

# Race for ASG president UNC could see new college to go uncontested again

BY VICTORIA WILSON  
STAFF WRITER

The race to lead the UNC system's student advocacy group is a lot less crowded than it could have been.

Zach Wynne, two-term student body president at UNC-Wilmington, is set to become the next president of the system's Association of Student Governments.

That's because Jud Watkins, a junior from Appalachian State University who initially had planned to run against Wynne, dropped out of the race in order to focus on his own campus.

It would have been the first contested ASG race in three years. This year's president, Amanda Devore, ran unchallenged — as did her two-term predecessor, Jonathan Ducote.

Wynne said his "outside-the-triangle perspective" will help him develop the ASG into a more credible organization that uses its budget efficiently.

"I want a steady leadership for the group so it can grow itself, so the program we already have become more effective," he said.

Wynne will begin working on his master's degree in public administration at ASU this fall, making him the first student from the university to serve as president after Devore steps down July 1.

He also will be the first ASG

president in seven years who is not a student at UNC-Chapel Hill or N.C. State University.

Wynne's responsibility as ASG president will include serving as chief executive officer of the organization and as a nonvoting member of the system's Board of Governors. He also will meet with members of the N.C. General Assembly and the system's president, Molly Broad, to lobby for student interests.

But a challenge for Wynne and many delegates in the association is the distance from their homes to Raleigh. "It's definitely going to be the biggest hill to climb," he said, adding that he plans to hold conference calls and conduct regular trips to the capital.

Ducote said the most important aspect of the president's job is working with state government officials in Raleigh. He added that since Wynne has an understanding of state and university policy, he will be able to contribute to the organization.

"He has experience with university issues," Ducote said. "I also think that Zach has always (had) a good ability to work with the General Assembly. He understands the General Assembly and he understands how to move things to that body."

In addition to his voice at the capital, Wynne said, he wants universities in the Triangle to help make sure

the ASG has a voice in Raleigh.

Another obstacle will be smoothing out what some say are strained relations between UNC-Chapel Hill and the association.

Several ASG members — particularly those on the Council of Student Body Presidents — voiced concern last semester that UNC-CH's involvement in the group has dropped off considerably.

SBP Matt Calabria sent a letter in the fall to the council filled with suggestions to improve the association's efficiency, saying he viewed the ASG as a "weak confederation" of student governments participating on a volunteer basis.

And in this year's student body president campaign, candidate Tom Jensen advocated for the University to pull out from the ASG.

But Wynne said the relationship between the association and the University should be smooth.

"I already have a good relationship with (UNC-CH Student Body President-elect) Seth Dearmin," he said. "We're going to keep more schools in this year, and people are going to be more excited."

Staff Writer  
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contributed to this article.  
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BY ALEX ROBINSON  
STAFF WRITER

With the passing of a bill that would establish a judicial college at UNC, officials said the University could better meet the needs of North Carolina's judicial system.

Sen. Walter Dalton, D-Rutherford, introduced a bill last week that would establish a judicial college at the University. The new program would offer continuing education classes for judges, clerks of superior court, magistrates and others who support judicial officials.

Judges also could attend the college for the mandatory 30 hours of instruction needed every two years to maintain their positions.

"Here at the school, we've long been involved in training for judges and court officials in North Carolina," said Tom Thornburg, senior associate dean at the School of Government.

"We are the primary provider of training. Over time, we've come to think that judicial officials are needing more training than we are able to provide with current funding."

The bill would procure the School of Government nearly

\$1,162,530 during the 2005-07 fiscal years, with \$250,000 of that coming from the general fund of the UNC-system Board of Governors.

The additional funds would allow for the hiring of core personnel and start-up operations.

"Judges are being sent out of state for judicial training, which could have been taught right here," said Phil Baddour, a N.C. lawyer who supports the bill.

"We are just scratching the surface of what those possibilities are."

If passed, the bill will go into effect July 1.

Dalton introduced the bill to promote the Judicial Branch Education Study Committee's vision that all judicial branch personnel receive the training and education needed to excel in providing justice.

The vision is a result of an 18-month study by the committee, in which members examined the current system of providing judicial branch education.

Classes at the college would mimic the format of those now taught at the School of Government and School of Law.

Jim Drennan, professor at the School of Government, teaches a

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PHIL BADDOUR, N.C. LAWYER

seminar on N.C. law, which has served as an archetype for the bill.

The seminar invites court practitioners, prosecutors and defense lawyers for discussion of past court cases.

"It's a luxury that judges don't typically have," he said.

"Each group brings something to the table, and each group learns different things from the process."

Baddour said the new college would prove to be an asset to the University and the state.

"We want to have the very best judges," Baddour said.

"The goal is to select high-quality judges, and then we have to equip them with the best education we can provide."

Contact the University Editor  
at udesk@unc.edu.

# Gymnasts move to Regional

FROM WIRE REPORTS

INDIANAPOLIS — The North Carolina gymnastics team will compete in the 2005 NCAA Southeast Regional Championships on April 9 in Gainesville, Fla., NCAA officials announced Monday.

The Tar Heels qualified for the meet for the fourth consecutive year after winning their second East Atlantic Gymnastics League Championship on Friday at N.C. State.

Six teams, five all-around competitors (who are not on a qualifying team) and one individual event specialist per event were named to each of the six regions: West, North Central, South Central, Central, Northeast and Southeast.

The top two teams and the top two all-around competitors (who

are not on an advancing team) from each regional will receive an automatic berth to the national championships in Auburn, Ala., on April 21 to 23. In addition, event winners at the regional championships will advance to the national championships (in that event only) if they are not part of a qualifying team or the all-around qualifiers.

UNC has never qualified as a team for the NCAA championships.

North Carolina came within the closest margin possible of advancing to the 2004 nationals when Tar Heels placed third, .025 points behind second-place Nebraska at regionals.

The year before, UNC came within .05 points of runner-up Florida, just barely missing the

national qualification.

North Carolina junior Courtney Bumpers advanced to the national finals both years as a result of her all-around performances at regionals. She placed fourth on balance beam in 2003 and won a share of the floor exercise title in 2004, tying with Alabama's Ashley Miles.

This year, the Tar Heels will be the fourth seed at the Southeast Regional, behind nationally ranked No. 5 Georgia, No. 7 Florida and No. 17 Denver. The Tar Heels jumped from No. 29 to No. 25 in this week's national poll on <http://www.trooster.com> after winning the EAGL.

West Virginia and N.C. State round out the schools that will head to Gainesville for Southeast Regional action.

# County to enter Sportsplex talks

BY SAM SHEPARD  
STAFF WRITER

County officials hope to accomplish two long-term goals with the purchase of the Triangle Sportsplex in Hillsborough.

The Orange County Board of Commissioners said Thursday that they will begin negotiations later this week to purchase the property — the site of several swimming pools and an ice-skating rink.

"We're really out to try and get something knocked out in the next few months," Assistant County Manager Rod Visser said Monday.

County officials intend to continue to use the site for recreational needs and as a potential location for a new senior center.

Visser said he hopes to reach an agreement in the next two to six months with owner Eaton Vance Distributors Inc., a Boston-based financial firm that seeks \$6 million for the property.

"For right now, they're interested, we're interested and that's what we are trying to focus on," he said.

He said the county managers will meet with an Eaton Vance representative to begin preliminary negotiations this week.

Eaton Vance built the Sportsplex nine years ago.

Since then, the corporation has owned and operated the building while guaranteeing public use of the facilities to all county residents for \$400,000 per year — a deal that expires this month.

"We're operating out of rented, inadequate space," said Commissioner Barry Jacobs. "A county purchase would put it under more efficient management."

The Sportsplex purchase would help the commissioners' goal of constructing two new senior centers, Visser said.

He said the county has estimated that it would be more cost-efficient to build one of the new senior centers on the Sportsplex property.

"(The need for a senior center) definitely got us thinking about how the Sportsplex might appear more valuable to us."

In 2001, the county voted on a bond referendum allocating \$2 million for each new senior center — one in the southern part of the county and the second in the central and northern part, said Commissioner Alice Gordon.

The proposed senior center at the Sportsplex would serve the needs of the central and northern areas of the county.

"This is something that's going to happen; it's just the logistics of it that remain," she said. "It takes some time to get everything in place."

Visser said cost efficiency seems to be a major issue driving the purchase forward.

But some issues still need to be smoothed out before the two parties can reach an agreement.

Visser said that while the building seems to be in good shape, the heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems need repair, as the structure is almost a decade old.

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at citydesk@unc.edu.

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