

Supply is low but demand is high for cash at CrossRoads

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News Editor and Reporter

CrossRoads, a sexual assault response and resource center, needs the North Carolina legislature to help out with money flow, for both the Latino community and the children's advocacy center in Alamance county.

The Alamance County Children's Advocacy Center is one of North Carolina's 15 Advocacy Centers. Hudson Fuller, executive director, said the center "currently can afford to employ only one advocate to work with the children full-time." Right now there are twin bills, H130 and S328, going through the House and the Senate, and if passed will provide \$50,000 to each of the 15 centers for the fiscal years to July 2005 to June 2006, and 2006 to 2007. To keep track of the progress of the bill, you can go to <http://www.ncleg.net> and type in the bill number.

Alice Bordsen, an Alamance County House Representative, is a co-sponsor of the bill. The CrossRoads Center has only had a \$2,500 non-renewable grant for their work, so if the bill passes, it will have great benefits for the center. "One can only imagine the possibilities to help the Alamance community with several times their original grant amount," Fuller said.

Currently, Erika Reynolds, part-time Latino

“One of the most difficult aspects of my job is not having enough time to feel I'm being effective in my outreach efforts and it has been a bit difficult to approach community leaders in a manner as to convey that CrossRoads is an available resource ...

—Erika Reynolds, Latino outreach coordinator, CrossRoads”

outreach coordinator, and Hudson Fuller, executive director of CrossRoads, are the only Spanish speaking staff members at CrossRoads.

"The best part of my job is interacting with the Hispanic/Latino community. It provides me an opportunity to listen to and see what's going on and learn more about the people I work with," Reynolds said.

Reynolds works 10 hours a week. Her stipend could end this June if the Government Crime Commission does not renew CrossRoads' grant.

Fuller would also like to see the grant extended so that CrossRoads could have a full-time Latino outreach coordinator.

Reynolds "has been able to work with Spanish-speaking clients, attend events, translate materials, and return phone calls ... she allows for direct services," Fuller said.

For both niches of people, CrossRoads helps in the communication process and decreases

anxiety for victims. Fuller said victims' family members are not always reliable for an accurate translation. Also, when a victim files a complaint with the police first, CrossRoads can use their translator, but then the interview is not confidential. This type of environment could potentially limit what the victim is comfortable saying during the interview.

The Children's Advocacy Center in Alamance County helps to alleviate the need for multiple explanations by having officers, social services and doctors located in one, child-friendly environment

Currently, 20 to 26 volunteers are actively working at CrossRoads. CrossRoads gets three to four Spanish phone calls a week, but Fuller thinks the number would increase if more of the Latino community was aware of the options he or she has.

"Currently, there aren't any Spanish speaking volunteers," Fuller said, "This is a problem because if someone calls and they're in crisis

we have to wait for Erika to call them back."

Volunteers who participate in crisis intervention attend 20 hours of training. The training is scheduled about three times a year, and then during the year there is continued training to educate volunteers about new laws and legislation.

"Were there to be more bilingual volunteers, I would like to have active participation on the crisis line," Reynolds said. "I would also like to co-host an event to heighten awareness in the Hispanic/Latino community about the services we offer and about important issues with regards to personal rights that men, women and children have."

"Volunteers don't have to be involved in crisis. They can go into the school systems to speak, or help out in other ways," Fuller said.

Training is not required by law, but is recommended in order to comply with statutes. Trained volunteers have the privilege of holding confidential conversations with victims. They don't have to disclose any information to the state. CrossRoads can be reached at (336) 228-0813.

Contact Krista Naposki and Beth Elmore at pendulum@elon.edu or 278-7247.



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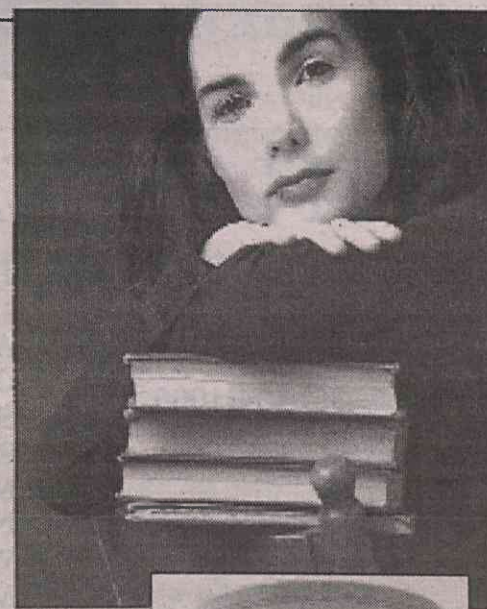
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