

TEXTBOOKS • CONTINUED FROM 1

all eight members of the congressional delegation.

SG has also been looking at other states' solutions to the problem. In California, for example, legislation has been passed imposing regulations on textbook publishers. In Illinois, the governor is working with schools individually. In Connecticut, a research team was

formed.

SG has been working with Provost Mark Becker to address concerns in Columbia.

"As soon as the spring, there will be a way for students to see textbook information earlier so that students have time to secure funds," Preston said, adding that the information would most likely be found on Blackboard or USC's Web site.

SG is also working with

University Bookstore to find ways to help professors make better textbook selections, as some students cite bundled textbooks and increasingly expensive new editions as problems.

SG also partnered with the USC Police Department for the Protect-Your-Books Campaign, which is geared toward decreasing textbook theft.

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ODOM • CONTINUED FROM 1

The level of competition and the actual amount of instruction that will take place, Odom said, wasn't quite clear. But the USC coach has his expectations.

"Knowing men, and women, like I do, once you get into any kind of battle, albeit, this basketball, I gotta believe that its gonna heat up a little bit," Odom said on Friday. But, when asked about the intensity of the coaching, he added: "I don't care what I do, I'll guarantee none of us will holler or scream at them as much as their commanding sergeants have."

"But, at the end of the day, it's all about making these guys feel appreciated and what they're doing important."

Rick Kell, who is serving as the executive director of the event, said that the idea for Operation Hardwood came when the University of Maryland was honoring troops who had returned from the Middle East at a basketball game last winter. Nike will sponsor the event will be sponsored by Nike, and the company will also provide uniforms and shoes to all participants.

Odom, who grew up in

Goldsboro, N.C., said the opportunity is even more significant given the military presence in the Carolinas.

"I remember growing up Goldsboro, going to school and seeing some of my best buddies whose fathers back in those days had been deployed for sometimes as long as a year or a year and a half to some of the countries that were under strife," Odom recalled. "And though they talked about it little you could almost sense each and every day the bewilderment, the frustration and the wonder of 'Will I ever see my dad again?'"

The Gamecocks head man, whose father Bill served in the Army in World War I, also mentioned the opportunity as especially important to him.

"If there was one thing I would think about changing, and I've thought about this often, it would be maybe spending a couple years in the military," Odom said. "This is kind of a way to go back and kind of cleanse myself, if you will, of that."

Camp Arifjan, the site of the event, is a relatively new \$200 million base built by the Kuwaiti government. Jim Garamone of the American Forces Press Service called Arifjan "the logistical hub for Operation Iraqi Freedom" in

December of 2003. The camp served — and still serves — as the main center for Iraq troop rotation.

Odom seemed unfazed at the notion of traveling in the Middle East, where insurgent attacks still occur regularly.

"I've got enough faith in people that make decisions like this that they're not gonna risk anybody's lives. Those kind of things don't bother me at all."

When asked about his personal views on the Iraq war, Odom said, "We have elected officials that I know make decisions with great care, and I trust their judgment."

While in Kuwait, Odom and the others will also appear at a children's clinic, another experience he's looking forward to.

"Just learning about (the Kuwaiti) culture, it truly will open my eyes that we do live in a global world and that there's good and bad everywhere you go," Odom said. "I hope to be able to come back and say that the tide is turning and there's even more hope that (the troops) will be coming back soon and that the people in the Middle East can handle their own affairs."

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Web site tracks Columbia roadwork

Justin Chapura
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

In response to complaints about the slow pace of road construction, the City of Columbia has launched a Web site to provide updated construction reports in four downtown areas.

The Web site, Makeovercolumbia.com, is part of

a larger marketing campaign to draw visitors back to the Vista, Five Points, Main Street and Two Notch Road while construction projects there are completed.

The Web site features construction advisories as well as posts on future projects of which drivers, particularly USC campus residents and commuters, should be mindful.

One advisory on the Web site warns parts of Greene Street near the intersection with Laurens Street could be blocked pending a construction permit on the railroad crossing there.

While the Web site says construction on portions of Two Notch Road is complete, work on Main Street is ongoing. The Vista is not expected to be construction-free until at least January. Five Points renovations are 45 percent complete and are scheduled to be finished by August 2006.

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