

Organizations spur voter drive

BY JOHN ZHANG
STAFF WRITER

Student government and a diverse group of student organizations are continuing their efforts this week to register students to vote in Orange County.

The groups — including Young Democrats, the Residence Hall Association and the N.C. Public Interest Research Group — have gone door to door, spoken at residence halls and campaigned in the Pit to encourage voter activism.

Ben Adams, chief of staff for Student Body President Matt Tepper, said about 500 voters have been registered — a total well below student government's goal of 4,000 students.

But Adams stressed that student government's major push will be next week with events at Top of Lenoir, Chase Hall and Polk Place.

These locations were chosen in an attempt to reach a majority of

students.

Adams said he thinks registering 4,000 students is an incredible feat but is feasible with next week's expected turnout.

Events will be held every day of the week.

Members of various government committees will be present at the slated locations to generate interest in student government and to register students to vote.

Student government also will visit students in residence halls and attend club meetings to recruit student voters.

Young Democrats have been leading the charge among student groups.

The organization collected voter registrations at Chase Hall on Monday and will have another event Friday in the Pit.

Justin Guillory, vice president of Young Democrats, said the group had about 200 students registered at press time.

"As more young students participate in the voting process ... the young will have a larger voice in policies."

JUSTIN GUILLORY, VICE PRESIDENT OF YOUNG DEMOCRATS

He said he expected the group to register another 100 to 200 students Monday night.

"As more young students participate in the voting process, politicians will target more campaigning toward the young, and the young will have a larger voice in policies," Guillory said.

RHA also plans to implement programs to educate students on the registration process. Programs will be held in residential communities and should start later this week.

Colin Scott, vice president of RHA, said the group will ask resident assistants to encourage students to register and to vote.

RHA is working with student government and Young Democrats to go door to door in residence halls, spreading the message about the voter registration drive.

Student groups receive 75 cents for every ballot turned in by their organization, but no group can receive more than \$3,000.

Funding was made possible by a grant to student government from the Tennessee-based Bentwood Foundation.

Adams said he encourages students to have their voices heard in elections.

Contact the University Editor
at udesk@unc.edu.

SEARCH

FROM PAGE 3

learn more specifics.

"I am very interested in this position but cannot make a blanket statement until I see what the offer will be," said candidate Bonita Jacobs, vice president for student development at the University of North Texas.

The three candidates said they understand why UNC officials are taking such a long time to finalize a decision.

"It is important to do it right," said candidate Penny Rue, dean of students at the University of Virginia. "It is just a complicated process."

Bruce Roscoe, dean of students at Central Michigan University, said UNC officials informed him from the beginning that the process would last several months.

"They would rather take time and find someone that is a good match rather than jump the gun to have someone on board."

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TEACH-INS

FROM PAGE 3

while they attend the event, and workers will only have a 30-minute lunch break to attend the teach-ins," Bollag said.

Faltering opinion of University administrators among low-wage workers is due to their disregard for equal opportunity — even in light of Honor and Integrity Week — and a main reason for the teach-ins, Brannigan said.

"(There is) a complete lack of honor and integrity by officials in regard to workers."

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NORTHSIDE

FROM PAGE 3

West Rosemary Street and west of North Columbia Street, is the town's largest historically black and working-class community.

The area used to consist mainly of single-family, one-story homes that were owned by the occupants.

But the burgeoning student population has led developers to market rental units toward students. Residents say that this trend has forced many from their homes due to increasing property values and that developments targeting students have diminished the area's charm and uniqueness.

Restrictions placed on new developments and renovations, committee members say, will dissuade property owners from leasing "mini dormitories" and force them to focus on the nontransient demand for houses.

Complaints about the newer developments in the area range from front yards devoted solely to parking instead of green space and homes that occupy the entirety of the lot they sit on. Potential restrictions include a building height limit of 20 feet, a limit of no more than four unrelated persons living in any single unit and a maximum square footage of 2000 feet per home.

Delores Bailey, the committee's chairwoman, said that she is optimistic about the process but that it has proved to be trying.

"We were anticipating that we would be done with the whole process by September," Bailey said. "We've got emotions tied into this; we've got investors tied into this."

Enactment of committee-sponsored restrictions will require council approval.

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GAY MARRIAGE

FROM PAGE 3

Newlin said he knows many couples who want to get married and a few who have had commitment ceremonies or holy unions. Chantelle Fisher-Borne "married" her long-term partner last May on a farm near Asheville.

Fisher-Borne said there are more than 1,000 rights in heterosexual marriage, and she would like to see them granted to gay couples. "It's very important for folks to think about marriage and that there is a big difference between civil and religious marriage."

Though a commitment ceremony has enhanced the relationship of Jim and Evan Ellis-Raymer, the experience has been challenging. They met in 1995 and married four years later at Chapel Hill's Binkley Olin T Memorial Baptist Church.

The union spurred debate, said Evan, a Duke University administrator and former minister. Fred Phelps, Westboro Baptist Church pastor and face of the Web site <http://www.godhatesfags.com>, protested the union. Jimmy Creech, the officiating minister, was tried in Nebraska and defrocked for participating.

"In the beginning, (God) made the male and the female, and those two should be one," said Fred Phelps Jr., a member of his father's church. "There's no biblical basis for (homosexuality)."

The younger Phelps said he has been to all 50 states preaching against homosexuality and gay unions. Members of the church will be at Canada's Parliament Hill in October in support of legislation against gay marriage, he said.

Evan, who was married to a woman for 23 years before he declared his sexuality, said he understands the argument for traditional marriage. "When I got married, I knew I was gay. But in the South then you just weren't gay."

As for the future of same-sex unions, Evan doesn't expect much. "I would rather see us go toward legal recognition — to get the same rights, like tax breaks, because we own things jointly."

Newlin said people who fight for same-sex marriage to be recognized focus on equal rights.

Meditating on fears of expiring visas and other challenges, Ed expressed similar sentiments. "Just because I'm gay, I shouldn't be denied the rights of any person."

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