

Campus Features

Student Activities staff promotes campus involvement

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Copy Editor

A student walks into the office of student activities and leadership development and asks, "Is there a lost and found here? I lost my computer disk."

Marge Keyes, the office manager, tells her that the official lost and found is at the security office. She gives the student the number to security, offers to let her use the phone, and offers to take the student's name if the disk should pop up.

It's noon on a Thursday. The first-shift student worker packs up her backpack to leave. The phone rings. Keyes gets it in her office.

The office director, Cheryl Jenkins, and the assistant director, Shelly Hoover, are in a meeting.

Another student runs in, requesting her yearbook. After the phone call, Keyes obliges.

The office is bombarded daily with such walk-in requests, but nobody minds.

"I feel it is my job to help the students," Keyes says, smiling. "That's why we're here."

Keyes got her start in business in her home state of New York. After moving to North Carolina and working as a full-time homemaker, she decided to work outside the home.

Keyes was employed by the Department of Public Instruction and also worked at an education lab at RTP before seeing an ad in the newspaper for a position at Meredith. She's been working here for six years.

Shortly, Jenkins and Hoover emerge from their meeting, smiling to greet the student worker.

Another student requests a yearbook. Jenkins smiles, waving both arms upward. "We're the one-stop

shop," she says.

The Office of Student Activities and Leadership Development is a one-stop shop and then some. Not only does it handle the affairs of Meredith's 80 organizations, it deals with various leadership seminars and activities as well.

The office aids organizations in planning their events and oversees all aspects of club needs from fundraising to reserving vans to training officers and faculty advisers. All organization budgets are handled through the office also.

Jenkins and Hoover themselves advise the major campus organizations, such as SGA, MEA, MRA, Senate, and the Programming Board.

Another important area the office deals with is leadership development. The office sponsors the Emerging Leaders Seminar for freshmen and sophomores and the Junior/Senior Leadership Enrichment Series, programs designed to raise students' levels of confidence and knowledge in communication and leadership topics. The office sponsors the Fall Leadership Conference for officers of organizations, as well as Leadership Awards Day.

At the end of the spring semester, the office holds a Presidents' Retreat

for newly-elected organization presidents to orient themselves to the office and each other.

The Presidents' Retreat is one of Jenkins' favorite activities. "You get to know the students you'll be working with," she says. She says they participate in rope courses and activities that are experiential.



The Three Musketeers: Marge Keyes, office manager; Cheryl Jenkins, director; and Shelley Hoover, assistant director.

Staff Photo

Although Keyes does not participate, she adds, "I have seen the camaraderie that's built at the Presidents' Retreat."

As if the above activities weren't enough, the office has started some new things this year. At the new Cate/Park Center, it sponsors the information desk and a dry-erase board of campus activities to alert students to what's going on on campus and to answer their questions. The office also oversees the new game room.

The people at the office are always brewing with new ideas and ways to make Meredith better.

Jenkins is excited about a new

high school leadership conference she and Hoover are doing. "It's the first time we're doing it," she says.

The most difficult part of working in the office, according to Jenkins, is "balancing it all."

Because the office participates in so many capacities, from overseeing organizations to directing seminars to just plain being there for students, things can get a little hectic. Jenkins says, "I love my job; I just wish there were more hours in the day."

Keyes agrees. "I enjoy every minute of it. That's why I hang around so much," she jokes. The women laugh because Keyes is a part-time employee, but that isn't evident by the time she puts in at Meredith.

Jenkins is a take-charge person. She got her start at UNC/CH with a bachelor's degree in speech communications. Then she got a master's degree in education in student development in higher education at NC State. She, too, has been at Meredith for six years, first as assistant director to the office and now as director. Jenkins is a member of the North Carolina College Personnel Association, an organization made up of student affairs professionals across the state, mostly people in higher education who work in student development. This year, Jenkins is president-elect and will serve as

president of the association next year.

Hoover is also a member and serves as leadership consortium chair. Hoover also holds a bachelor's degree in speech communications and another in journalism from the University of Kansas. She worked at the Greensboro Convention and Visitors' Center for a year before returning to get a master's in education in student personnel services at the University of South Carolina at Columbia. This year is her second at Meredith.

"I never thought I'd be in student activities or leadership development. It hooked me," she says.

All three women enjoy their work at Meredith.

Hoover says that "watching the students' development" is rewarding.

"I like seeing students succeed—to see them plan an event from start to finish," says Jenkins.

And Jenkins' favorite campus event? Class Day, without a doubt. Jenkins and Keyes both agree to that. Hoover, on the other hand, shouts, "Cornhuskin'!"

The women want the students to know that they are also a resource center for anyone interested in leadership topics. They have resources available for check-out, including books, cassette tapes, videos, and catalogs. They themselves are resources for any student's questions or concerns.

"We're there for all students, and you don't have to be a big campus leader," Jenkins says.

Hoover nods. She says, "We're always open to ideas from students."

Although things around the office are usually chaotic, Jenkins stresses that "someone is always available" to address a student's concerns.

Keyes says, smiling, "We make time for people. That's why we're here."

STAMAT continued from page 1 . . .

- Academic Advising Support Center
- Financial Aid Counselor-Technical Assistant
- Campus Intranet
- Grants Officer and Major Gifts Director
- Creative Ideas Fund
- Computer Hardware Specialist
- Pay for First Year Experience Instructors
- Evening Counselor
- Commuter and Special Services Director
- Advertising and Promotional Plan
- Student Financial Aid

Although the new programs are approved

for funding, before implementation they must also be approved by the academic council, an elected group of faculty members which establishes academic policy. "Some of the academic programs have not been endorsed by the faculty's academic council," said Taylor. "Both funding and program approval must be in place before an initiative can move forward."

Taylor said that his goal is for Meredith "to define higher education in the 21st century," and he believes that the Stamats recommendations, along with Initiative 2000, are going to do just that.



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