

**COVENANT**

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“We got lucky because we read the tea leaves correctly with what was likely to happen with public funding,” said Shirley Ort, associate provost and director for scholarships and student aid, who is widely credited for the Covenant’s start.

It was the increase that let the program succeed, she said. She even originally called it the Carolina Compact because she was unsure of the legal implications of the word covenant.

It was Moeser, she said, who insisted on coining the program as it is — making it a clearer, stronger promise to low-income families.

“I was delighted because I never thought it would get past the attorneys,” Ort said.

But as more low-income students apply to college, it could put pressure on the program.

The number of Carolina Covenant scholars increased to 413 in 2006 from 224 in 2004.

Part of that increase stems from UNC widening the program’s eligibility. In 2004 students whose families lived at 150 percent of the poverty line qualified, but in 2005 that threshold was raised to 200 percent. The total number of Covenant scholars in 2005 was 352.

Combined with the growing numbers of Covenant scholars, state financial aid is leveling off.

“We would all be happy if they just don’t cut them,” Ort said, noting that she does not expect the state legislature to do so.

To counter any possible shift in government money, UNC has focused on raising private funds.

The University reached its goal last year of \$10 million in private funds and has launched another campaign to double that.

Much of the institutional — money from areas such as trademark and licensing — and private funds sit in an endowment as

reserves.

“We’ve been serious about raising endowment money ... to make sure the Covenant is on solid footing,” Moeser said.

**‘More than just the money’**

As more students have entered UNC as Covenant scholars, the program also has increased its support services.

“Now they have a community, and it’s so easy to network with Covenant scholars,” Shaw said. “Everything that I would have changed they’re working on now.”

The program now includes a peer mentoring system and a special orientation at C-TOPS.

Ort said these programs help take down some of the barriers to success.

“We know from a lot of studies that it’s more than just the money,” she said.

To further improve the program, UNC hired Research Triangle Institute in March to complete a study about the Covenant. The report should be finished in about a year.

The report will look at how the Covenant can do more to encourage and enable low-income people to apply to UNC, Ort said.

“Typically those families that most need to understand that there’s money there for them are least likely to know it’s there,” Ort said.

Now that the first class is graduating, the RTI also can compare graduation rates of Covenant scholars against a cohort of 2003 students from low-income families.

Shaw said it has been exciting to watch the Covenant transition to a more comprehensive, inclusive program.

“Every day I come to school, and it’s not just coming to school. It’s a gift that Carolina gave me.”

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

**WASTE**

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“If the neighborhood where it’s sited decides to contest it, we can condemn it by eminent domain and keep working, and it’ll go through the courts,” Commissioner Chairman Barry Jacobs said.

“So we would prefer not to use eminent domain. We’d prefer to find a willing seller.”

Olver Inc., the company charged with helping commissioners through the process, is finalizing exclusionary criteria that eliminates a huge portion of the county from consideration.

They are developing specific criteria that will take matters of social justice into account.

“It’s an important community element from the standpoint that everybody is treated economically and fairly in any type of process,” said Bob Sallach, Olver president and the senior project manager.

The Environmental Protection Agency has set out specific guidelines for the siting of waste sites to avoid the disproportionate clustering in low-income and minority neighborhoods.

“The kind that are overburdened should be protected from over-exasperation,” said Mathy Stanislaus, chairman of the Waste Transfer Station Working Group for the National Environmental Justice Action Council.

“Under civil rights protection you have to look beyond the basic factors if there is going to be a racial consequence of your action.”

The EPA recommends setting up a community advisory panel in the process with members of all affected communities, spokeswoman Roxanne Smith said in an e-mail.

“Communities need to address clustering and zoning issues at the local level through comprehensive planning that considers the aggregate effects of clustering certain activities and the equity in sharing community burdens,” she said.

Orange County has not taken the step of forming such a panel, but they are moving away from what started as a more informal process.

Olver has had several public information sessions to hear community input and protest.

A map of the socioeconomic and racial makeup of Orange County shows that the landfill is clearly located in a predominantly African-American and relatively poor neighborhood.

The Orange County Landfill has been off Eubanks Road since 1972, and would seem an ideal site for the transfer station after it closes in the coming years. The county already owns the land and it is just off major roadways, which are necessary for the 18-wheelers that will take the trash to another county.

But Jacobs said the landfill site is likely to be excluded by the environmental justice criteria, although a formal process has to exclude it.

The commissioners are crunched to find a site as the landfill is expected to fill up by around 2011.

Sallach expects to have a recommended site in front of the board by November, despite recent delays in picking criteria.

The process is expected to take another 36 months after a final site is picked.

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

**SPRINGFEST**

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done to alter LDOC’s traditions.

LDOC, which was Wednesday at Duke, is notorious for attracting student alcohol use on campus and low class attendance, said Vincent Ling, the programming director for major attractions with the Duke University Union.

This year, LDOC featured performances by Third Eye Blind and The Roots. Ling said the entire event cost about \$140,000 and was funded primarily by student activity fees.

With SpringFest’s history in mind, Gurdian said one of CUAB’s goals for the event was to promote a relaxed

and fun environment for students to spend time together. Subsequently, the Lot Party was created to precede the concert.

The party will feature an art show where student works will be for sale, a caged dodgeball tournament, a barbecue and performances by student groups.

“When I first got involved with SpringFest, CUAB (representatives) made it seem like they wanted more than just one show that would cost a lot of money,” Gurdian said. “They wanted it to be a day of fun where people can spend time with other people in different situations.”

Contact the Arts Editor at [artsdesk@unc.edu](mailto:artsdesk@unc.edu).

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