

# Students fast to share experience

BY JESSICA GIBSON  
STAFF WRITER

The call to prayer and a desire to help the hungry summoned about 90 people to the Hanes Art Center Thursday night to take part in a feast to break their daylong fast.

The meal celebrated the end of the fast-a-thon, organized by the Muslim Students Association as part of Islamic Awareness Week.

For every student who pledged to fast, local businesses and private donors will contribute more money toward feeding the hungry in the area.

All proceeds raised from the fast-a-thon will go to the local charity, the Inter-Faith Council for Social Service.

Muslims are celebrating the holy month of Ramadan, and they fast each day from sunup to sundown. Members of MSA said they hoped the fast-a-thon will help dispel stereotypes by educating non-Muslims about the practices of Islam.

"A lot of people have misconcep-

tions about our faith," said freshman Fahmida Azad, a member of MSA.

The fast-a-thon was part of MSA members' weeklong efforts to educate the campus about Muslim culture.

MSA members have been in the Pit throughout the week, answering students' questions and trying to break down misconceptions. They said the fast was one way others could relate to the Muslim experience.

"It lets people get a glimpse of what it's like when Muslims fast," said sophomore Arif Kahn, outreach co-coordinator for MSA.

Some people said they found similarities between Islam and their own religions during this period of reflection.

"I've never fasted before," said Quentin Read, a freshman. "I was raised Catholic, and I've always given up things for Lent so I decided to try this."

As one of the five pillars of Islam, fasting is an important part of the Islamic religion, MSA members

said at the event.

It is a method of self-purification and self-restraint and also allows one to empathize with those who are less fortunate, they said.

Fasters were encouraged to think about others who were less fortunate than themselves during the day.

Ihab Saad, professor of construction management for East Carolina University and speaker for the night, said he believes people are called to help each other.

"We are one big family," he said.

While the fast-a-thon raised money to benefit those in the local area, there are more than 1 billion people in the world who suffer from hunger and malnutrition, MSA members said at the celebration feast.

There is a saying that you should give until it hurts, but Saad said he disagrees with this philosophy.

"You must give until it doesn't hurt and you enjoy it," he said.

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## MIERS

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William Marshall, a professor in the UNC School of Law, said her withdrawal was precipitated by the news of her personal finances.

He said that Miers' reason likely was a cover and that it was the accumulated pressure that led her to withdraw.

England said that because Miers' experience primarily comes from her work in the executive branch, her nomination gave rise to this issue.

"It's a credit to Miers that she recognized this and decided not to force this conflict on the two branches," he said.

"She's prevented what probably would have been a real serious issue between the president and Congress."

## SPEAKER

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excel in some form of academia or humanitarian efforts.

"We also look at whether the person would be willing to speak for free," Allred said. "That ends up eliminating a lot of people."

Previous speakers include Erskine Bowles, who recently was named president of the UNC system, and entertainer Bill Cosby.

Whisnant said that he and Senior Class Vice President Jenny Peddycord solicited input from seniors and that almost half the recommendation list came from student suggestions.

But Whisnant noted that it can be difficult to find someone who appeals to graduates, families and the University community.

"I think that's something we always struggle with," he said. "The senior class always feels as though this is the day for them. But Commencement is really a University celebration for everyone."

Dearmin said he is confident that whoever is selected will possess attributes desirable to all audiences.

"We're going to get someone that seniors will like and that others will like as well."

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He added that in order to function effectively, the executive branch must have a strong privilege.

The withdrawal could have serious implications for Supreme Court cases, with Justice Sandra Day O'Connor remaining on the bench until a replacement can be named.

"One of the ironies of this case is that the right-wing conservatives that are disenchanting with O'Connor have her deciding in (cases)," said Glenn Smith, law professor for the California Western School of Law.

Smith said that O'Connor is known for being a justice who is less predictable and less staunch on certain issues and that Miers might have been more consistent.

Bush now faces the challenge of finding another nominee. He said

he will make a choice in a timely manner.

"His next nominee will be tougher for him," said Michael Gerhardt, a professor in the UNC School of Law. He added that Bush must decide whether to appease the right wing with his next selection.

Marshall said reaction to the next nominee likely will be divided more along party lines because right-wing disapproval increases the legitimacy of any left-wing protests.

Smith said he hopes the next nominee will reflect a wider scope for the future of the court and its decisions.

"There are bigger stakes involved here than getting a partisan advantage," he said.

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## MARKET

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to fruition.

"This is exactly what we envisioned," he said. "People are excited, everybody's been happy with the turnout."

Although Dearmin wasn't involved in the market's initial planning, once he became aware of the center's work, his administration aided in publicity and helped recruit volunteers.

"I've heard no complaints and a lot of positive feedback," he said.

Emily Ingram, a volunteer at the market who is a member of the Student Environmental Action Coalition, said it is ongoing work to try to get local and organic foods served in campus dining halls.

And Jeff Ledbetter, a CDS manager, said the event was geared to

promote locally grown fare.

"A lot of the things we offer here are made and prepared here," he said. Locally grown items at the market were identified by signs.

But some students said they weren't satisfied with the amount of local fare offered.

Manju Rajendran, who bought a pumpkin pie, said she thought local sellers were not well-represented.

"I really like the idea of having a real farmers' market that supports small farms, where all proceeds go directly to the people who prepare the food," she said.

"I feel like we could do better than having a fake farmers' market," Rajendran said.

"But the pie is good."

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## DEARMIN

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to take a look at diversity and equity by working to "make sure that all departments are responding well to the needs of LGBTQ students."

"That sounds nice," Rimbach said. "But what our community needs at Carolina is a concrete list of specific changes that can be made to protect the rights that are not awarded to queers on campus."

Rimbach said adding a gender identity clause to the University's nondiscrimination policy is the most important issue to the LGBTQ community.

"(Student Body Vice President Adrian Johnston) has taken that issue back to the chancellor," Dearmin said.

Also important is publicizing the benefits that same-sex faculty partners at the University receive and focusing on community and classroom safety, Rimbach said.

Dearmin's entire campaign staff was Safe Zone-trained, and he said he now is working on training for everyone in student government.

Dearmin also said he hopes the addition of a male and female Greek representative to his cabinet will provide a greater voice in student government for the Greek community.

"Which is huge," said Kit MacLean, president of the Panhellenic Council. "We've been trying to be a part of student government and campus life for a really long time."

She said Dearmin attends all policy-making meetings regarding changes to the Greek system and is working to integrate the Greek judicial board with the Honor Court.

"I see him out," MacLean said. "I know he goes to the spaghetti dinners, cookouts and 5Ks that support the community."

From the housing vantage point, reworking the technology interface involved with the recontracting process also was at the top of Dearmin's to-do list.

"The committee recontracting recommendations to this date make it look very different from how it was last year," said Rick Bradley, assistant director of information and communication for housing and residential education.

While the significant changes have not yet been approved, Dearmin's involvement has been well-received.

"He appointed four student government representatives to the housing advisory board," Bradley said.

"It's very helpful to have students at that level that are involved."

Dearmin's executive staff is in the process of scheduling, and divvying up, meetings with some 40 student organizations.

"On the whole, we want more feedback from groups across the board," Dearmin said.

"We need a lot of change to the face of student government so people will buy into this organization."

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## DOWNTOWN

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maintain Carrboro's unique look and feel, the current board passed multiple zoning requirements, such as the downtown neighborhood protection district overlay zone, that give the aldermen more oversight on development projects.

The overlay zone sets the maximum height of buildings in downtown at two stories or 35 feet. If a project goes above that, the developers must get a conditional-use

permit, requiring them to come before the aldermen for approval.

It's another step in the often long process that happens even before any construction can begin.

But not everyone thinks building heights alone will do the trick in giving Carrboro the kind of buildings the aldermen want to see.

Mark Chilton, current alderman and mayoral candidate, said the board only reviews projects with property size exceeding one acre or developments that might stand too tall.

"In (a business zone) like downtown, that's almost meaningless," Chilton said.

Instead, the trigger for a conditional-use permit could be building square footage, Chilton said.

Carnahan said he doesn't want the town to make every developer come before the aldermen.

"Developers view us as difficult," he said. "It would behoove us to be clear about what we want."

When asked for examples of what the town does want, Chilton and others point to Weaver Street Market, with its open green that has become a gathering place.

Doubling commercial space will ease the tax burden on residents, but improving downtown shouldn't be a purely economic priority, said David Marshall, an alderman hopeful.

"It's about quality of life," he said. "It's about making life better for all of the town's residents."

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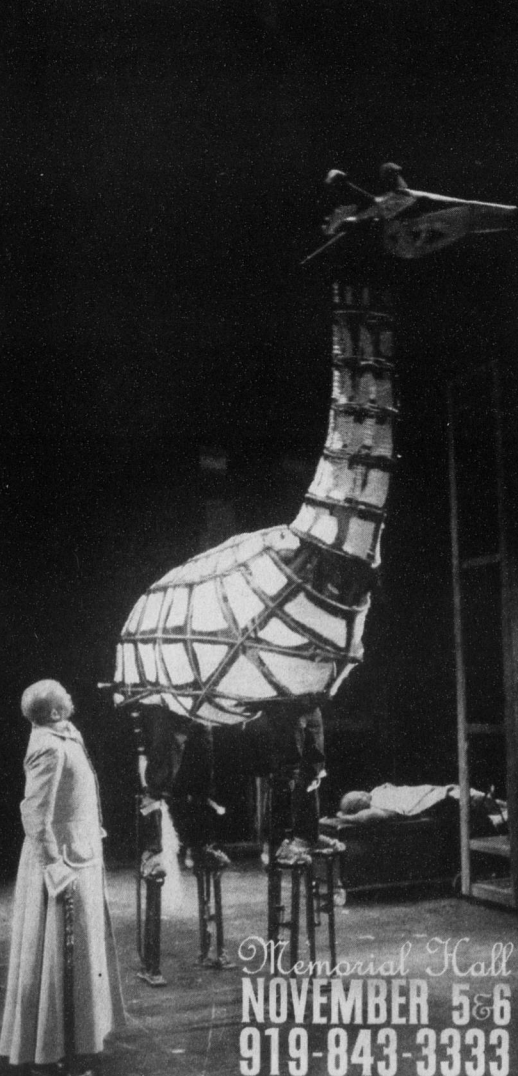


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