

Raynor researches town homelessness

Officials: Change is a large task

BY SARAH FRIER
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

Student Body President J.J. Raynor said she knows she won't be able to end homelessness in Orange County during her term.

But she's been researching the issue and familiarizing herself with community initiatives. She said she plans to boost student involvement and meet with community leaders.

"So many students feel directly connected to the issue," Raynor said. "It's about being a responsible, caring and engaged neighbor, and it's so much larger than what you see on the street."

There were 224 homeless people in Orange County, 71 of whom were chronically homeless, at the time of a 2007 survey by the Orange County Community Initiative to End Homelessness.

"Change is not something the students can do alone; it's not something the community can do alone," said Chris Moran, director of the Inter-Faith Council for Social Service. "We need to bring

"Change is not something the students can do alone, it's not something the community can do alone."

CHRIS MORAN, DIRECTOR OF THE INTER-FAITH COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE

forces together."

Liz Parham, executive director of the Downtown Partnership, said she supports Raynor's plans to educate students about the issue.

"Many of the initiatives out there ... all take volunteers and commitment and time," Parham said. "I think that raising awareness is essential."

Former Student Body President Eve Carson's administration encouraged students to donate to the Real Change from Spare Change program after a student government study found that 86.8 percent of students said they would be more likely to give panhandlers money if they knew where it was going.

And now Raynor's team is in the process of evaluating what worked and what didn't.

"We really need to sit down and say, 'OK, we had T-shirts sold and wrist bands. Was it successful?'" Raynor said. "And then we can beef up the student body outreach."

Junior Chris Belhorn, who served on Carson's homelessness task force and now is co-chairman of Raynor's public service

and advocacy committee, said he appreciates Raynor's commitment to researching to understand the issue fully before taking action.

Raynor said she has started brainstorming with Chapel Hill Mayor Kevin Foy about how to use resources to reopen conversations about homelessness.

Many student groups have already become involved, and Carson Dean, coordinator for the Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness, said the student body president should tap into the resources she already has.

The Campus Y organized an overnight stay in boxes last month to raise awareness about poverty.

And IFC's partnership with student groups, such as N.C. Hillel, allows them to keep their Carrboro building open two nights a week.

"Students carry weight, they're passionate, and they have more time to make a difference," Belhorn said. "The student body president sets the tone."

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

Group elects leadership, takes care of old business

BY KELLEN MOORE
STAFF WRITER

Student Congress' finance committee named a vice chairman to help lead the largely rookie group and blazed easily through two more objectives at its first official meeting Tuesday.

After two members refused nominations for vice chairman, freshman Joe Levin-Manning was unanimously elected to the post. The freshman from Raleigh seeking a double major in peace, war and defense and public policy will serve alongside chairman Mike Morrill.

The vice chairman presides over meetings if the chairman cannot, records meeting minutes and takes roll.

"I originally ran for chair, so I'm excited to be vice chair," Levin-Manning said. "It's going to be a very awesome year."

And although Morrill said he doesn't yet know the members well, he expressed confidence that Levin-Manning will be a good fit.

"I have no reason to think he won't do a good job," Morrill said. "He obviously wants to take a big role in the finance committee, and I think vice-chair is a good place

"I think he just kind of forgot about the bills. It was a chaotic time, so it's understandable."

MIKE MORRILL, STUDENT CONGRESS FINANCE CHAIRMAN, ON FORMER STUDENT BODY VICE PRESIDENT MIKE TARRANT

for him right now." The committee also took care of some unfinished business from the 89th Student Congress, which concluded April 2.

The committee recommended passing bills awarding funds ranging from \$20 to \$1,100 to six student organizations.

The committee and Congress approved the appropriations bills once before, but they were not signed into effect by former Student Body Vice President Mike Tarrant, who needed to sign in lieu of former Student Body President Eve Carson.

When Tarrant's term ended and the bills remained unsigned, they were automatically vetoed.

"I think he just kind of forgot about the bills," Morrill said. "It was a chaotic time, so it's understandable."

Although funds already have been

awarded to the six organizations, they must be reapproved and signed by Student Body President J.J. Raynor before becoming official.

The committee also reapproved Congress' annual budget of about \$322,000.

The meeting concluded with a unanimous approval of reimbursements for 22 candidates who ran for student government positions.

The reimbursement totaled \$1,730.88, with more than half of the money going toward the three candidates for student body president.

All candidates are reimbursed to a limit for money spent campaigning, a process that ensures that more affluent candidates don't have an advantage, Morrill said.

The committee next will meet in the fall.

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

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