

Local initiative promotes alternative transit usage

BY ANTONIO VELARDE
STAFF WRITER

Cumbersome bus guides, obscure bicycle laws, countless transit Web pages — University students certainly have transportation options, but sorting through them is another thing.

Partnering with other area transit authorities and UNC-system schools, the Triangle Transit Authority initiated a year-long campaign last month designed to get college students interested in alternative transportation.

Titled "Redefine the Way You Travel," the campaign uses a Web site, RedefineTravel.org, and various advertisements to show how students can bike, carpool or ride public transportation to reach common destinations.

"I think it's sort of a quantum leap," said Carrboro Planning Board Chairman James Carnahan.

Carnahan said that the initiative should complement Car Free Day, an area initiative to promote alternative transportation in the area, scheduled for Thursday.

Working with the University and N.C. State University, area transit authorities, as well as representa-

TRAVEL TIPS

- Students can bike, carpool, take public transit or walk.
- Visit www.redefinetravel.org for more information.

tives from Shaw and N.C. Central universities, the TTA is using print and radio advertisements to direct students at all four institutions to the project's Web site.

For students trying to reach common destinations like The Streets at Southpoint in Durham or Southern Village, the site features information about bus routes and transit services that can be used.

The site also lists N.C. bicycle laws and bicycle safety tips for those who would rather fit a little more exercise into their daily routines.

And for anyone interested in starting a carpool, the site also has a section on how to start and maintain one.

The TTA started the campaign, which began planning in May and launched Aug. 17, to expand its services to those who do not normally use the transit system, said intern and University senior Jennifer

Mallory.

Mallory, who helped design the campaign for the TTA over the summer with another student from N.C. State, said the campaign will eventually include other advertising ideas.

One such idea, Mallory said, would be a "Ticket for a Ticket" program that would place Web site advertisement on parking tickets.

"It's called guerilla marketing," she said.

Other ideas would include working with student apartment complexes to create a carpool, Mallory added.

For now, campaign planners are setting up information kiosks and are scheduling bus tours at each of the institutions, with the University's bus tour scheduled for Oct. 1.

Patrick McDonough, TTA transit service planner, said the program would likely benefit more than just students.

"We've got a little bit of everybody riding," he said.

Those interested in taking the bus tour can e-mail Mallory at jmallory@ridetta.org.

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

Program creates safe haven

BY KATHERINE EVANS
STAFF WRITER

Students affected by sexual assault and relationship violence soon will be able to confide in faculty and staff equipped to handle difficult issues.

Women's centers at Duke University and UNC are sharing resources to launch the Helping Advocate Violence Ending Now program. The program, also sponsored by the UNC Dean of Students office, will train faculty and staff to help these students.

Funded by the Robertson Scholars Collaboration Fund, the initiative will tap into faculty and staff interactions with students. Organizers said affected students normally begin to seek support only when academic performance begins to suffer.

"Interpersonal violence and relational violence affect academic performance," said Chimi Boyd, assistant director of the Carolina Women's Center. "Faculty and staff are in a unique position to notice changing in performance."

The schools will hold separate

training sessions that cover the basics of sexual and relationship violence, as well as ways that faculty and staff can guide students.

UNC Assistant Dean of Students Melinda Manning and Jean Leonard, sexual assault support services coordinator at Duke, will teach the sessions.

The first UNC training session is from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. Sept. 28 in Union 2518A.

After completing the training, UNC participants will have a sign on their offices marking them as "safe places." More sessions are planned for the rest of the year.

The purpose of the sessions are two-fold, Manning said.

The first objective simply is to educate the faculty and staff about the problem of sexual assault. But the sessions, and the resulting "safe places," also should help serve affected students more effectively, she said.

"Students feel more comfortable talking to faculty and staff that they already know," Manning said.

Last year, 30 cases of sexual assault were reported on campus,

Manning said, and reports of relationship violence and stalking are filed on a weekly basis.

"They're all too common," she said.

Next semester, students can participate in HAVEN by taking a class on gender violence offered through C-START — a program that allows undergraduates to create and teach their own courses.

"We'll examine violence from a cultural perspective," said UNC junior Lindsay Johnson, who will be teaching the course.

UNC organizers said they plan to train students in the spring.

The goal of any initiative, Leonard said, is to make violence awareness a part of everyday life.

"By having this network of staff and faculty and students who are knowledgeable about the complex issues, it may allow for different conversations in different and unexpected places on campus," she said.

"It's about changing campus climate."

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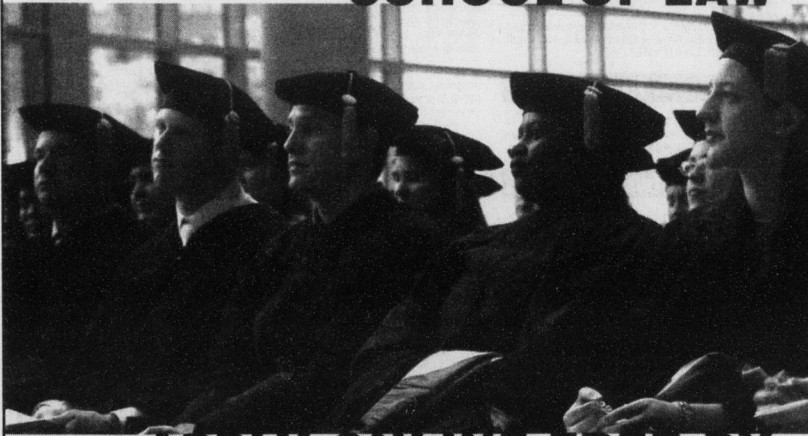
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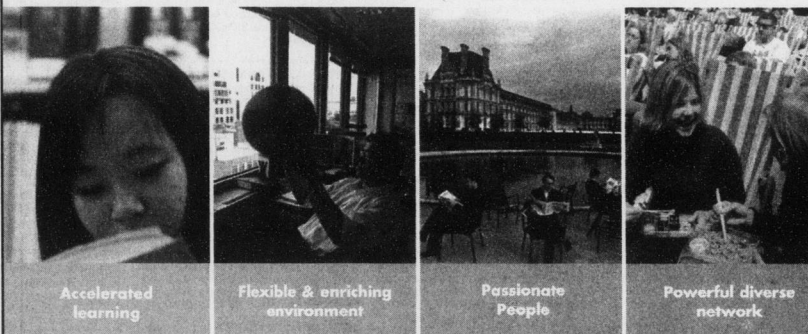
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