

'Creek' Hopefuls Flood Durham's South Square

The WB's popular series 'Dawson's Creek' will be filming at Duke to show the characters in college.

By Ashley Williams
Staff Writer

JULY 19 (DURHAM) - "Dawson's Creek" will soon begin filming in Durham, and last weekend 5,000 area residents lined up to audition for the WB's hit show.

As the show's cast prepares for the fall season, some characters will be going off to college. The school scenes take place in Boston, but will be filmed at Duke University.

Fincannon and Associates, a Wilmington-based agency, held an open casting call for extras in the lower-level Belk court of South Square Mall in Durham last Saturday and Sunday.

Although not highly publicized, the casting call received a great response.

"I got here at 10 a.m. and the line was backed up down the mall," said Shannon Deantonio, extras casting director for Fincannon and Associates. "This is a really great turnout."

Deantonio said the agency holds casting calls only when they are working outside the Wilmington area.

As word has spread that the show will be filming in the Durham area, rumors have circulated that "Dawson's Creek" was making a permanent move from Wilmington to Durham.

But Deantonio said the show will be filmed in both Wilmington and Durham.

"They are expanding their territory," Deantonio said. "They are still shooting in sound stages in Wilmington."

While some auditioners came with headshots and mile-long resumes in

hand, others had no prior experience. "I came out because I thought it would be a lot of fun," said Meghan Crawford of Fuquay-Varina.

Fincannon and Associates was looking for a variety of people to fill the extra positions.

"We're looking for all shapes, sizes and ages to build a database," Deantonio said. "Predominantly, we will be using ages 18 to 32 to play people in their college years."

Although extras do not play a prominent role in television shows, they help bring realism.

"They work as background extras, which makes the scene look real," Deantonio said.

The audition consisted of filling out a card with general information such as height and weight, which was then attached to a Polaroid headshot taken by Fincannon & Associates' staff.

Some auditioners took the casting call very seriously, in hopes that becoming a "Dawson's Creek" extra could launch their acting careers.

"You never know who may spot you out and say, 'I want her in my movie,'" said Donna Bass of Durham.

Bass also viewed the casting call as an opportunity for diversity. "There are no black people on the show and I think they need some diversity," she said.

Auditioner Jessica Factor, a Maryland resident, said she has wanted to be an actress since she was 2 years old and thought the casting call was a great opportunity.

Other auditioners simply wanted to meet the show's cast.

"I have been in love with Katie Holmes since the very first episode of the show," said Kyle Payne of Carrboro. "I came hoping to meet her today."

Ashley Williams can be reached at willia30@email.unc.edu.

Local Scouts Lose School Sponsorship

By Ashley Williams
Staff Writer

JULY 5 - Despite the Boy Scouts of America's decision to exclude homosexual members and volunteers, Chapel Hill's troops have not had trouble raising funds and recruiting new members.

But the scouts have lost school sponsorship at two area schools, McDougale Elementary School and Frank Porter Graham Elementary School. They could also lose the financial support they receive from the Triangle United Way.

On June 14, the U.S. Senate approved a proposal by Sen. Jesse Helms directing the U.S. Department of Education to withhold federal money from districts that refuse the Scouts "equal access or a fair opportunity to meet" on school grounds. This follows an October 1999 Supreme Court decision holding that the Boy Scouts can exclude homosexuals.

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro Board of Education voted in Jan. 2001 to withdraw support of the Boy Scouts. "Although the Scouts can no longer meet rent-free on school grounds, we

have offered them the option to rent," said Superintendent Neil Pedersen. "We decided the Boy Scouts would not receive preferential treatment."

"Sponsorship suggests endorsement of the purpose and policy of the group," Pedersen said.

"The Scouts' policy of discrimination against homosexuals is contrary to our policy of not discriminating based on sexual orientation."

The school system is not alone in its reaction to the Scouts' policy.

Mary Williams-Stover, vice president of marketing and communications for the Triangle United Way, which helps fund the Scouts, said a new United Way policy could change their funding.

The board of directors recently reviewed non-discrimination standards that agencies that get funding have to meet. The policy will go into effect in May 2002.

"Funding would terminate in 2003," Williams-Stover said. "The goal is making sure services for people are maintained, regardless of sexual orientation."

Despite local reactions, Director of Field Service Jeff Rock said the Orange County Boy Scouts have had one of

their best years ever in raising new funds and recruiting new members.

"For the most part, the response has been very positive for the Boy Scouts," Rock said.

"I don't think anyone has been anti-scouting. Only one particular church in Chapel Hill felt our policy didn't fit their discrimination policy."

The schools allowed them to contin-

ue meeting until they could find new sponsors.

The two Cub Scout packs now meet at area churches, Rock said.

"Although people don't always agree with our position, they see the benefits in scouting and want to be a part of it."

Ashley Williams can be reached at willia30@email.unc.edu.

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