

# ASG takes on Washington

BY ERIC JOHNSON

ASSISTANT STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

WASHINGTON, D.C. — After two days of meetings with lawmakers and policy advocates, 49 delegates from the UNC Association of Student Governments will return to North Carolina more confident in exercising the association's influence and more aware of its limitations.

"This really is just the beginning," said ASG President Amanda Devore. "We can't just sit on all the information we've gained."

ASG delegates from 14 system campuses visited the offices of North Carolina's congressional representatives and senators Wednesday and spent all of Thursday meeting with officials from higher education advocacy groups.

This was the association's first large-scale lobbying trip to Washington, although Jonathan Ducote, ASG director of federal relations and former ASG president, made periodic trips to the area during the academic year. He did not attend this trip due to illness.

Lois Rice, an expert in higher education finance and a guest schol-

ar with the Brookings Institute, said she was encouraged to see students taking a more active role in the debate at the federal level.

"It seems to me that student groups can play a very, very significant role," she said. "To my knowledge, historically, (students) really weren't in view."

But, Rice added, student groups should consider meeting with the members of Congress who exert the most influence over education policy, and not just those from their home state. "I think their own delegations are not enough," she said.

Matt Owens, federal relations officer for the Association of American Universities, said professional advocacy groups focus their efforts on the leadership of key congressional committees.

"They are the ones who are going to have the first crack at drafting those pieces of legislation," he said.

But Owens, who spoke with ASG delegates on Thursday, added that home state legislators are more likely to listen to student concerns.

"That is who's going to pay the most attention to your voice," he

said. "Those legislators can use that as they are in committee negotiations to say, 'Hey, this is what I'm hearing from my constituents.'"

That was exactly the thought behind the association's decision to meet only with N.C. representatives, said Matt Liles, ASG vice president for legislative affairs.

"You always have more pull when you can say you're a constituent," he said.

The ASG also met with Wilbert Bryant, deputy assistant secretary for higher education programs in the U.S. Department of Education.

Bryant, a presidential appointee, said it was the first time he had been invited to meet with a student association.

ASG delegates pressed Bryant about programs cut out of the White House budget, and he told the group that only a handful were likely to see actual cuts once the budget passes through Congress.

"Stay tuned for those," he said. "It'll be a brutal fight."

Devore said she hopes to see the ASG play a bigger role in that fight in the months and years ahead.

"I think we're breaking some serious ground here in terms of what students are doing."

Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

FROM STAFF REPORTS

■ Carrboro police arrested an 18-year-old student at East Chapel Hill High School at 2:15 p.m. Wednesday and charged him with one count each of common law robbery, conspiracy and obtaining property under false pretenses — all felonies — as well as misdemeanor assault, Carrboro police reports state.

According to reports, Jarmal Antonio Hamm, of 209 N. Graham St., was arrested in connection with a Jan. 14 incident at the Ridgewood Apartments at 404 Jones Ferry Road in Carrboro.

In the incident, a Chanello's Pizza delivery man was robbed in front of Apt. C-15 when delivering a pizza at about 1:30 a.m., reports state.

He was confronted by two suspects wearing black hooded sweatshirts, who claimed to have a knife and robbed him of his pocket money and two pizzas, reports state.

Carrboro police are still following leads on the second suspect.

Hamm was taken to Orange County Jail to be held on a \$5,000 secured bond. He will appear in Orange County District Criminal Court in Hillsborough.

■ An automobile was reported stolen at Crown Honda-Volvo at 1730 N. Fordham Blvd. at 1:50 p.m. Wednesday, Chapel Hill police reports state.

According to reports, the car

## POLICE LOG

was towed to the dealership in November and had been disabled since then. When the owner decided to donate the car to charity, the car could not be found on the lot.

The car, a red 1996 Volvo, was valued at \$4,000, reports state.

■ A Carrboro man was arrested at 2 p.m. Wednesday and charged with possession of schedule I drugs and possession with intent to sell and deliver cocaine, both felonies, Chapel Hill police reports state.

According to reports, Charles Edgar Debose, 40, of 8862 Lake Hogan Farms Road, was arrested at a residence at 605 Airport Road after he was observed in the possession of the drugs.

He was served with an outstanding possession warrant, reports state.

Debose was taken to Orange County Jail to be held on a \$4,500 secured bond. He was set to appear at the first opportunity Thursday in Orange County District Criminal Court in Hillsborough.

■ A Chapel Hill man was arrested at 4 p.m. Wednesday at the Chapel Hill police station, at 828 Airport Road, for assault on a government official and carrying a concealed weapon, Chapel Hill police reports state.

According to reports, Jerry Lee Farrington, 59, also known as Muscledhead, was charged in con-

nection with a Feb. 9 incident. He was taken to Orange County Jail to be held on a \$2,000 secured bond. He will appear Feb. 21 in Orange County District Criminal Court in Hillsborough.

■ A vehicle break-in was reported at 108 Misty Woods Circle at 9 a.m. Wednesday, Chapel Hill police reports.

According to reports, an unknown suspect grabbed the driver's side door near the top and bent it open.

Nothing was reported stolen from the red 2005 Dodge SRT-4, but \$200 in damage was reported.

■ A UNC senior was cited at 1:30 a.m. Thursday for public urination, Chapel Hill police reports state.

According to reports, Brian McSweeney Cassella, 22, of 515 S. Merritt Mill Road C, was observed relieving himself in the parking lot at 202 Henderson St.

Cassella is a staff member of The Daily Tar Heel.

### The Daily Tar Heel

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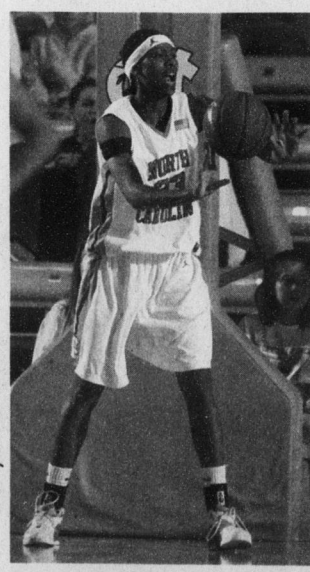
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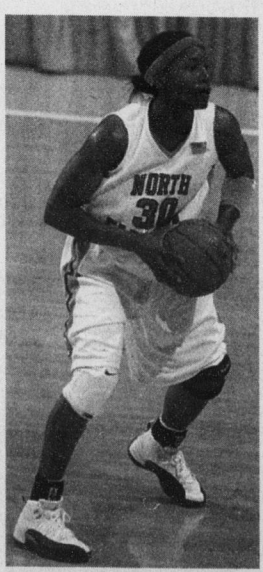
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