

# Mentoring program seeks volunteers

BY JEFF WOODALL  
STAFF WRITER

Through a local mentoring program, Andrew Teras has gained a new perspective on the community. Teras, a business school student, mentors an 11-year-old in the Blue Ribbon Mentor-Advocate Program.

through the program," he said. "It's a great reward and a chance to learn about the local flavor and what's going on in Chapel Hill."

The program working with students in Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools is looking for volunteers.

A new group of volunteers received training earlier this month and have begun their work

with students.

It is a nationally recognized, comprehensive support program that was founded in 1995. The program helps young black and Latino students reach their full academic potential.

Blue Ribbon coordinator Graig Meyer said volunteering is an opportunity for students and adults to give children guidance and make long-term relationships.

ships.

Alecia Slade, a graduate student in social work, does a variety of activities with the fifth-grade student she mentors.

"We have made cookies together, gone window shopping at the mall and played games at her house," Slade said.

"Basically, we do whatever she would like to do."

These simple activities, Slade explained, are the ways through which she has built a strong relationship with her student.

Rather than solely focusing on academics, Blue Ribbon tries to build relationships that will result in personal growth for both the mentor and the child. Personal connections are emphasized.

The children start the program in fourth grade, and 100 percent have gone to education past high school, he said.

"Over 90 percent of our mentor relationships go past the first two years, and 60 percent of the students keep the same mentor all the way through college," Meyer said.

Applicants must be at least 21 years old. Many UNC graduate students have volunteered and found it a very rewarding experience, Meyer said.

To be a volunteer mentor, an applicant must be willing to give a two-year commitment to Blue Ribbon.

Other commitments include two hours a week one-on-one with the mentee and performing other advocacy activities run by Blue Ribbon.

But Slade said she did face some struggles early in the process that she warned might be experienced by other new volunteers.

"Sometimes they can be a little shy, so getting to know them and finding out things about them at first is better than trying to be a super-mentor," she said.

"We started out small, making cookies, and now she is assertive and confident in our relationship."

Contact the City Editor at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).



Chancellor James Moeser receives a plaque from Peace Corps Deputy Director Judy Olsen for UNC alumni participation in the Peace Corps.

# UNC ranks fourth in Peace Corps volunteers

BY ANDREW RYAN COSGROVE  
STAFF WRITER

This year UNC moved up to No. 4 on the list of current Peace Corps volunteers at large universities.

Since the beginning of the Peace Corps in 1961, 1,012 UNC alumni have volunteered for the organization, making it the 25th university on the list of all-time volunteer producers.

"This is such an honor for the University because large universities fight for these positions," Peace Corps Deputy Director Judy Olsen said.

UNC has 81 alumni currently volunteering for Peace Corps abroad. Olsen praised UNC for its efforts to send alumni abroad to volunteer in countries that need assistance.

"I think one of the biggest reasons why UNC students want to join the Peace Corps is because the University emphasizes services," said Liz Kane, Peace Corps campus recruiter. "Students really want to give back."

Peace Corps is now at a 37-year high with more than 8,000 volunteers abroad.

Since 1961, more than 190,000 volunteers have helped promote a better understanding between Americans and the people of the 139 countries where volunteers have served.

"I think the reason is people are more aware of what is going on in the world, and they want to share who they are as an American," Olsen said.

And though many say the program is rewarding, the work can be

difficult at times, and some volunteers come to see that their help is not always wanted.

So, before sitting down to fill out the application, there are several factors to consider, as not everyone is cut out for the job, said Patrick Smith, who worked in Ecuador.

"You really have to weigh your ability to step outside your comfort zone because it is not an easy experience, but it is worthwhile," he said.

It is important to be able to communicate with people from all different cultures, said Elena Lebetkin, because you have to relate to them while you are there.

"When I was in Ghana during my first week a woman stopped me and asked who I was. I explained why I was there, and then she took me to her home and we had lunch," she said.

"This really emphasized how welcoming the community was while I was there."

Kane said the best way to realize the level of work is to learn from those who have done it. Prospective applicants should step into the shoes of those who have volunteered for the Peace Corps.

"If you are thinking about applying, you really should read the testimonials or talk with students that have gone to work for the Peace Corps because you need to know if you would be the type of person that would enjoy this work."

Contact the University Editor at [udesk@unc.edu](mailto:udesk@unc.edu).

## National and World News

FROM THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

### McCain travels to Iraq to seek facts

BAGHDAD (AP) — Sen. John McCain, the likely Republican presidential nominee, arrived in Baghdad on Sunday for a visit with Iraqi and U.S. diplomatic and military officials.

Before leaving the United States, McCain, one of the foremost proponents of the March 2003 U.S.-led invasion, said the trip to the Middle East and Europe was for fact-finding purposes, not a campaign photo opportunity. But he expressed public worries that militants in Iraq might try to influence the November election.

### Pelosi's remarks support Obama

WASHINGTON, D.C. (AP) — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi says it would be damaging to the Democratic Party for its leaders to buck the will of national convention delegates picked in primaries and caucuses, a declaration that gives a boost to Sen. Barack Obama.

Her remarks seemed to suggest she was prepared to cast her ballot at the convention in favor of the candidate who emerges from the primary season with the most pledged delegates.

### N.Y. lieutenant governor prepares for office in wake of Spitzer resignation

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — As Eliot Spitzer departs the governor's office in disgrace, his replacement will face political challenges in place long before the prostitution scandal that paralyzed the state Capitol.

Lt. Gov. David Paterson will try to heal bruised relations with lawmakers in both parties who were offended by Spitzer's confrontational leadership style. He also faces a tight budget in a slowing economy and memories of divisive issues from Spitzer's less than 15-month tenure.

Spitzer stepped down amid

a call-girl scandal that made a mockery of his straight-arrow image and left him facing the prospect of criminal charges and perhaps disbarment.

Patterson plans to meet with lawmakers on Monday to lay out his positions and any revisions to Spitzer's budget, which faces an April 1 deadline.

Spitzer resigned Wednesday, making an announcement without securing a plea bargain with federal prosecutors, though a law enforcement official said the former governor was still believed to be negotiating one.

### Dalai Lama calls for investigation

BEIJING (AP) — The Dalai Lama called Sunday for an international investigation into China's crackdown against protesters in Tibet, which he said is facing a "cultural genocide" and where his exiled government said 80 people were killed in the violence.

Along with 80 killed, some 72 people were injured in the protests, said Thubten Samphel, a spokesman for the exiles. China's state media said 10 people died.

Meanwhile, hundreds of armed police and soldiers patrolled the streets of Lhasa two days after Tibetans torched buildings and stoned Chinese residents.

### Troops could soon see 4,000th death

BAGHDAD (AP) — Sometime soon, the U.S. military will suffer the 4,000th death of the war in Iraq.

Analysts say the 4,000 dead, while an arbitrary marker, could inject the war debate back into the campaign season, particularly with the war's fifth anniversary Thursday. Or, with overall violence lower in Iraq, the milestone could pass with far less public discussion than in past years.

Last year was the deadliest for American troops in Iraq, with 901 troops killed. As of Sunday, at least 3,988 Americans have died in Iraq.

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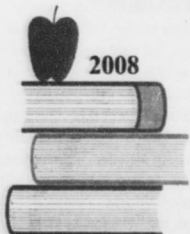
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