

# Tumultuous year ends in close election

## New leader says ASG will unify

BY OLIVIA BOWLER  
STAFF WRITER

The UNC-system Association of Student Governments wrapped up the already controversial 2007-08 school year with yet another bang.

By a margin of one vote, Greg Doucette and Ashley Yopp claimed victory last Saturday as the newest ASG president and vice president.

The vote, which was originally 22-21 in favor of the Doucette-Yopp ticket, was brought to a tie when East Carolina University Student Body President Keri Brockett successfully challenged the legality of one of ECU's own delegates.

An N.C. State University delegate was also questioned, but chairman Thomas Brigman of Appalachian State University didn't uphold the challenge. Brigman's vote broke the tie.

Chase Matson, a UNC-Chapel Hill ASG delegate who ran against Doucette in the recent election, said he thinks the process was just.

"I think it was fair, handled in the best manner possible," he said.

But Yopp said she thought Brockett challenged the ECU delegate in an attempt to keep her

from gaining the vice presidency — leaving questions about how unified the organization will be.

The last elected ASG president, Cole Jones, was nearly unanimously elected in 2007 despite his pending assault charge.

"He assured everybody that it would be dealt with very quickly," said Cody Grasty, Jones' vice president who assumed the presidency last October.

After Jones' Aug. 1 conviction, many assumed that he would quietly vacate his post. However, he chose to appeal the decision.

The two-month waiting game was ended only when Jones submitted his resignation letter in October.

"It was like we slammed into a ditch," Grasty said. "A lot of our skeletons in the closet came out at that time."

Grasty, who said he never wanted to be president in the first place, was faced with picking up the pieces of a fragmented organization.

"There was a lot of confusion and miscommunication," he said. "There were angry people; there were a lot of bad vibes."

Grasty said that he took some time off after being sworn in as president and that in retrospect he feels that he dropped the ball.

"I'm not calling the rest of the



ASG President-elect **Greg Doucette**, of N.C. State, says he has plans for serving UNC-system students.

year a success," he said. "In fact, I'm saying that I failed miserably."

But Grasty did say he was proud that he kept the organization together. "We came from the worst possible situation ever to at least a level of maintaining."

Doucette said his plans for the association involve repairing its damaged reputation and increasing communication.

"There's going to be a focus on empowering students in a way that the association hasn't in the past three years," he said.

He said that he has talked with students from UNC-Charlotte and UNC-Asheville and that he thinks they will return delegates to the ASG next year.

UNC-C withdrew in September after the organization passed a vote of no confidence in Jones and failed to pass an interim budget, and Asheville withdrew in spring 2007, citing inefficiency.

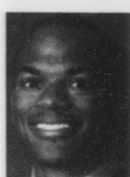
Doucette also said he wants to work with UNC-system General

Administration to hold down tuition, adding that it affected him personally when he had to drop out of N.C. State in 2000 for financial reasons.

"I'm in a position finally to hopefully help those people."

The budget, which cost UNC-system students \$190,000 in fees last year, is arguably the most contested aspect of ASG.

The General Administration implemented in January a screen-



Former ASG President **Cole Jones** resigned several months after a conviction for assault.

ing process for the organization's spending.

To remedy budget ailments, Doucette said he plans on estab-

lishing a Web site at which students can offer creative ideas about how ASG should spend the money.

"I want it to be a straight-up feedback thing."

Despite the rocky year, Grasty said he is confident that the organization will succeed. "The organization has no where to go but up."

Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

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