for a pledge at four different times, in four different ways, during one phone call. Different scripts are given for calls to alumni who were Greeks and members of the Fightin' Christian Club.

Despite all of this preparation, Elon couldn't do it without the help of students. The college should consider itself lucky that students would want to volunteer some of their free evenings (and not so free as well) to do something for the school. Granted, there are freebies and a Spring Break vacation in Florida for the group that raises the most amount of money during the Phonathon.

Aside from all of these "goodies," it is important to remember that students are taking an active part in helping the school raise money—not the administration or someone out of the development office. Overall, if this kind of enthusiasm can be sustained in the years ahead, Elon will have made a wise choice in "installing" this event.

—By Loukia Louka



Student teachers getting money's worth?

Elon currently has 26 education majors in the Alamance County school systems doing their student teaching. Each of these students is paying the normal semester tuition, \$1,700.

Is this fair? These students while learning are providing a service to their respective school systems and as representatives to the college. They are generally in the classrooms by 8 a.m. functioning as an aide or as the full-time teacher.

Each student receives supervi-

sion on various levels. First there is the co-operating teacher to whom the student has been assigned. This teacher receives a small stipend from the college and has the opportunity to register at Elon for the classes necessary to keep certification up to date. Students also are monitored by college faculty members.

True, it costs money to employ teachers as supervisors, but what else are these students receiving for their money? First of all, the operating expenses of the college

must be considered. Behind the scenes, the education department plans training sessions with the co-operating teachers. There are also four seminars that must be planned and executed. The time and expenses add up.

There are basically three different forms of learning experiences: traditional (classroom) study, learning by experience and independent study. On-the-job training is often viewed as the setting in which the student receives the greatest yield from his or her

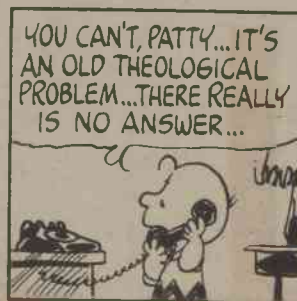
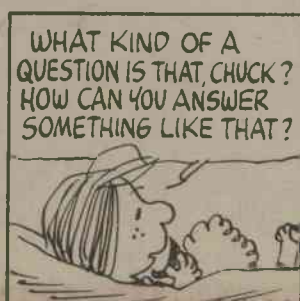
investment in time. Nothing in the traditional classroom can match practical knowledge gained through student teaching. The advantages to the student teaching program seem to far outweigh the sacrifice of a fall tuition.

But must a student pay for this experience? Multiply \$1,700 by 26 and you must have more than enough money to cover the expenses of operating the program.

It all boils down to this: Student teachers are not receiving a very good bargain for their money.

—By Maureen Sweeney

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