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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

COLUMBIA, S.C.

SIGMA CHI

Pledges punished for roles in assault

■ Incident declared resolved; formal report expected by end of next week

BY CRISTY INFINGER
THE GAMECOCK

Two Sigma Chi pledges have been disciplined for an assault involving a brother and two pledges that might have been part of a fraternity initiation.

Greek Life Coordinator Carl Johnson said the incident, which took place in December, has been resolved, and a formal report of the incident and the consequences for those involved will be reported soon.

"We hope to have a formal report sometime late next week," said Johnson.

Casey Barnes, one of the pledges involved in the incident, said he and Josh Rhodes have been reprimanded.

"We have it solved," Barnes said. "It is over. Rhodes and I have some community service hours and some probationary implications."

The alleged incident occurred at 9:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 4, in front of South Tower. Police said witnesses observed William Allman, a brother of Sigma Chi, in a physical altercation with Rhodes and Barnes, two pledges.

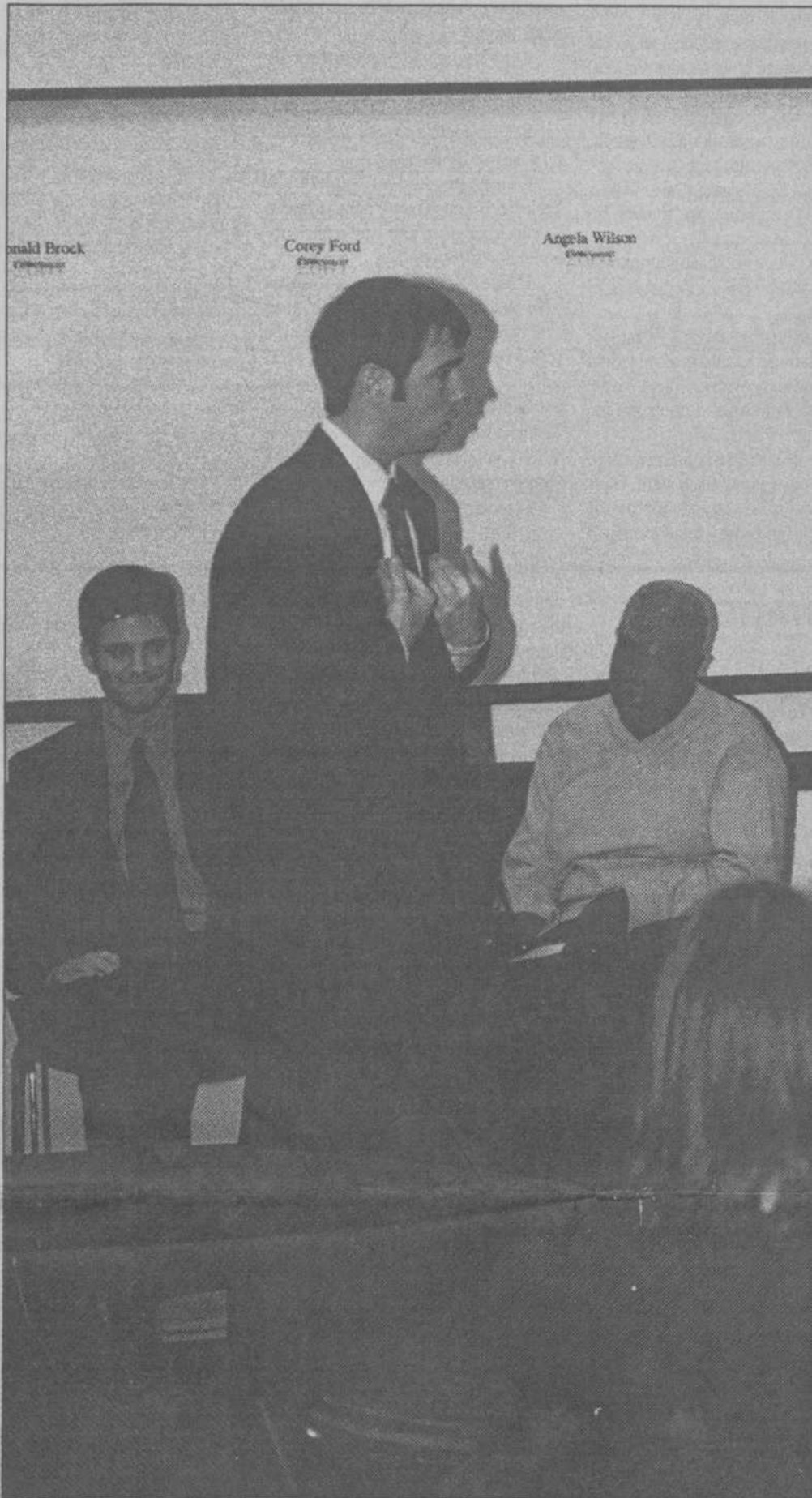
Sigma Chi chapter representatives have repeatedly denied any link to the incident. At the time of the incident, Sigma Chi President Michael Berger said the assault was some type of prank unrelated to the fraternity.

"This had absolutely, positively nothing to do with hazing or fraternity initiation," Berger said at the time of the incident.

Allman wasn't injured in the incident and refused any sort of medical attention, according to the police report.

The university desk can be reached at gamecockudesk@hotmail.com

SG ELECTIONS: Down to the wire



Travis Lynn/The Gamecock

Student Government presidential candidates (from left) Corey Ford, Donald Brock and Angela Wilson debate Monday in the Russell House.

Presidential candidates debate issues

BY VALERIE MATCHETTE
THE GAMECOCK

Student Government presidential candidates had a final chance to debate issues such as parking, meal plans and SG reform during a Monday night forum sponsored by *The Gamecock*.

Donald Brock, Corey Ford and Angela Wilson spent an hour trying to convince students that each deserved to win SG's highest post.

One of the issues the candidates discussed was experience. Brock said, though he hasn't been involved with SG, he has had plenty of job experience and leadership qualities that would make him right for the job. Having worked as a

Voting starts today

- WHERE YOU CAN VOTE: Go to www.vip.sc.edu.
- WHEN TO VOTE: Starts 9 a.m. today; ends 5 p.m. Thursday.

State House page, Brock assured the audience that he's made all the right contacts in local government and would be able to carry USC students' concerns right to the top.

"Experience won't play a factor in this

PRESIDENT SEE PAGE 3

VP hopefuls discuss wide range of topics

BY CRISTY INFINGER
THE GAMECOCK

Student Government vice-presidential candidates Monday discussed subjects ranging from the responsibilities of the office to televising SG senate meetings at *The Gamecock's* 2001 Executive Candidates Debate.

The four candidates, Freshman Council Adviser Nithya Bala, Institutional Affairs Director Adam Bourne and Sens. Brian Hunter and Nathan White, also discussed subjects such as safety and parking.

And for the first time, Bala admitted someone from her campaign was responsible for reporting more than 60 violations against the other three candidates in set of filings that were eventually ruled groundless by the SG Elections Commission.

A recurring theme throughout the hour-long debate was the question of what responsibilities the vice president has. Candidates said those responsibilities were to lead the senate and to

support the SG president. The candidates disagreed about whether the vice president should have an agenda of his or her own.

"The most important part about being vice president is to work on the president's agenda," Hunter said. "If I were elected Student Government vice president, I would make this my top priority."

Bala offered a different take on the office's duties.

"The president has their own cabinet to help them with their agenda," Bala said. "If elected, I do not feel that my agenda will interfere with that of the president's."

When asked what they will do if not elected, all the candidates agreed that they would like to stay involved in Student Government by applying to be a member of the Cabinet.

"I would like to apply to Cabinet, although I am not sure which position I would be most interested in. I would also like to devote more

VICE PRESIDENT SEE PAGE 3

Former hostage recalls experience

BY MARUXA RELANO
THE GAMECOCK

Tom Sutherland might be one of the few people around who can say he's been kidnapped just for being an American.

Sutherland, who was held hostage for more than six years by Lebanese terrorists, spoke about his experience Thursday at the Capital City Club.

Sutherland was held in captivity for 2,354 days until his release on Nov. 18, 1991, making him the second-longest held Western hostage ever.

He spoke at the World Affairs Council of Columbia in what he described as "the joy of dialogue with interested and educated people."

In 1983, Sutherland took a job at the American University of Beirut as Dean of Agriculture, and he and his wife, Jean Ann, moved to Lebanon. They had both been professors in Colorado for decades.

On June 9, 1985, Sutherland was returning to Lebanon after a visit to the

'They covered my eyes, and that was the last time I saw sunlight for six and a half years.'

Tom Sutherland
Former hostage

U.S.

He was met at the Beirut airport by a welcoming party that included four bodyguards and a chauffeur in a brand-new Chevrolet Caprice.

At the World Affairs Council in Columbia, he said to his captivated audience that he had told himself, "So what, I'm an American at the University of Beirut. No one's going to touch me." And then he said to his chauffeur, "We don't need bodyguards, do we, Shariff? You will be my bodyguard."

Sutherland was surprised when

Shariff, 5-foot-3 and in his 50s, didn't laugh at his decision. Minutes later, he was kidnapped by the Islamic Jihad, one of the most active terrorist groups in Lebanon, whose mission is to destroy the state of Israel.

Sutherland said he thought at the time, "I've never seen this dude before."

"I didn't argue with him," he added. "They covered my eyes, and that was the last time I saw sunlight for six and a half years."

The Islamic Jihad wanted to exchange

HOSTAGE SEE PAGE 3

Condon vows to fight budget cuts

■ Attorney general says S.C. lags behind other states in higher education

BY CHARLES PRASHAW
THE GAMECOCK

S.C. Attorney General Charlie Condon has said he would fight budget cuts in higher education, calling the proposed 15 percent cuts by Gov. Jim Hodges "deeply disturbing."

Condon, who announced late last month that he would run for governor in 2002, has been more vocal on state issues since the announcement.

"I will fight those proposed cuts every step of the way in the General Assembly," Condon said at a press conference held last week at his office.

Condon compared South Carolina to neighbor states with respect to higher education. He said Georgia spends \$9,131

per student enrolled in its public colleges and universities, and North Carolina spends \$8,566. By comparison, he said, South Carolina spends \$5,850.

Condon pointed out other figures on the national wage average. According to Condon, a strong link exists between the amount the state spends on higher education and average wage rates for the state. Both Georgia and North Carolina were closer to the national wage average than South Carolina.

"There is no reason why we should be lagging behind other states in our region," Condon said.

Condon also questioned the governor's spending on K-12 schools. "We can't be the state whose education systems end with the 12th grade," he said.

Condon vowed to fight the budget cuts all the way and promised to remain on the side of higher education until the cuts are worked out.

"Whatever the critics say, I will not stand on the sidelines while Governor Hodges fumbles our children's future," he said.

Dick Harpootlian, S.C. Democratic Party chairman, argued that Condon can't control what happens with respect to the budget.

"Condon has nothing to do with the budget process," Harpootlian said. "And since his recent full-time political activities, he has even less to do with the attorney general's office."

Harpootlian has been a vocal critic of Condon's since Condon defeated him in the last statewide election for attorney general.

The city desk can be reached at gamecockcitydesk@hotmail.com

WEATHER

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COMING UP



A preview of *Dance Marathon*.

FRIDAY

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"A lot of people mistake a short memory for a clear conscience."

— Doug Larson

ONLINE POLL



Who are you voting for in the SG presidential race?

Ford: 55% Brock: 26% Wilson: 19%

Look for next week's question at www.dailygamecock.com