

UNC may get scholarship for veteran students

Would provide small stipend

BY ANDREA MARCHIANO
STAFF WRITER

The transition from soldier to student might become a little easier if a scholarship plan from the Carolina Veterans Organization comes to fruition.

Carolina Gives Back, a scholarship for new and transfer students, would be the first scholarship for veterans at UNC, providing a small amount of money for two semesters.

But the symbolic value of the gift means more than the monetary one, said Brian Cox, director of Carolina Veterans Organization, creator of the scholarship and veteran of the Iraq war.

"A lot of people would say things like, 'Thanks for your service,' but I wished there was something more I could do other than say thank you," Cox said.

"I started thinking of tangible ways people could thank veterans for their service."

Cox said he hopes to provide all veterans entering UNC with \$150 to \$200 for each of their first two semesters. Any service member will be eligible, not just those who have been deployed.

More than 250 students at UNC already receive veterans' aid. Most benefits from the GI Bill of Rights, which provides money to veterans, service members and some dependents of disabled or deceased veterans who want to pursue an education.

But no special veterans' scholarships or aid programs are available through the University as of yet, Dan Thornton, associate director

of the Office of Scholarships and Student Aid, said in an e-mail.

Because the Carolina Gives Back scholarship would be the first of its kind at UNC, Cox said, he thinks it will serve as a model for other universities to support their veterans.

"The general idea of the community coming together and having a way to thank veterans in the community will be something that catches on once word gets around," he said.

One way Cox said he hopes to bring attention to the scholarship is through its first fundraiser, a 5K race on Nov. 11, Veterans Day.

"Having it on Veterans Day will really help to get the word out," he said.

Although the scholarship will not become official for several weeks, many veterans on campus already have shown support for the idea.

"All veterans at UNC would do everything they could to get this effort off the ground," said Jeff Jackson, a third-year law student.

Jackson, a current National Guard soldier, served in Afghanistan from 2005 to 2006.

"Even though we wouldn't benefit from it, it would help future veterans, and that's worth our time."

Jackson and Cox said emphasizing the gesture of the scholarship was most important.

"Even the smallest signs of gratitude are the ones you remember years later. It's relatively small amount of money, but it has the potential to mean a lot to somebody."

Staff writer Cassandra Ayars contributed reporting. Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

Tourney raises funds 'fore' the kids

BY ANDREW HARRELL
STAFF WRITER

At first glance Friday, The Preserve at Jordan Lake looked like a typical golf club on a beautiful fall day: men with tucked-in shirts and Titleist hats and golf pros demonstrating the proper swing.

And then there was the ram mascot in a football jersey pretending to steal somebody's boxed lunch.

That's how the UNC Dance Marathon Homecoming Golf Classic does golf, this time for the third year running.

"It's the only time of the year when the radio's blaring and Rameses is out here," said Mike Meyer, a professional golfer at the Preserve, which has hosted the Classic since its inception.

The number of participants made a big jump between the first and second years of the tournament, but this year's turnout of 67 players was about the same as the last one.

"With the economy as it is, it was hard to get people out," said Kate Gillam, the alumni relations chairwoman for Dance Marathon.

Gillam said they "don't look at the numbers," and couldn't say how much money the event raised or what portion of Dance Marathon's money it made up. Each entrant paid \$100.

"We just focus on making a good tournament and making sure people have fun so they'll be back next year," she said.

The tournament started as an effort to attract a new type of donor to the program and expand Dance Marathon's fundraiser base. It takes place around Homecoming weekend to appeal to UNC alumni.

And Dance Marathon officials said there's hope that future tournaments will cater specifically to Dance Marathon alumni.

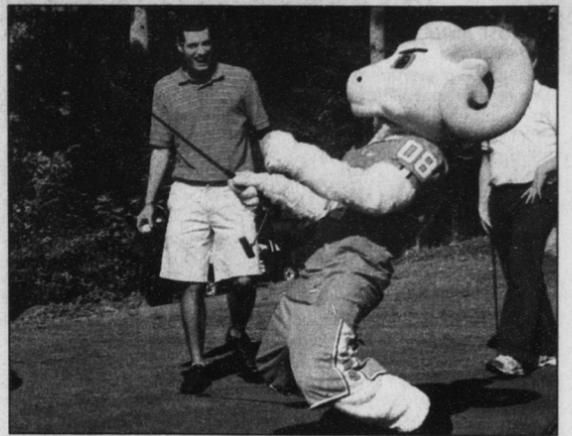
"As Dance Marathon has grown, we've grown in the way we've been able to help the parents and families," said Samuel Lau, Dance Marathon's publicity chair.

This is the 11th year for Dance Marathon, a group that organizes events year-round to raise funds for the N.C. Children's Hospital and facilitate student interaction with the patients and families.

Dance Marathon raised a record \$321,938 last year.

Erik Schuchard and Jay Zapko, two former club golf team members who participated in the first tournament as students, have returned both years since then as alumni.

They said they had to drive a couple hours to make the tournament, but they wouldn't have made the same effort for the 24-hour



DTH/CODEY JOHNSTON
UNC mascot Rameses reacts to missing a putt at the third annual UNC Dance Marathon Homecoming Golf Classic as Matthew Elliot looks on.

marathon. The team of four that they competed with ended up winning the tournament.

Ray Killian of Charlotte decided to play in the tournament with his son, a UNC student and contributor to Dance Marathon.

"It's a tremendous cause," Killian said. "It's good that the students have taken an interest in this." Asked what professional golfer he

would like to see showing his moves at the February Dance Marathon, Killian named Tiger Woods.

And what song would Woods be dancing to?

"I don't know," Killian said. "It would have something to do with winning."

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

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