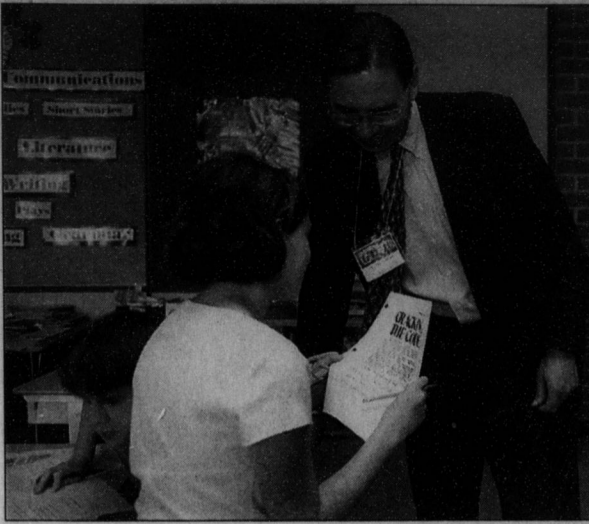


CLASS ACT



DTH/BRENT CLARK

Neil Pedersen, superintendent of Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, substitutes at Grey Culbreth Middle School on Friday. Teachers were able to attend workshops while administrators substituted in the school, alleviating substitute teacher shortages.

# Global Issues Draw Students to UNC

By Brook Corwin  
Staff Writer

The multitude of non-UNC students on campus last Saturday was not limited to N.C. State football fans.

More than 14 out-of-state students from as far as Florida made lengthy drives to spend the weekend at the Students United for a Responsible Global Environment conference held on campus.

Although one student said he was disappointed with the one-sided nature of the conference, most of these visitors said they were pleased with the trip.

"(The trip) was well worth it," said Claire Rumore, a senior sociology and Spanish major from Auburn University in Alabama. "There's great people, good energy and an awesome conference."

Rumore led a group of eight students from Alabama to Chapel Hill this weekend. The group consisted of six Auburn students and two students from the University of Alabama.

The students learned of the conference through an e-mail sent to their history professor by SURGE co-founder Dennis

Markatos. After reading the letter, the group canceled its plans to attend a march for women's rights in Washington, D.C., and headed to Chapel Hill, Rumore said.

Also making an eight-hour drive was a group of six students from the University of Florida. The UF students said a balanced mix between lectures and open discussions made the journey worthwhile.

"Some of the workshops dealt with personal issues of mine, and some were all-encompassing presentations of our movement," said Mary Barbarette, a senior English major at UF.

Both groups said factors other than the workshops added to the appeal of the conference. Several out-of-state students cited the vegan food and the musical performance by the Raging Grannies as particular standouts.

"It wasn't the workshops, or the discussions, or the people or the entertainment that made (the conference) so great, but the combination of them all," said Jason Tompkins, a senior political science major from UF.

Several students from Washington, D.C., also attended the conference.

But not everyone was satisfied with the event. Alabama senior Phil McHugh said he was disappointed to see discussion sessions with titles such as "Biodegradation: Genetically Modified Organisms," and "The United States: Owning up to a Genocidal History."

"When I see titles such as that, I don't expect to be educated as much as indoctrinated," he said. McHugh was further distressed by reading pamphlets passed out at the conference that he said were low on sources and extremely one-sided.

"You have to determine for yourself what is truth and what is not truth," he said. "This bias is counterproductive to what (the conference) stands for."

But after attending workshops Sunday, McHugh said he was less critical of the conference. "The first workshop left me lacking, but the second one

(on alternative careers) I really enjoyed. I felt I was able to add something to it."

Many of the out-of-state students said the knowledge they gained at the SURGE conference could be applied in their own activism. "I'm looking to start my own conference like this, so I've been talking to the conference leaders and getting information," Rumore said.

Adam Clasens, a freshman political science major from UF, said he would be able to find practical applications for the information he had obtained at the conference once he returned home.

"Solar power, Dumpster diving, compost gardening - I have so many resources for things I can use when I get back home."

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WORKSHOPS  
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moted such causes as workers' rights, animal rights and ending the death penalty. SURGE members began planning last semester, trying to show the relationships between a broad range of issues.

"All these issues are brought together here and being worked on in a grassroots way," said Mary Barbarette, a senior from the University of Florida.

UNC senior Todd Pugatch and sophomore Courtney Sproule, who are

involved in United Students Against Sweatshops, ran a workshop titled "The Anti-Sweatshop Struggle and USAS."

The workshop covered how the apparel industry is set up, the role the government plays and how students could start movements at their universities.

UNC has been visible in recent sweatshop-related issues, where protesters succeeded in convincing the University to have dual membership in the Workers Rights Consortium and the Fair Labor Association, two labor monitoring groups.

Jason Tompkins, a senior from UF, said the workshop inspired him. "Coming to

UNC is good because UNC did it," he said. "It's good to come here and see people who were successful."

A workshop also took place regarding the Campaign to End the Death Penalty. It began with a listing of facts on the death penalty and evolved into a round-table discussion about organization and tactics.

During a workshop on civil disobedience, attendees learned different methods for "lock-downs," a protest method where participants chain themselves together or to objects. Linking themselves on the floor of the Great Hall in the Student Union, participants learned to protect sensitive areas

and how to use bicycle locks and PVC pipe in lock-downs.

While education was a primary goal of the workshops, SURGE members also wanted to inspire action. "It's got two parts," Owen said. "Simple education, letting people know what's going on. Once you know what's going on, the next logical question is how to change it."

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POLLS  
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have registered at the two schools. But neither Matthews nor Pettigrew would predict how many would vote. "No one's ever done this before, so it's difficult to predict what the turnout will be," Matthews said.

Matthews said he believes the campus polling site will help the bond referendum's chances.

The No Excuse Voting program is the brainchild of Sen. Eleanor Kinnaird, D-Orange, who said she worked with students and local legislators to pass the bill.

Kinnaird said the law aimed to eliminate confusion about voting. "Students live off campus and they may not know where the polling places are," she said. "It's a great convenience for students."

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PURPOSE  
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kickoff, introducing the conference's central theme. Coordinators said the purpose of the conference was to gather those interested in activism and educate them while discussing potential solutions.

"We're hoping people are going to go to the workshops to be exposed to things they never have before," said coordinator John Johnson.

Johnson said Saturday's workshops were designed to present issues, and Sunday's activities planned action to effect change. "You need to understand how these play off of each other," he said.

SURGE reached out to more people than last year by providing free housing and meals for its participants - amenities donated by SURGE members, churches, and area restaurants like Weaver Street Market and Artist's Escape Cafe.

Organizers said the conference cost about \$11,000, money provided by the Carolina Union Activities Board, student government and various University departments, coordinators said.

Naomi Klein, an activist and journalist from Toronto, gave the keynote speech Friday to launch the conference, speaking out against unjust corporate practices such as sweatshop labor and warning against the growing threat of global corporatization.

The rest of the weekend provided time for participants to contemplate the knowledge they acquired. Dawn Ratcliffe, a worker for a Charlotte-based organic farm, said she came to the SURGE conference to refresh her mind on important issues. "They're all promoting passion and respect for all life," she said.

The conference concluded Sunday with a march for women's rights down Franklin Street, which coincided with other similar marches around the world. Activists toted "Stop Sexual Violence" and "Girl Power" signs while chanting phrases such as "Not the church; not the state! Women will decide our fate!"

After the march, organizers felt they had reached their goal of raising awareness. Coordinator Kristine Soriano said, "The SURGE conference is a place for people to share food for thought to nourish our actions."

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