RESIDENCE HALL ASSOCIATION

Bill would establish student advocates

By JACOB DAVIS THE GAMECOCK

Students would assistance and advice on their legal rights during university judicial proceedings if a bill led by RHA President Adam Hark makes it through the Residence Hall Association Senate.

The program, called Student Advocacy, focuses on helping students understand their rights and feel comfortable about the disciplinary procedure.

"These people are not defense lawyers. Our mission is to advocate for the students at the university," said Hark, a fourth-year history student. The program is still in early stages.

Hark said he has been talking about the possibility of the program for at least two years. "Next week we'll be meeting to, hopefully, begin founding the group and taking steps to establish a constitution and become an official organization," he said.

group of ten to twenty select, trained members who would be the basis for the program."

Scott Lewis, director of Judicial Affairs and the National Student Exchange, said, "We want to see if there is a need. Do students want it? Do students want to be a part of it?"

Lewis said he had seen similar programs fail.

"Problems center around poorly trained advocates and hasty planning," he said, "We would rather do this well than do it quickly. I think that students could really benefit from a well trained advocate who could provide them with an institutionally global perspective on their situation."

A notation is planned for the standard discipline form, which will give students the name and number of an advocate they can call for assistance.

"No one will be forced to accept an advocate, it will just be there as an option, in case you want someone to accompany you to the proceedings

"Ideally, we'd like to have a or just have someone to get advice from," Hark said. "We want diversity, so students can have advice from different angles, from students with different perspectives."

"I think it's a good opportunity to ensure that everything happening is done in the best way possible, and intimidation is not a factor," second-year public relations student Meghan Hughes said.

Second-year biology student Ben Hinman said he thought it was a great idea because the USC judicial process is so complicated.

"It can really help students to have an impartial voice of advice," Hark said the program wouldn't

be about getting students out of

"The idea is to promote comfort while avoiding misunderstandings and situations that could lead to premature conclusions to problems that really require a more in-depth

An interest meeting will be held 6 p.m. Wednesday in Gambrell.

■ NAACP

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Cunningham, the president of the NAACP chapter at USC, said, "Voting is the quintessential mechanism for participating in the political process and should be considered an obligation, not an option. To ensure that the issues pertinent to young people are addressed it is imperative that we exercise our power at the polls, otherwise we are in danger of becoming a silenced generation."

According McLawhorn, the political action chairman, the NAACP decided to hold the event hoping to make a differene in students' lives by encouraging participation in the political process.

"Voting is an essential element that many people take for granted," McLawhorn said, adding that a sense of apathy or inefficacy seems to deter students from taking part in elections.

"The USC branch of the NAACP is not trying, but going to change and empower young people to vote no matter a person's race, sex, creed or background," he said. "Voting is the most fundamental obligation that we have to our democracy and this obligation must be fulfilled."

He added, "Young people should vote because it gives them leverage on a variety of issues, whether they agree or disagree with President Bush or Senator

Salandra Bowman, the chapter vice president said it was important for young people, especially minorities, to vote. "We will be the catalysts for change," she said. "If we don't do it, who else will?"

Michael Goodwin, associate director of multicultural student affairs, said "Make it Count Monday" stressed the importance of voting in both local and national elections.

"This event is there to help out those who aren't necessarily connected or informed about how important it is to vote," Goodwin

The NAACP is holding another registration drive Friday at the Palmetto City Classic Step Show at the Koger Center.

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■ PHARMACY

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graduate assistant, spoke to The Gamecock but only on condition of anonymity. The graduate assistant said she didn't want to give her name because "The pharmacy network is very small, you don't want to burn bridges. This is a great program, which is why we don't want to make it awkward. We get along very well with the professors."

The former graduate assistant said the political climate at the college was very small, and that he wanted to graduate with few

For the graduate assistant, she said the supplement decrease cost her about \$1,000 on her bill "because I paid 1,200 dollars last fall and it was 24 something" this

to schedule an interview.

year. She said she is taking the same amount of classes this year, but does have a \$200 business fee this year that was not on her bill last year.

But she said the issue was not really about the extra tuition, but the timing.

"If we had either a) known to budget for the increase, then that would have helped, or b) if they had told us, or had been able to tell us earlier, then we could have applied for financial aid. The biggest issue was the time frame. We're sympathetic to budget cuts," she said. "I'm able to work parttime as a pharmacist and make pretty good money. As long as I know ahead of time that I'm not going to receive any funding, it won't really be an issue. But that is something that I hope that they would tell us as soon as they know before so we can plan accordingly."

A former graduate assistant and .

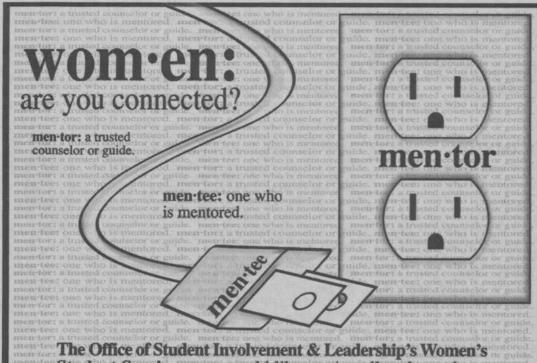
current graduate student said he understood budget cuts might have led the school to passing the tuition responsibilities to the students but said he wonders how these cuts will affect the emphasis on South Carolina being a research-driven

"At a university level, the university has passed the burden onto the individual schools. For anybody who's on a graduate assistantship, previously the university, however they do it, would take care of the tuition or tuition reduction. And that has changed within the past couple of years," he said.

"If you're going to have a graduate program with happy students," he said, "you need to take care of them."

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Mandatory Renewal & Treasurer's Workshops

All registered student organizations must attend a Renewal Workshop. Any organizations receiving or planning to receive student activity fee funding must also be represented by their Treasurer at one of the Treasurer's Workshops listed below.

Renewal & Treasurer's Workshops will be held on the following dates:

RH 322/326 Tuesday, August 31, 2004 3:00 - 4:30 RH 322/326 - *Sports Tuesday, August 31, 2004 5:00 - 6:30 Thursday, September 2, 2004 RH 322/326 3:00 - 4:30 Wednesday, September 8, 2004 3:00 - 4:30 RH 322/326 Wednesday, September 8, 2004 7:00 - 8:00 RH 322/326 - *International Thursday, September 9, 2004 RH 322/326 3:00 - 4:30

*these workshops are slightly modified to accommodate the needs of the mentioned groups; however, anyone can attend.

Student Organization Registration Forms are due Friday, September 10th, in 227 Russell House.

Budgets for the 2004-2005 academic year are due Friday, September 17, 2004 by 4:00 pm to the Office of Student Government & Student Organizations, 227 Russell House. Budget submission forms are available online at: www.sg.edu/forms.htm