ASUN Year End Report

2009-2010

“If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.”
-Henry Ford
**Introduction**

The year in ASUN was marked with productivity. Our campus saw Innovation Campus begin to take shape, the formation of the new Student Money Management Center and the construction of the Gaughan Multicultural Center with student government playing an important role in each these projects among others. Internally, ASUN worked to ensure the continuation of the 475-RIDE service for students, update the student government website and improve on existing programs like The Big Event and communication to students.

The report that follows describes the projects and successes of each ASUN executive or committee chair. In addition to this report, each also provided their own successor with more specific transitioning information as many of the projects reported here are ongoing. Following these reports is a miscellaneous section with some general student government projects and ideas for continued betterment.

It’s been quick year, for certain, but one I will always remember and be grateful for. The opportunities, new friends and all that I’ve learned have truly enriched my experience at UNL. Many thanks to Marlene for everything she does for student government—from early mornings to late night meetings—the year-to-year continuity and quiet guidance Marlene provides greatly contributed to the success of ASUN this year. Thanks also to Brian, Amanda and Jared for a great year full of challenges, solutions and fun times in the ASUN office. Finally, thank you to Dr. Franco for being a supporter and friend to student government.

Sincerely,

Megan Collins
ASUN President 2009-2010
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Internal Vice President

BRIAN COBURN

475-RIDE
In a few short years, the 475-RIDE program went from having over $120,000 in its contingency fund to the possibility of bankrupting ASUN this year. The Internal Vice President worked directly with the External Vice President & ASUN Data Entry Worker to develop a strategy for addressing the dramatic increase in ridership over the past 3 years. In consultation with the President of ASUN, Marlene Beyke and the ASUN Executive Committee, policies for ridership were developed and strictly enforced.

It became clear during the fall semester of 2009-10 school year that some individuals were using 475-RIDE habitually. While the service originated mainly to end limit drunk driving by UNL students, it did include any limiting philosophy for proper use. During the 2008-2009 school year, President Zimmer developed guidelines that sought to limit usage to last resort situations. In continuation of that idea, this year the philosophy was developed, enforced and communicated.

The lack of communication with students about the service allowed for a general miscommunication about the service to thrive. International students were told that it could be used if they lived far from campus and didn’t have any means of transportation. Husker Choices advertised it as a no excuses policy if drinking. Students taking night classes were using it to get home since the buses were no longer operating. These examples of the most obvious misuses explain why it was so important that a strategy be was developed to reign in the cost of the service.

In September, a policy was implemented that used benchmark usage to limit students to using the service only as a last resort. A last resort was defined to mean that a student was in an unsafe situation that could not have been planned for. If a student had a reasonable opportunity to plan for other means of transportation, then use of the service would be considered inappropriate. The benchmark number of uses was used out of necessity as a point at which a student should be contacted to determine why that student was using the service so frequently. In the initial communication, a hard line was taken and students were assumed to be abusing the service. However, this initial communication only served as a warning and thus extenuating circumstances could be taken into account upon communication with an individual student. If a student continued to meet this benchmark usage in any single month after the initial contact was made, the student was contacted again and moved to an Unfunded Ridership list three days after the second communication.

This summary should provide general information about the approach that allowed ASUN to limit 475-RIDE usage it considered abusive. By limiting the service to only unsafe situations that could not have been planned for, ASUN was able to maintain a service that will increase safety while limiting undue expenses. These strategies summarized here are estimated to have saved students over $30,000 through the end of the 2009-2010 school year. The efficient operation of this service should not be construed to mean that ASUN doesn’t care about the safety of students who are in unsafe situations that they can plan for. Instead, enforcement of 475-RIDE policies has highlighted, and will continue to highlight, other student needs. Transportation is an issue after night classes and housing is an issue for international students. Addressing these issues directly will limit students’ tendency to rely on 475-RIDE.
Specifically, the Internal Vice President was active in responding to students who had received warning emails, developing budget recommendations, developing data analysis strategies and maintaining records about enforcement. Additionally, the Internal Vice President worked to create a history for the program that gives the policy enforcement the longevity necessary to maintain a healthy program.

Diversity Strategic Development Committee
The Diversity Strategic Development Committee passed its first Diversity Plan this year, actively engaged Recognized Student Organizations and put on a dinner to encourage appreciation and interaction among people of diverse interests and backgrounds. The committee also helped put on an International Student Involvement Reception after the fall Student Involvement Fair. The Internal Vice President’s main role on this committee was to act as a resource, be a liaison and advocate among the executive committee and provide critical feedback. For more information about this committee and its actions please refer to the Diversity Strategic Development Committee Year End Report.

The Big Event
This year was The Big Event’s fifth at UNL. On April 10, the 19 members of the Executive Team and the 35 Operations Staff Members brought together over 2,100 university volunteers with 140 volunteer locations. This year was The Big Events most successful year of sponsorship increasing past numbers by nearly 100 percent. Additionally, this was the first year that the day of the event was organized from the Campus Recreation Center. It was located on the four basketball courts below the elevated track. This was also the first year that volunteers were sent to private residences.

The participant survey was put online through Google forms this year and received a similar response rate as was seen in the past. However, the mode of communication likely changed the type of people who responded. In the past, those with complaints may not have come back to fill out surveys whereas people close to the event would be more likely to come back. Instead, the online form allowed individuals who had complaints an easier way to communicate their thoughts.

This year the celebration was changed to emphasize breakfast and lunch with a movie showing the following day. Cost was saved by not including a dinner or post-event celebration the day of the event. The movie did not receive good feedback with 25% participation out of the 1000 movie tickets given out. Some of this was likely due to poor advertising, but overall it is not a recommendation for the future.

The year was wrapped up with two members of the executive team going to Virginia Tech to observe their event and bring back recommendations. Recommendations and ideas based on the experiences at Virginia Tech include that the celebration team should attempt to collaborate on a large concert associated with the event, but otherwise should continue to focus on breakfast and lunch. Online sign-up should continue to be emphasized and should be expanded to jobsite requests. Solutions to matching difficulties remain elusive, but if jobsites have an online signup process then a data management system could be used to match sites and organize tool requests. Use of private residences as volunteer sites should be expanded and this will require a closer relationship with the City of Lincoln. Finally, The Big Event Executive Committee should be reconstituted to better distribute responsibilities and address growing needs.

It is apparent that there are many opportunities for improvement with The Big Event this coming year that will guide its growth for the next five years.
RecycleMania/Sustainability
One of the major campaign platforms of the CONNECT party was to advocate for an improvement in sustainability efforts on campus. The Internal Vice President was involved in a stadium cleanup day after a Husker football game as well as revitalizing involvement in the Environmental Resource Center (ERC).

The Internal Vice President was also responsible for a proposal to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs that received $6,000 to fund UNL’s participation in RecycleMania for the first year ever. ASUN collaborated with the ERC to put on the event. Nearly all of the student effort was run out of the ERC and this was determined to be in the best interest of sustainability efforts among students on campus, giving these efforts a home even whether emphasis or support within ASUN is there for sustainability efforts or not. The first year was disappointing as UNL finished 181st out of 267 in the Grand Champion division representing a recycling rate of about 22%. Previously reported numbers for recycling on campus were around 30-35%, but this often included construction and other numbers that could not be included in the competition. Major improvements were made in the accessibility of recycling on campus especially in the residence halls. This improvement only serves to highlight the need for a change in the attitude of students toward waste if recycling is to be more successful.

Sustainability efforts among students on campus remain disconnected. Aside from the ASUN President, the student positions on the Chancellor’s Commission on Environmental Sustainability remains the most direct and influential way that students can influence policies or efforts on campus that pertain to sustainability. Additionally, the Environmental Resource Center is the most promising home of consolidating efforts among students. It is recommended that any future efforts focus on utilizing these two groups.

Communications
In February, the Internal Vice President approached the Freshman Campus Leadership Associates to develop a recommendation for improving student communications on campus. This would likely include a computer platform that can effectively and efficiently communicate campus events. Additionally, this could include an expansion of Student Involvement Information Strategies to become a Design Center that RSOs can utilize. This type of Design Center could be modeled after the one found in the student involvement office at the University of Missouri. Better communication is necessary because there exists an inability among students to effectively communicate events to other students beyond their own social networks. This limits students’ ability to broaden their experience at the university. Attention should be given to this issue in the future as the technology to address it exists. A more vibrant and interactive campus life could be encouraged through a greater support for more efficient and well-publicized communication among students.
External Vice President

AMANDA CROOK

Incoming Student Outreach
Vice President Crook worked closely with New Student Enrollment (NSE) throughout the summer and academic year. In the summer, External Vice President Crook spent time each morning discussing student government activities and involvement opportunities with all incoming freshmen students. Throughout the year, Vice President Crook continued a relationship with NSE by working with program director Patrick McBride and the University Admissions office to ensure student government issues and activities will continue to be represented to incoming students.

College Advisory Board Efforts
External Vice-President Crook worked to improve ASUN’s relationships with college advisory boards. Vice President Crook hosted meetings with all of the college advisory board presidents. These meetings resulted in communication of each college’s unique challenges and ideas for solutions useful for other colleges. Also resulting from these meetings were ideas on how ASUN Senators can better represent the students in their colleges.

Government Liaison Committee
Additionally, Vice President Crook spent a significant amount of time working with the Government Liaison Committee. Vice President Crook worked as the Executive Committee liaison, aiding GLC members in generating project ideas and in project follow-through. She also chaired the Secretary of State’s Student Advisory Council, which grew its membership this year to include students from college campuses around Nebraska. The Council seeks to more fully engage college students in the electoral process.
Projects worked on included:

- Textbook adoption
- Textbook rental policies
- Undergraduate Online Bulletin Preparation
- ACE Education Outreach
- Implementation of a University of Nebraska History Class
- Research into new curriculums to be implemented at UNL
- UNL Open Access Week
- 15th Week of Policy – inclusion of a reading day
- Support of International Education Week

Textbook Adoption
The Academic Committee continued efforts on textbook adoptions at UNL, recognizing textbook adoption is a great way for students to save money by driving the prices of textbooks down. Efforts will be continued over the next year, looking for increased faculty involvement in the textbook adoption process.

Textbook Rental
As rental textbooks are becoming a more popular option among students it is important to protect students from fine print policies that textbook rental companies operate under. We have researched the policies of Chegg.com, the Nebraska Bookstore, and textbookrentals.com and are ready to publish those results in the DN over the summer in hopes that students can benefit from a better understanding of these policies.

Online Undergraduate Bulletin Preparation
As the undergraduate bulletin moves to an online format this summer ASUN participated in focus groups to provide student feedback on the functionality and effectiveness of the new bulletin. Work will continue with the bulletin in hopes that it can become progressively better over the next year.

ACE Education Outreach
Implementation of the new ACE program and guidelines began in the Fall 2009. The Academic Committee has assisted with feedback on the program to the Office of Undergraduate Studies. The Academic Committee also worked with the Freshman Campus Leadership Associates to get feedback on registering and working with the ACE website.

Other projects
Additionally, the Academic Committee continued support for academic programming, including UNL Open Access Week and International Education Week. The Academic Committee, per the bylaws, also dealt with the 15th Week Policies at UNL. Committee members researched and advocated for new curriculum to be added to course offerings at UNL.
Academic Fees Advisory Committee

EMILY GREENE

Projects worked on included:
- College Technology Fee Review
- Added Smartcarts in the City Campus Union
- Information Services Facebook Page
- New Student Information System

College Technology Fee Review
Each year the committee requests and receives an expenditure breakdown from each college regarding the college’s use of AFAC monies. Rather than allocating these sums, AFAC ensures appropriate spending by the colleges in an expenditure review. The review for this year was completed in February.

Added Smartcarts in the City Campus Union
Three additionally smart carts have been purchased through Pam Holley-Wilcox and are being shipped for use beginning in the Fall 2010. A review will be done in 2014 by AFAC to evaluate the costs to maintain or replace the smartcart equipment.

Information Services Facebook Page
Information Services utilized AFAC in their creation of a Facebook page which aims to familiarize students with services provided by IS. The page will hopefully make information about the use of student technology fee money more accessible and mainstream for students.

New Student Information System
Implications of the new student information system for UNL students were evaluated by AFAC members. AFAC will be instrumental in keeping an open line of communication with students in their evaluation and feedback for improvements and additions to the new system.
Projects worked on included:
- Sustainability
- Campus Night Life
- Wheelchair Basketball
- International Student Representation
- The Shirt
- Smoking Ad-Hoc Committee
- Transportation
- Environmental Issues Representation

Sustainability
The Campus Life Committee worked with Greek houses through Greek Affairs to promote sustainability. There are plans to host competitions in the fall semester to identify the “Greenest” Greek house as well as the house that has improved their sustainable efforts the most. The committee prepared a report that is available in Greek Affairs and in the ASUN office to help Greek houses get started.

The committee also paired with an ENVR 489 class as part of their capstone project to identify sustainable projects already occurring in University Housing, looking for ways to improve. Before ASUN can pass legislation that directs Housing or other campus units to work to promote better sustainability, we must first have a better understanding of what is already occurring.

The Campus Life Committee worked with Internal Vice President Coburn in UNL’s participation with RecycleMania for the first time this year. The Campus Life Committee worked to develop passives and recruit Greek houses.

Campus Night Life
The Campus Life Committee had a delegate on the Campus Night Life Committee (CNL) which met once a week to plan upcoming campus events. CNL hosted about one event each month this year and found success in student attendance.

Wheelchair Basketball
The Wheelchair Basketball event was hosted by ASUN on March 28 and raised more than $1,000 for scholarships. Again the Omaha Red Dogs team participated in the tournament’s championship game.

The Shirt
The year saw great progress in expanding The Shirt program throughout campus and beyond in the future. This year, 1,600 shirts were sold. Since $5 from the purchase of each official Husker football shirt directly funds ASUN’s 475-RIDE service, and because this year particular strain was put on the 475-RIDE budget, new outlets were explored successfully to generate additional revenue.

The Shirt Committee worked with New Student Enrollment and during incoming student orientations throughout the summer, The Shirt will be explained and advertised to all new students and their parents. The committee also worked to strengthen its relationship with the Athletic Department. This relationship has increased Athletic Department support for the project and has enabled The Shirt to be sold on the department’s official website and may include
advertising time throughout the football season. Additionally, the committee began working with the Nebraska Alumni Association to inform alumni chapters across the country about The Shirt in hopes that alumni may be interested in purchasing The Shirt.

Transportation
The Campus Life committee looked into possibilities for more frequent transportation between UNL’s City and East Campuses on the weekends. The committee was successfully able to work with Parking & Transit Services to develop a Sunday route between the campuses to run from approximately 10a.m. until 7p.m.
Communications Committee

Matt Kelly

Projects worked on included:
- ASUN Town Hall
- ASUN Candidate Information Session
- “Meet Your Senator” Posters
- International Student Outreach
- ASUN Website Updates

ASUN Town Hall
Following some misunderstanding and a change in policies, the Communications Committee hosted a town hall forum for students regarding 475-RIDE. At the town hall, students were able to voice their concerns and have questions answered about the ride service by ASUN’s executives.

ASUN Candidate Information Session
Prior to the March ASUN election, the Communications Committee hosted an event for all candidates to describe the rule and methods of campaigning. Each party running, as well as some individuals, attended the event.

“Meet Your Senator” Posters
Posters introducing individual senators were created and displayed in the college buildings respective to each senator. The posters included the basic information about each senator, like name and major, along with a picture and what the senator hoped to accomplish in ASUN.

International Student Outreach
Though sometimes difficult, the Communications Committee worked to improve communication with international students through work with the International Affairs office on campus. Little progress was made, though projects in tandem with the Campus Life and Diversity Strategic Development Committees were semi-successful.

ASUN Website Updates
The committee worked closely with John Wojtasek to develop an updated ASUN website. The new website is set to match the new University format and will be unveiled in the coming year.
Freshman Campus Leadership Associates

Stephanie Lee

Projects worked on included:
- Big Red Road Show
- ASUN/FCLA Website
- Fundraising for Haiti
- Volunteering
- The Parade

In the first semester, FCLA meetings are run by the Director and Associate Director, but in the second semester, Directors of the Week are assigned in pairs to lead each meeting and create their own agendas under the guidance of the Director and Associate Director. A new committee was created for the group this year, ASUN Fun—responsible for serving as a liaison for projects and ideas between FCLA members and other ASUN members. Throughout the year, guest speakers were brought in to share with the freshman various campus and general involvement opportunities.

Big Red Road Show
In February, FCLA designed a booth and staffed the University’s annual Big Red Road Show recruiting event. The booth advertised to new students both FCLA and ASUN in general, through interactions with the prospective students and handouts designed by the freshmen.

Fundraising for Haiti
Following the earthquake in Haiti, FCLA members developed ideas for a fundraising campaign to benefit those impacted by the storm. Freshmen placed collection buckets at strategic locations on both City and East Campuses and were able to collect more than $1,400 to donate to the American Red Cross.

Volunteering
A significant aspect of FCLA is outreach within the University community and beyond. This year, FCLA members organized a letter-writing drive through AnySoldier to send encouraging mail to United States soldiers abroad. The group also volunteered their time at the Malone Center in Lincoln and participated in Relay for Life—raising money through a bake sale in the City Campus Union.

The Parade
As members new to FCLA in the fall, freshmen work with the previous year’s FCLA to put on the University Homecoming Parade. As outgoing FCLA members, freshmen begin planning the parade for the following year. From the outgoing group, a parade chair and logistics chairs are selected to work most directly with the parade throughout the summer. In the fall, those older students become the leaders together the new and old groups complete the jobs necessary in parade execution as a transition of groups.
Government Liaison Committee

DAVID BARMORE

Projects worked on included:

- National Legislation Tracking
- Big XII on the Hill
- State Legislation Tracking
- Senator Luncheon
- StarTran Changes
- Lincoln Haymarket Arena Project
- Miscellaneous GLC projects

National Legislation Tracking

**HR 3221** would eliminate the private student loan industry and use the savings to increase Pell Grants and other scholarship programs. After being included with the healthcare reform bill, this issue became somewhat complicated. Without becoming involved in the contentious health care reform issue, GLC lobbied Nebraska’s delegates solely on the student lending issue and advocated for the positive impact it could have for students.

**HR 1283** would repeal the military policy of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” a policy with implications for university ROTC students. After meeting with different university ROTC administrators and generals, GLC felt strongly about this issue and it was included in talks with Nebraska delegates at Big XII on the Hill.

**HR 1954** would promote college affordability. While the actual bill is practically defunct in Congress, it allowed GLC to brainstorm options in making college affordable.

Big XII on the Hill

March 22-24, four members of ASUN traveled to Washington D.C. to take part in the annual event, Big XII on the Hill. UNL’s attendees this year included the outgoing and incoming presidents, ASUN Speaker of the Senate and GLC Chair. Legislation discussed is included in the National Legislation section of this report. In 2011, UNL will host this event for the other schools in the Big XII.

State Legislation Tracking

**LB 258** would increase penalties for minors in possession of alcohol. GLC worked closely and successfully with Shelley Stall in Student Legal Services to see that certain amendments were added to the bill to make the penalties practicable for students.

**LB 1001** would repeal the Nebraska Dream Act, thus forcing children of undocumented immigrants to pay out-of-state tuition at all Nebraska universities and colleges. The bill never made it out of committee, but GLC and ASUN were prepared to be firmly against the legislation.

State Senator Luncheon

Usually in April, the luncheon was moved to February this year. As an important University budget year, it was important that ASUN represented students to the state senators early in the session and as often as possible. Over 30 senators attended alongside nearly 20 students.

StarTran Bus Shelter

GLC’s local subcommittee researched an additional bus shelter at the intersection of 23rd & S Street. After getting in contact with Parking & Transit Services, the item was included in the Parking & Transit Services presentation to CFA. CFA and the ASUN Senate both passed
Parking and Transit’s proposal, including the amount required for the construction of a new bus shelter. Implementation of the new shelter should begin in the near future.

Lincoln Haymarket Arena Project
Multiple members of GLC worked with former ASUN President Matt Schaefer to help educate students on campus about the project’s benefits and also encourage students to vote in the Lincoln May primary election. GLC held many voter registration drives and events in support of the arena project.

Miscellaneous GLC Projects
NU Government Day is an annual event hosted by the Secretary of State’s office. Representatives from UNL, UNK and UNO were invited to witness state government in action. UNL representatives benefitted from this experience.

GLC members of the local subcommittee met with Milo Mumgaard, Mayor Beutler’s Senior Policy Aide for Sustainability to discuss how ASUN can better work in conjunction with the Mayor’s office in sustainability projects directly pertaining to students.

GLC members also looked into issues of pedestrian safety and sidewalk accessibility at UNL. After meeting with members of the City of Lincoln Engineering Services, GLC had the information necessary to construct an informational pamphlet. This pamphlet regarding pedestrian safety will be distributed in the ASUN office as well as around campus.
Special Topics Committee

RYAN FETTE

Projects worked on included:

• Bylaw A: CFA Bylaws
• Bylaw B: ASUN Agenda
• Bylaw C: Recognized Student Organizations
• Bylaw E: Laura Cockson Steering Committee
• Bylaw F: RSO Non-Discrimination Language Change
• Bylaw G: Veterans and Military Affairs Representative
• Bylaw H: Amend ASUN Bylaws & Special Rules- Chief of Staff
• Bylaw I: The Shirt

Bylaw A: CFA Bylaws
Bylaw A recognized proposed changes to the Committee for Fees Allocation Bylaws.

Bylaw B: ASUN Agenda
Bylaw B mandated that the ASUN Senate agenda be published by 12:00pm (noon) the Tuesday before Senate meetings and also declared the structure of the agenda for all Senate meetings.

Bylaw C: Recognized Student Organizations
Bylaw C removed from RSO mandatory language and policies that only an RSO’s primary advisory may approve the expenditure of funds. The change enables any RSO advisory to approval fund allocation, a change encouraged by Student Involvement.

Bylaw E: Laura Cockson Steering Committee
Bylaw E changed the mandatory committee membership for the Laura Cockson Steering Committee, the committee responsible for selecting the annual scholarship recipients. The bylaw change reflects changes in committees that used to participate in the selection process.

Bylaw F: RSO Non-Discrimination Language Change
Bylaw F changed wording in the mandatory language of the RSO Non-Discrimination policy to more explicitly recognized that discrimination based on a person’s sex is not to be tolerated on campus.

Bylaw G: Veterans and Military Affairs Representative
Bylaw G came about after input from students determined that the Campus Life Committee would benefit from an additional committee person, a Veterans and Military Affairs Representative.

Bylaw H: Amend ASUN Bylaws & Special Rules- Chief of Staff
Bylaw G established the position of ASUN Chief of Staff.

Bylaw I: The Shirt
Bylaw I updated the bylaws to better position ASUN’s The Shirt committee to pursue continued success in funding the 475-RIDE program.
Miscellaneous

Projects included:

• Student Money Management Center
• ASUN Election Rules/Online Voting
• Fan Behavior
• Wellness Referendum
• ASUN Office Updates

Student Money Management Center
After a successful proposal last year to the administration, the Student Money Management Center was founded. Staffed by a full-time coordinator and student money mentors and funded by a $150,000 contribution from Pepsi money made by the Chancellor, the center is beginning to find success in ensuring financial literacy among students on campus.

The center is the result of a partnership between Dr. Kathy Prochaska-Cue with Child, Youth, and Family Services, Dr. Franco in the Vice Chancellor’s Office and ASUN as well as a commitment to better preparing students to manage their finances. Much of the year was spent determining how best to approach financial education for students on campus, developing a mission, goals, education ideas and values for the Student Money Management Center.

ASUN Election Rules/Online Voting
With the advent of online technology over the last several years, the Electoral Commission recognized these developments by overhauling many of the election rules this year. The new rules better define the commission’s oversight in online campaign activities.

In its second year, online voting has not only again increased voter turnout, but it also increased the ease and speed of election night vote counting.

Fan Behavior
After incidents at two of the Husker home football games of cultural insensitivity, ASUN was called upon to work with the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Office as well as the Athletic Department to help create a more culturally aware student body, particularly at sporting events.

Wellness Referendum
After last year’s unsuccessful referendum for new recreation and health centers and improvements to an existing recreation center, there were hopes that the committee could again put forth a student referendum this year. After much deliberation on how best to successfully approach students with ideas of these facilities, it was decided that more time was necessary. The Wellness Committee will continue working in the coming year expecting to put a successful referendum forward in the fall semester or with the ASUN elections in the spring.

ASUN Office Updates
The Communications Committee worked to improve the ASUN office by researching new mailbox costs and configurations. New mailboxes should be ordered for the office in the coming year. The committee also researched potential for a new logo to be placed in the window of the ASUN office.