

# Students getting involved in '88 presidential election

By STEVE PRADARELLI  
Assistant news editor

State Democratic and Republican college representatives hope to infect USC and other students with election fever in the coming weeks, but they say the task will be tough.

"A lot of people are indecisive about this election," said Andy Williams, one of three state Democratic college coordinators and Student Government vice president.

"They see good and bad qualities in both candidates."

Because of that, college representatives for the two campaigns say their strategies will include defining the Republican nominee, Vice President George Bush, and the Democratic nominee, Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis.

Marty McClellan, Bush campaign chairman at USC and a philosophy junior, said he'll try to avoid repeating the mistake made at the na-

tional campaign level of portraying Bush as something he's not. "We're going to do the issues, not the personality," McClellan said.

The Democratic college coordinators, working out of their party's Devine Street headquarters, plan to visit South Carolina's more than 60 colleges in the weeks leading to Nov. 8. The Republicans will use a system of field and campus representatives to get their message across.

Both campaigns say they will use handouts, information tables and rallies to stir support for their candidates, but neither has a firm schedule of events yet.

"It's not that we've lacked leadership," Williams said. "There's not been involvement."

To change that, the Republican and Democratic representatives say they'll work to increase election interest and participation among students.

"The first thing we need to do is bring up the interest in voter registration," McClellan said. "Then we can show the real side of Dukakis and the real side of Bush."

Williams said the Democrats are especially interested in reaching college students this election year, particularly after what Williams characterized as Walter Mondale's failure to woo college-age voters in 1984.

He said the greatest effort will be concentrated on greets, because "they're usually organized and easily targeted."

But McClellan said an increasing conservatism among college students, particularly in South Carolina, will make the Democrats' task difficult.

"That's going to be an important issue in this and future campaigns," McClellan said.

## Students run unusual rat race

By the Associated Press

**KALAMAZOO, Mich.** — She stepped out onto the high bar with a look of determination, quivering while she tried to steady herself. The crowd gasped when she lost her footing, then broke into cheers when she twirled her tail around the bar, saving herself from a 15-inch drop.

Welcome to the second annual Rat Olympics, a lesson in patience, sensitivity and positive reinforcement.

Since June, about 50 psychology students at Kalamazoo College have been training 11 white, pink-eyed rats to inch their way across the 2-foot-long, quarter-inch-wide wooden bar, jump hurdles and climb a 5-foot vertical screen.

With a piece of chocolate chip cookie as bait, the beady-eyed entrants in the Tri-Rathlon also had to climb a five-step ladder and make their way through a tunnel and a pan filled with an inch of water, to which most rats have an aversion.

"I was really afraid of them when we started, but they're really very sweet," said junior Robin Lake, 19, of Traverse City, Mich., as her rat, Mimi, crawled across her shoulders.

Professor Lyn Raible, who is researching brain chemicals that affect rats' sexual behavior, said it all started as a way to teach her students about learning and conditioning. But it turned into an ethics lesson.

"In some of my classes we do live animal experiments with the rats and I found this teaches sensitivity," she said. "They realize that rats have personalities and feelings, and it makes them think twice before they do their experiment."

Though some students refused to touch the rats at first,

almost all the racing rodents found homes with their trainers after Friday's competition.

"We've been together about 10 weeks, and we've gotten very close," junior Tom Remble, 20, of St. Joseph, said of his rat, Putita, who wore a Superman cape and had her tail painted red, white and blue.

Because pets aren't allowed in dormitory rooms, Putita, like many of her rivals, will be sent to parents. Asked if he thinks his parents will be pleased with their new pet, Remble said: "I don't know, but I'm sure my cats will be."

None of the rats will go back to the lab for experiments. The small liberal arts college rolled out the red carpet for the rodents. There was an opening ceremony and procession of students to the theme of *Chariots Of Fire*, followed by a torch-carrying student wearing pointed ears and a tail.

The competitors all were female because, Raible said, male rats are too ugly, fat and lazy.

Black-robed judges held up numbers to rate each competitor. No overall winner was announced, but the crowd of about 75 seemed to agree the champion was Elle Dopa, named after L-dopa, a drug used to substitute for dopamine, a brain chemical.

This may be just the beginning of the path to stardom for rodents with four-legged fortitude.

Raible said she has twice sent videotapes to talk show host David Letterman with the hope of getting the rats a spot on his Stupid Pet Tricks segment. Both times she was rejected, because the show doesn't consider rats pets. "Can you imagine?" she asked.



Strike up the band

Cocky, the Carolina Band and the USC cheerleaders try to strike up some enthusiasm at the freshman pep rally this past Wednesday.

JOHANN SCHMONSEES/The Gamecock

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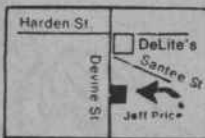
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