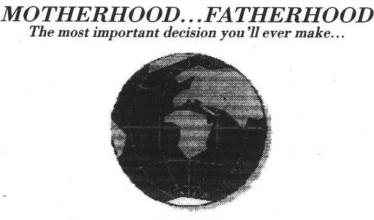
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# ASUN faces substantial campus issues in '98-'99

## Student senate took on funds, diversity, alcohol amid debate

ASUN

#### By KIM SWEET Staff writer

For the outgoing student senate of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska, the final book closed four weeks ago on the 1998-99 school year.

Days after 34 new senators and executives were inaugurated into office, the legislation that former President Sara Russell and her fellow senate helped craft were put into a notebook that will sit on a shelf for future perusal by incoming senators and executives.

While contemplating what people will remember about the 1998-99 senate, Russell, during her last day in office, could think of only one thing to say.

say. "I just hope we're remembered," Russell said. "I hope in the history of ASUN, we're looked at as doing some pretty valid stuff."

While looking through the book, future senators will be able to see the wide variety of issues senators and executives confronted during the year.

Facing a proposed constitutional amendment that could have decreased university funding by \$10 million, Russell and the senate campaigned against Initiative 413.

Making a commitment to educate the university, members of the senate organized a group against the lid, had students wear blue to a football game in protest of the amendment and held informational sessions.

Russell and the senate put their living unit.

force behind efforts to create the Laura Cockson Memorial Scholarship, which honors the UNL student killed by a drunken driver more than a year ago.

ASUN and other student organizations on campus raised enough money to give out a \$750 scholarship each year to someone who promotes alcohol awareness and responsible drinking on campus.

The senate created programming for the Martin Luther King Jr. day celebration. For the first year, students got a day off from classes to attend events sponsored by ASUN and community groups.

The senate achieved other goals during its yearlong term. Revising the ASUN Outstanding Educator award, making grades and schedules available in an online site and taking action on issues dealing with American Indian remains are several things the senate worked on this year.

While senate members in the future can look through the book to find on paper what issues were pertinent during the year, they cannot assess the hours of discussion racked up by senators on controversial topics that led to long meetings and close votes.

A constitutional amendment proposed by Russell resulted in a fourhour-long meeting and a divided senate chamber.

Desiring to increase representation on the senate, Russell proposed to add five at-large seats on the senate. She also wanted to add seats based on living unit. Riddled with the same questions that arise when debating affirmative action, many of the senators said setting aside five special seats intended for underrepresented students would be discriminatory.

Others said the seats were a necessity.

After the senate voted to let the students decide by putting the proposal on the election ballot, the issue became one of contention between the two parties in the spring elections.

Andy Schuerman and the Voice party rallied for the amendment.

Paul Schreier and his Focus running mates stood in opposition to the proposed amendment. Instead, they endorsed the idea of a presidential cabinet that would report directly to the president on issues affecting underrepresented students on campus.

The amendment was defeated on election day. Schuerman and his running mate Rachelle Winkle won the president and first vice presidential offices in a runoff. Focus party candidate Trisha Meuret took the second vice presidential office.

Now that the work of this year's senate is in book form, controversial bills such as the proposed constitutional amendment sit right next to bills simply recognizing student organizations. Bills that deal with the everlasting problem of parking sit right next to bills giving commendation to one student or another.

But something that can't be captured in a book of bills is time invested in the tools that form legislation – discussion and debate.

While the bills passed this year will quickly fade in the minds of students and senators, the time and energy the 1998-99 senate exerted on issues is something that senators hope will not be forgotten.



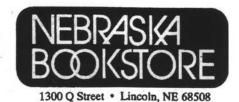
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