

Time for Accountability. Time for Results.



**University of North Carolina  
Association of Student Governments**

Candidates:

**T. Greg Doucette**  
*Speaker Pro Tempore*

Candidate for President

**Ashley M. Yopp**  
*Senior Vice President*

Candidate for Senior Vice President

The clock is ticking...

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April 19, 2008

Delegates of the UNC Association of Student Governments  
c/o Mr. Cody Grasty, President  
127 W Hargett Street Suite 300  
Raleigh, NC 27601

**Re: The clock is ticking...**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is an honor to present to you "The Clock is Ticking...", our platform and vision for the 37th session of the UNC Association of Student Governments.

But first let's be honest with each other: this Association is running out of time.

We're running out of time to demonstrate our maturity to each other following a steady stream of disrespect, walkouts, resignations and withdrawals. We're running out of time to prove our responsibility to the UNC General Administration following scandal after scandal (after scandal). Most significantly, we're running out of time to justify our relevance to the students we represent following years of complacency.

The Association isn't broken. We stand upon a years-old legacy built by our predecessors, student leaders who invested hours upon hours of their time creating this institution and entrusting it to our care to use as a tool for ensuring the students' voices are heard.

We need to prove their trust wasn't misplaced. This Association doesn't need reform -- it needs a new direction. It needs all of us to recognize how dangerously close we are to losing the very institution we comprise. And it needs fresh, bold and decisive leadership.

The time has come: it's time for accountability, and it's time for results.

The clock is ticking...

With warm regards,

T. Greg Doucette  
ASG Speaker Pro Tempore  
Candidate for ASG President

Ashley M. Yopp  
ASG Senior Vice President

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# Part I

## Charting a New Direction

## **SEVENTEEN STRONG**

Over the past few years an elitist attitude has developed within the Association, an inexplicable belief that the campuses that fund it and act as its voting members are somehow inferior and subservient to the Association they comprise. This unjustified arrogance is the root cause of the walkout by HBCUs two years ago, the withdrawal last year of UNC Asheville and this year of UNC Charlotte, and the general ineffectiveness that had set the Association on a path to self-destruction.

It's time we candidly recognize that an Association without members isn't really an Association at all. It's time we finally have an Association that is truly seventeen strong.

The central focus of the Doucette/Yopp administration – including this platform – is to permanently break this Association belief of entitlement and replace it with a spirit of service. Instead of trying to remind campuses that “they need us” (a direct quote from one of this year's committee chairmen), we need to be reminding campuses that they don't really need us at all – the Association exists to serve them, not the other way around. And every policy and program by the Association should have that fundamental reality in mind.

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## **REBUILDING THE INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

The Association was created as a clearinghouse for ideas, tactics and information to be shared among all the schools in the UNC system. That central purpose of the Association has been buried and lost as delegations over the last three years have instead tried to force state-wide consensus on issues where consensus simply doesn't exist.

In addition to other reforms covered later in this platform, we will rebuild this information exchange by returning campus updates and campus-to-campus interaction to the forefront of Association policy. If NC A&T State is planning to start a large-scale voter mobilization program, it should be able to hit up UNC Asheville for thoughts on potential pitfalls to avoid. If ECU needs pointers on how to conduct ethical elections, it should have the Elections Commissions of all the other UNC schools at its fingertips to get suggestions. And if UNC Wilmington or UNC Greensboro or UNC Charlotte want a football team, they should be able to lean on the experiences of UNC Pembroke for strategies to make it happen.

Access to information is the best way to empower everyone. And empowering everyone is the only way to strengthen the Association.

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## **COMPREHENSIVE WEBSITE WITH SGIMS INTEGRATION**

Minimal record-keeping. Late agendas and legislation. Delegation members that seem to be determined by the political equivalent of “musical chairs.” These are just a few of the current practices destroying the integrity and effectiveness of the Association that can be fixed with a little technology.

Wash Creek Software, a North Carolina-based software consulting company founded by a former UNCASG delegate, produces a database-driven software package known as SGIMS (the Student Government Information Management System). This package has been used by the NC State Student Government for nearly 10 years and has been critical in taking the actions and activities of the Student Government and putting them at the fingertips of the students it represents.

To learn more about SGIMS, you can visit the Wash Creek page at:

<http://www.washcreek.com/sgims/>

And to see a real-world implementation of the system, you can visit the NC State Student Senate page at:

<http://students.ncsu.edu/senate/>

In addition to licensing the SGIMS package to improve the backend workflow of the Association, we will also hire a professional web development team to completely revitalize the frontend of our website and make it a useful destination for students and delegates alike.

Transparency and efficiency are twin goals the Association will need to meet next year, and a comprehensive website is one of the avenues to achieving them.

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## **LOCAL LEGISLATION**

In terms of institutional history and needs, the UNC system is among the most diverse in the nation. Small schools such as UNC Asheville have different needs than large schools like UNC Chapel Hill. HBCUs like Winston-Salem State have different needs than PWIs like Appalachian State. Land-grant institutions like NC A&T State and NC State have different needs to serve their unique missions, and as a residential high school our newest member – the NC School of Science and Mathematics – has different needs to serve its unique 100% non-college-student constituency.

The State of North Carolina has similar issues, and to address them the North Carolina General Assembly adopted the concept of “local bills.” When legislation establishes a law exclusively for a certain municipality or county, it is introduced in the form of a “local bill” and enacted unless there is overwhelming objection from the rest of the chamber.

While the notion of any legislature having a good idea might seem like a non sequitur, the Association should take a lesson from the General Assembly and adopt the same process.

With your help, we will amend the Association's governing documents to establish local legislation. If a potential resolution impacts only one campus – for example, if Elizabeth City State needs special flexibility in terms of setting tuition rates to accommodate growth – it can be introduced with the signatures of the four delegates from that institution and will be automatically adopted by the consent of the Association unless objected to by a three-fourths supermajority of the General Assembly.

The Association exists to serve all 17 of its constituent institutions. With local legislation among the Association's policy options, we can empower every campus to have its issues addressed at a statewide level.

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### **FULL WEEKEND MEETINGS**

For years the Association conducted its meetings over an entire weekend. The structure varied over time, but generally included all or part of the following:

- Friday night: brief introductory session of the General Assembly to introduce guests and new legislation, followed by various social events
- Saturday morning: committees meet to discuss referred legislation and other ideas
- Saturday afternoon: General Assembly session to consider legislation reported by committee
- Saturday late afternoon: committee work period to generate new ideas or begin implementing adopted policies
- Saturday evening: General Assembly session to consider any remaining issues and campus reports
- Saturday night: dinner with guest speaker, followed by various social events
- Sunday morning: optional working breakfast from 9:00am until campuses depart

The practice of full-weekend meetings was abandoned three years ago to “cut costs,” but the students represented by the Association have paid a steep price in the process: dramatically reduced productivity by the people who claim to represent them.

Nothing can adequately replace the effectiveness of delegates working together in person and freely exchanging their respective ideas. And when delegations are spending more time traveling to a meeting than they are actually \*meeting\*, they're less inclined to show up in the first place.

We will ensure the Association provides the funding for campuses to participate in full-weekend meetings – a few extra hours of delegates' time once a month is a small price to pay for the students, and it will yield tangible results.

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## **TIERED TRAVEL WITH UNCW KICKOFF AND UP-FRONT FUNDING**

A long-standing tradition of the Association has been to hold its meetings at a different host campus each month. This gives the particular campus additional exposure, and it also helps reaffirm the Association's core mission that its responsibility is to serve all of its constituent members no matter where they are located.

But this important tradition is eroded when meetings routinely lack quorum because individual delegations didn't have the funding or the time to commit to the journey.

We will implement two specific solutions to address this problem based on suggestions from delegates this year. The first reform is to set each of the 17 constituent institutions into tiers based on their distance from the state capital; here is a sample set of tiers based on data from Google Maps:

Tier A (0-75 miles from the NCGA)	Tier B (76-150 miles from the NCGA)	Tier C (151+ miles from the NCGA)
NCSU (3 miles) NCCU (29 miles) NCSSM (31 miles) UNCCH (32 miles) FSU (64 miles)	NCAT (80 miles) UNCG (82 miles) ECU (83 miles) UNCP (97 miles) NCSA (108 miles) WSSU (109 miles) UNCW (126 miles)	UNCC (163 miles) ECSU (167 miles) ASU (193 miles) UNCA (251 miles) WCU (301 miles)

To start each session with a spirit of purpose and collegiality, the first meeting would be a beach kickoff at UNC Wilmington in August.

To ensure quorum and adequate competition during nominations and elections of UNCASG officers, the last two meetings of each session would be held at Tier A institutions.

To fill the Association's historical goal of meeting at outlying campuses, the December Council of Student Body Presidents meeting and at least one regular meeting of each session would be held at Tier C institutions.

Additional requirements or restrictions could be made by the General Assembly.

In addition, we will work with UNC General Administration to find a way to provide up-front funding to campuses to ensure they can afford to attend meetings. Travel grants, third-party vehicle rentals, or some other means must be put into place so we never have a campus go unrepresented due to a lack of funding.

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## **CLEANING HOUSE:** **OPEN MEETINGS, OPEN BUDGETS AND OPEN GOVERNANCE**

US Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis, in his book *Other People's Money*, wrote “Publicity is justly commended as a remedy for social and industrial diseases. Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants...” With constituent institutions, students, campus newspapers and state legislators all calling for the Association to “clean up its act,” that maxim should be taken to heart and the Association’s business should be thrust into the public spotlight.

The first step of this process has already taken place: with the help of several campuses, in January the Association’s governing documents were amended to force every constituent committee and group to abide by North Carolina’s Open Meetings Law. We will take this momentum to the next level by working to expand attendance at every Association meeting, with more guests, more regular students, and more University officials.

Budget transparency is the next obligation the Association owes to the students it represents. If elected we will ensure the entire Association budget is posted online for public inspection. More importantly, we will also have each line item contain a link to online images of every single receipt and invoice showing what was spent out of that particular line item. If the Association is going to be trusted with the students’ money, we need to satisfy students’ concerns that their money is being spent appropriately.

In addition to financial transparency, the Association must also have transparency in its governance. Over the past decade the Association has had 3 different Presidents resign due to assorted indiscretions, yet there are still no policies or procedures in any of our governing documents to address what leadership transition – if any – needs to take place in the event an officer is indicted or convicted of an offense. There are also no policies governing conflicts of interest in Association activities, including the funding of events planned by current or former officers for their own personal or political benefit. Establishing regulations that ensure an accountable Association will be one of our primary objectives.

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## **RESTRUCTURING VICE PRESIDENTS WITH BLIND HIRING AND** **EXPANDABLE STAFF**

The Vice Presidents appointed by the Association President – confirmed by the General Assembly and paid by the students – are the main vehicles to move the students’ agenda forward in between meetings. Yet despite the critical role these student leaders fill, the Association has been mired in controversy twice in the past three years amid perception that these paid positions are handed out based on political patronage instead of competence.

We will develop an online application process for the Vice President positions that will enable “blind” hiring: candidates will submit their resume and other supporting documentation online in a format that includes no reference to their name or any other information that could enable

corruption in the hiring process. Applications will be tagged with an identifier linking it via SQL query to contact information for the applicant in the event that person is selected for a Vice President position.

When the public can be confident the Vice Presidents have been selected based on their own merit instead of political favors, the Association can be confident it chose the right people to get the job done. Accordingly, we will expand the power of each Vice President to select their own Assistant Vice Presidents – as many as they want, from whatever campuses they choose. These Assistant Vice Presidents will be sworn officers who have the authority to act on behalf of the Association for their given area, and will assist the Assembly-approved Vice President in carrying out his/her duties. But this expanded power will come with expanded responsibility: if a Vice President or his/her Assistant Vice Presidents fall short in meeting the obligations of their position, they will all be categorically fired and a new Vice President selected.

Striking a balance between flexibility and responsibility are critical to providing accountability to the students. These reforms will take the Association further down that path.

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### **TURNING OFFICERS INTO AMBASSADORS**

For years the Association had a presence on every campus in the system, and senior officers regularly visited institutions outside of the Association's regular monthly meeting schedule. In recent years this practice has essentially ended, even as the Association sits on higher and higher piles of student fee money collected for outreach and advocacy.

If elected, we plan to return to the Association structure of the 33rd Session (2004-2005) and have every paid officer of the Association visiting a minimum number of institutions each month, providing updates on Association activities, training student leaders on the Association's legislative agenda, spreading awareness about the Association and tangibly putting access to the Board of Governors into the hands of the students.

The Association can't succeed without student support, and it can't expect student support unless it makes an effort to earn it.

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### **STATEWIDE CONFERENCE ON STUDENT GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS**

2008 seems to be an illuminating year for problems in Student Government elections. UNC Pembroke's elections were delayed when a Student Body President candidate's running mate dropped out; an identical situation led to campaign finance issues for a SBP candidate at N.C. State. The Student Congress at East Carolina University called for a second election when it was revealed the first election was essentially rigged; UNC Greensboro had to schedule a second

election before its Legislature could say anything, because its Elections Commission left candidates off the ballot.

Elections are wily beasts, and holding one that's problem-free is almost impossible. But that shouldn't stop institutions from collaborating on ideas to avoid pitfalls and boost turnout.

Two years ago the Association held a system-wide conference on elections at UNC Chapel Hill, bringing together the election staff of each institution for 2 days of information- and idea-sharing as well as presentations from Secretary of State Elaine Marshall and State Board of Elections Chairman Larry Leake. The result of this conference was a long list of ideas on what works and what doesn't when it comes to Student Government elections, but with the graduation of most of the Student Government leaders that were present the time has come for a new conference this coming year.

Each institution is unique and of course has a unique electoral system – but in an Association of equals, the credibility of the Association depends on the credibility of its members, which in turn depends on the credibility of each member's election process. The Association should help ensure each institution has the resources it needs to provide the best-possible election framework for its students.

## Part II

# Becoming the Student Voice

## **PUTTING A STUDENT-FRIENDLY FACE ON UNC TOMORROW**

The UNC Tomorrow initiative was established by UNC Board of Governors Chairman Jim Phillips and UNC President Erskine Bowles to “determine how the University of North Carolina can respond more directly and proactively to the 21st century challenges facing North Carolina.”

While several legislators and university administrators have questioned the UNC Tomorrow Commission’s methodologies and reacted cautiously to its findings, there should be no doubt that the Commission’s final report will make a tangible imprint on the policies, plans and projects of the University for the foreseeable future.

And with any major policy implementation like the UNC Tomorrow report, it’s vitally important to have students’ voices heard as each institution moves forward.

We will work with all 17 campuses to help their respective Student Governments put a student-friendly face on UNC Tomorrow and how its findings are put into practice. Implementation of the UNC Tomorrow report should cater to the students, not to the administrators whose salaries are paid by them.

You can read the final report of the UNC Tomorrow Commission online here:

[http://www.nctomorrow.org/content.php/reports\\_documents/commission/Final\\_Report.pdf](http://www.nctomorrow.org/content.php/reports_documents/commission/Final_Report.pdf)

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## **RESURRECTING THE ADVOCACY CORPS**

One specific outcome to achieve from expanding the flexibility of Vice Presidents: resurrecting the UNCASG Advocacy Corps. This team of politically-savvy students across the state, responsible for pushing the NC General Assembly to adopt pro-student legislation when the Legislature is in town, has almost totally eroded during the Association’s squabbles this year.

With the 2008 short session of the General Assembly beginning in a few short weeks, the importance of getting this group up-and-running as soon as possible – even if just in a skeletal form – cannot be understated. Funding for the system, new programs at various institutions, ending the “knowledge tax” on textbooks and many other issues will be decided this year, and the only way the Association can make it happen is with the active assistance of the Advocacy Corps.

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## **ENSURING ACCESS:** **MOVING FROM COST PROBABILITY TO COST CERTAINTY**

Last year, the UNC Board of Governors and General Administration jointly conducted a study of tuition models throughout the country to determine the “best practices” used today. The result of this study was the quasi-”tuition cap” limiting campus-initiated tuition increases to a maximum of 6.5% per year until the end of 2010.

There’s no doubt that this quasi-”tuition cap” was an improvement over prior tuition policy, where increases were essentially decided with no real standard or guidance in place. But the proposal’s various exceptions, limitations and short-term duration make it only a stopgap plan to establishing a sound, long-term plan for containing tuition costs over time – while still giving institutions the flexibility they need to pursue tuition and fee increases that fit the mission of the institution and the desires of its Student Body.

In a December 2004 address urging the UNC Board of Governors to reject campus-initiated tuition increases, former Board Chairman J. Bradley Wilson suggested the review and adoption of a policy of “tuition cost certainty,” where tuition rates would be set at a constant level for a given class/cohort for that group’s first four years of enrollment at a UNC institution. This policy is similar to those enacted in Illinois with its “Truth in Tuition” laws and among dozens of private colleges and universities throughout the country that implement “tuition lock” programs.

We will work with the UNC Board of Governors and General Administration for a specific study focused exclusively on the feasibility and implementation costs of enacting a “cost certainty” model in North Carolina. Considering it briefly amid dozens of other options is insufficient.

A “cost certainty” model would better enable the students and taxpayers of North Carolina to plan how to finance the monetary burden of obtaining a higher education in this State, and would ensure that no academically-qualified student would be forced to interrupt their academic career due to tuition cost concerns. It’s an idea that has been implemented with success elsewhere, and there’s no reason we shouldn’t be studying the idea here as well.

You can read more about the arguments for “tuition cost certainty,” including links to other resources, online here:

<http://students.ncsu.edu/sgims/archive-86/bill/tuition-certainty-act-899.html>

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## **ENSURING ACCESS:** **FIGHTING FOR LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS**

A necessary precursor to any kind of long-term tuition model for the UNC system – whether it’s a tuition freeze, “cost certainty” or anything in between – is ensuring the Legislature continues its legacy of generously funding higher education. We all know that Article IX Section 9 of the Constitution of the State of North Carolina calls for the General Assembly to act: “[t]he General

Assembly shall provide that the benefits of The University of North Carolina and other public institutions of higher education, as far as practicable, be extended to the people of the State free of expense. “

But a constitutional mandate is no reason for students to stand idly by.

We’ve all seen the benefits of the Legislature’s generosity: beyond continuing to utilize some of the best values in higher education in the country, next year students will benefit directly at many institutions because tuition increases never approached the 6.5% limit thanks to ample funding by the General Assembly. Continued appropriations from the Legislature improves existing programs, funds new ones, and most importantly provides the General Administration and each constituent institution with greater flexibility in carrying out its mission without placing an undue burden on the Student Body.

We will build upon the work of previous sessions of the Association, including Students’ Day at the Capital and other initiatives, to highlight the tangible results of the General Assembly’s giving and to encourage legislators of both parties to give again.

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### **ENSURING ACCESS:** **ENDING THE KNOWLEDGE TAX**

In the 2007 long session of the N.C. General Assembly, students successfully had introduced Senate Bill 1392 that would have eliminated the sales tax on textbooks. This “knowledge tax” is oppressive on its own, but becomes even moreso as college enrollment climbs given the deteriorating state economy – with the tax being paid by those recently unemployed and least able to afford it.

While S1392 ultimately died after a public hearing in the Senate Finance Committee, the Association this year adopted a resolution calling for a renewed effort to secure its passage during the short session.

We will work with Andy Willis and Erin Schuettpelz at UNC General Administration to have ending the knowledge tax added to the UNC system’s list of legislative priorities. In addition, we will continue to work with the students’ friends in the General Assembly to have the language of S1392 reintroduced and push for its adoption.

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### **ENSURING ACCESS:** **CAPITAL BOOK PARTY @ THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

As part of the effort to end the knowledge tax, and in tribute to those who protested unjust taxation 234 years ago at the Boston Tea Party, we will mobilize students across the state of North Carolina to protest the knowledge tax with the Capital Book Party.

With a boat parked on Halifax Mall in between the General Assembly and the Legislative Office Building, a group of a dozen students dressed as pirates will throw used books overboard into an inflatable swimming pool while members of the UNCASG Advocacy Corps highlight the statistics on the knowledge tax and the benefits of ending it.

Political theatre is often a precursor for political action, and the Capital Book Party protesting North Carolina's knowledge tax will be one piece of a multi-pronged attack to benefit the students of North Carolina.

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### **DIVERSITY: MORE THAN JUST A 4-SYLLABLE WORD**

Our constituent institutions have invested untold hours and finances to promote the importance of diversity and diversity awareness on their respective campuses. But does the awareness matter if the diversity barely exists?

The time has come to take the diversity talk and couple it with tangible action.

One particular focus of the next year will be to expand on an idea conceived and being implemented by Student Body President Mark Blackwell of UNC Wilmington: compiling statistical information for every high school in all 100 counties and cross-referencing it to the number of applications at each UNC institution coming from that particular high school.

University administrators who work on extension and engagement know one of the easiest ways to improve the applicant pool is to go to a high school and encourage the students to apply to your institution. Armed with this database of information, each constituent institution of the Association can be empowered to do the same and actually help create diversity instead of merely observing it.

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### **RETURNING CAMPUS SOVEREIGNTY ON SMOKING**

Although individual institutions have been permitted to regulate smoking on their respective campuses for many years, the General Assembly eliminated that sovereignty entirely starting with the 2008-2009 academic year following the adoption of House Bill 24.



While the admirable purpose of the legislation was to reduce the effects of secondhand smoke on non-smokers, the results as institutions have worked to implement this ban has had a negative impact on the intended beneficiaries – including whole segments of residence halls and other buildings closed off entirely to smokers and non-smokers alike, to help reduce the institution's costs in monitoring compliance with the law.

We will work to return some level of control back to the individual institutions so they can abide by the spirit of the Legislature's actions while still ensuring their students enjoy the best academic experience possible.

You can read House Bill 24, now signed into law, online here:

<http://www.ncleg.net/gascripts/BillLookUp/BillLookUp.pl?Session=2007&BillID=H24>

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### **RESURRECTING THE STUDENT VOTE ON THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Another effort that has largely been dropped in the last year: bringing a student vote to the UNC Board of Governors.

The idea and the merits of it have been enshrined in ASG history. Over 82% of other states with student representation on their governing boards provide it. But giving the Association President a vote on the UNC Board of Governors has died in the North Carolina Senate in session after session.

Rather than accept defeat and give up on the issue, we need to continue pushing forward and highlight the need for a student vote on the Board of Governors.

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## Part III

# Investing in Our Future

### **MOBILIZING THE STUDENT VOTE: EXPLOITING SAME-DAY REGISTRATION**

This is the first full election cycle since the NC General Assembly adopted one-stop, no-excuse same-day registration and voting – a powerful tool to making sure students’ voices are heard in the upcoming election by enabling someone to register and vote at the same location on the same day.

Student Body President Tristyn Card and her SGA team at UNC Asheville have already implemented a voter mobilization program that exploits this new law, providing a shuttle from the UNCA student union every 30 minutes to take students to the polls. The UNC system’s two land-grant institutions, N.C. A&T State and N.C. State, are both working to implement similar programs with “Roll to the Polls” and “Pack the Polls” respectively.

We will make sure the Association’s resources are made available to these institutions as well as the other 14 campuses to help drive student voter turnout up and lay the groundwork for Get-Out-the-Vote efforts in the future.

You can learn more about the UNC Asheville GOTV program here:

<http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=10508817380>

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### **MOBILIZING THE STUDENT VOTE: FUNDING NCSSM AND NCSA**

As residential high schools, the NC School of Science and Mathematics and the high school portion of the NC School of the Arts are the only two institutions in the system that can guarantee a 100% success rate with voter registration – because their constituents cross the threshold of being legally able to vote while still attending the school.

You can’t find a much safer investment than that.

In addition to the GOTV grant program adopted by the Association this year, we will work to implement special funding for both NCSA and NCSSM to do targeted voter mobilization programs on their own campuses. These are the future leaders of our State and we should treat them both as equal partners in the Association’s efforts to mobilize student voters.

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### **MOBILIZING THE STUDENT VOTE: GOTV COLLABORATION WITH USSA**

Morton Blackwell of the Washington DC-based Leadership Institute once remarked that “political technology is ideologically neutral.” Last year the Association became a member of the US Student Association, a national organization that provides a number of potent programs to its members – but also has a distinct left-leaning political bias.

Throughout the past year the relationship with USSA has been put under a microscope by individuals who disagree with the organization’s political leanings. While scrutiny is always welcome, it shouldn’t prevent UNCASG or its constituent institutions from benefiting from USSA’s “political technology”: its Electoral Action Training and other training to mobilize student voters and Get Out the Vote.

With the North Carolina primary taking on national significance for the first time in generations, 2008 promises to be a crucial time for mobilizing student voters on our respective campuses. Utilizing USSA’s resources to help with that effort, especially when North Carolina students are already paying for the privilege, makes financial and political sense.

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### **IMPLEMENTING THE NC IN DC ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN**

Several institutions in the system regularly send delegations to Washington, DC each year to advocate for student issues. Bringing students to the nation’s capital helps convey student issues better than could ever be done by a hired university lobbyist – and it also provides a valuable learning experience for the participants.

This year a proposal was submitted to the Association to send 400+ students to Washington as part a self-funded “Advocacy in Action” campaign, but it quickly died amid the broader questions surrounding the Association’s future direction.

If elected we will coordinate with all 17 institutions and the US Students Association to make the NC in DC advocacy campaign a reality, so students can know their representatives in the Association are the “total package” and capable of advocating for them on the local, state and federal level.

You can read the 2007 Advocacy in Action proposal here:

<http://www.ncindc.org/docs/081507AdvocacyInAction.pdf>

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### **SERVING THE COMMUNITY BY BRINGING SERVICE INITIATIVES TO ALL 17 CAMPUSES**

The Association of Student Governments is more than a governing body, more than an advocacy body, and more than a body that spends fees paid by the students it represents. We are also partners in our respective communities and we have an obligation to be good stewards of the relationships we have with them.

Each institution has a number of national and local service projects that it implements. Three of the most prominent are Service NC to help the community, National Dracula Day in October to support the Red Cross and blood donation, and Relay for Life to fund cancer research.

While these initiatives are already present at many campuses, they are not at others. We will work with interested institutions to bring these initiatives to their own cities, as well as taking their own local initiatives back across the state. In addition we will make sure the Association's resources are available to help ensure each of these initiatives is a success.

Maintaining good town-gown relationships requires more than friendly talks with municipal leaders; it also requires engaging the community. The Association should make itself a model for helping make that happen.

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### **LAYING A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE WITH THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT FOUNDATION OF NORTH CAROLINA**

Among the prohibitions of the student fee collected on behalf of the Association is a ban on funneling the cash into an endowment that could eventually eliminate the need for the Association to collect the fee in the first place.

That shouldn't prevent the Association from establishing a private foundation and working to start raising private money on its own.

We will seek out student leaders and partners in private enterprise throughout North Carolina to help build a private, charitable Student Government Foundation tied into the Association for the purpose of providing educational and historical information without having to dig into students' wallets. Several private Student Governments have already created them, a number of public Student Governments are exploring the idea – the Association should help lead the way.

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### **CREATING CONTINUITY THROUGH THE UNCASG ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

All of the reforms and initiatives mentioned in this platform will be meaningless if they cease to exist when we leave office. The Association created an Alumni Association to help provide continuity over time, but as the Association has waned in the last three years the Alumni Association has waned with it.

We intend to work closely with President Cody Grasty, Alumni Association President Emeritus Jeff Nieman and the other past Presidents of UNCASG to bring the Alumni Association back to life and help ensure the students' voices will continue to be heard no matter who happens to occupy the offices of UNCASG.



# Part IV

## Candidate Bios





# T. Greg Doucette

## *Candidate for President*

RALEIGH, NC – Greg Doucette is the Student Senate President at N.C. State University, where he is a senior majoring in Computer Science with minors in Economics and Political Science.

Elected Speaker *Pro Tempore* of the Association in January, Greg has served as an N.C. State delegate to the Association for three separate sessions: the 27th session under President Jeff Nieman (1998-1999), the 35th session under President Derek Pantiel (2006-2007), and the current 36th session under President Cody Grasty.

Among his professional experiences, Greg has worked as the youngest Assistant Clerk of Superior Court in modern Wake County history and the Clerk's Office Director of Special Projects (2003-2004) as well as Director of Client Communications for the lobbying firm Lawrence Bewley & Associates (2005-2007). He currently serves as a legislative research intern for State Senator Tony Foriest, a first-term legislator and freshman member of the Legislative Black Caucus representing Senate District 24 (Alamance and Caswell counties).

Greg was elected as the youngest Vice Chairman in the history of the Wake County Republican Party in March 2003 where he served until March 2005. He also served for four years as Vice Chairman of the City of Raleigh's Board of Adjustment (2004-2008) and is currently a member of the N.C. State chapter of the NAACP, American Mensa, and the North Carolina Farm Bureau.

In March 2008 Greg was overwhelmingly reelected by the N.C. State Student Body to a second term as Student Senate President, becoming the first student since 1989 to successfully win reelection to this highly competitive position. He was privileged to have the support of a broad range of student groups including the African-American Student Advisory Council, the CALS Agri-Life Council, College Democrats, College Republicans, the Inter-Fraternity Council and the InterResidence Council.

Driving his activity in Student Government, Greg is passionate about ensuring access to higher education in North Carolina – he had to drop out of N.C. State in May 2000 after just two years at the school, and couldn't afford to return until August 2005. Greg wants to help make certain no other student has to endure a similar experience.

# Ashley M. Yopp

## *Candidate for Senior Vice President*

GREENVILLE, NC – Ashley Yopp is the 2007-2008 Student Senate President at East Carolina University, where she is a senior studying political science through the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences.

Elected Speaker *Pro Tempore* of the Association in November and becoming Senior Vice President in January, Ashley is also involved in several student organizations on campus such as Phi Sigma Pi National Honor Fraternity, National Society of Collegiate Scholars, Students for Organ Donation Awareness and the ECU Skydiving Club.



Ashley has served in a variety of leadership capacities both on- and off-campus. She was State President of the North Carolina FFA Association in 2005-2006, where she traveled to hundreds of public high schools across the state and served as an *ex-officio* member of the NC FFA Foundation, Board of Trustees, and Board of Directors. Ashley is the co-founder and president of Students for Organ Donation Awareness and has served on Duke University's Second Wind Foundation Board; she believes strongly in organ donation awareness and hopes to shed more light on its importance through her work.

Within the ECU Student Government Association, Ashley has also served as the Speaker of Congress, Rules & Judiciary Chairman, and Consul to the House of Organizations where she worked to create a student legislative body that was representative of the students of East Carolina University. Ashley has also served as the President and Parliamentarian of Phi Sigma Pi National Honor Fraternity and the Secretary of the ECU Skydiving Club.

Ashley believes strongly in public service and community volunteerism. She spends time with several community organizations including The Boys & Girls Club, Building Hope, Spring Arbor, and the Hope Lodge. Ashley's passion within community service rests within the public education system, where she has worked as a mentor and coach with several students in Pitt County. Ashley sincerely believes that students have the power and responsibility to create their college experience, and she strives to help students realize their potential and maximize their success. She hopes to work for students across the state to ensure everyone can afford the opportunity of higher education.

*“You can’t lead the people if you don’t love the people.  
You can’t save the people if you won’t serve the people.”  
- Dr. Cornel West*