

UNC-CH Student Parent Association Vision & Growth Strategy

December 2008 -2013

UNC-CH SPA Mission: Provide resources, support, avenues for advocacy and social networking opportunities to pregnant and parenting UNC students, postdoctoral fellows and medical residents. This includes, but is not limited to peer support, provision of information, practical resources and opportunities for social activism. Feedback and involvement from the group is essential. The expertise, interests and experience of members are important dynamics and are reflected in the structure of the organization.

UNC Mission and the role of UNC-CH SPA: As a public institution in the state of North Carolina UNC Chapel Hill is dedicated to, “serve all the people of the State...as a center for scholarship and creative endeavor. The University exists to teach students at all levels in an environment of research, free inquiry, and personal responsibility; to expand the body of knowledge; to improve the condition of human life through service and publication; and to enrich our culture.” UNC SPA is dedicated to removing the barriers that can prevent student parents from succeeding at UNC. The group is dedicated to working with administrators and faculty to support student parent friendly initiatives at the university level in addition to networking with community organizations that may benefit this student population.

History: The UNC Support Group for Pregnant and Parenting Students began in August of 2007 under the umbrella of the Carolina Women’s Center. Initial leadership was provided by Donna Bickford (Director) and Corrie Piontak (MHA candidate in the School of Public Health). The group began with twelve members. Through the networking of the leadership team the organization incorporated additional leadership from UNC’s Office of Work/Life Management (Aimee Krans) and Campus Health and Wellness (Sara Stahlman). During the academic year Monthly meetings were held to provide students with resources and support. These meetings included both informal student discussions and presentations by outside organizations (Child Care Services Association, American Association of American Women). The group also published a virtual *Resource Guide for Pregnant and Parenting UNC Students* that can be found online on the following websites: Carolina Women’s Center, UNC HR Work/Family Life Office and the Graduate Professional Student Federation. The guide is also available in print or electronic format at the UNC Office of Scholarships and Student Aid and the Family Violence Prevention Center of Orange County. In addition it is used for outreach purposes by School of Social

Work Students and UNC Family Medicine Clinic. The group held two social events during its first year: a fall picnic and spring potluck, both of which were moderately attended. At the end of the academic year the group had grown to 72 members.

The 2008-2009 academic year began with the name of the group changing from “UNC Support Group for Pregnant and Parenting Students” to UNC CH Chapel Hill Student Parents Association (UNC SPA) and additional students became involved at the leadership level. Informal morning coffee meetings were held monthly during the fall term and a Halloween social event was co-sponsored with the Graduate Professional Student Organization and the Graduate Student Center with an estimated 60+ individuals attending this event. A childcare co-op was founded by graduate student Lilah Bessler in Baity Hill Student housing and received support from the group. At the beginning of November the group had a membership of 82 (listserv) and 78 (Facebook page). Many individuals are dually listed on the listserv and Facebook. Overall membership estimate is 110.

Need for UNC SPA: There is a need for a campus wide group that brings together undergraduate, graduate and post doctorate parenting students. The membership numbers on the listserv and Facebook page is evident of this need. Presence of the group will result in UNC retaining and attracting highly qualified student parents. No campus group exists to meet the needs of pregnant and parenting students. There are two parenting groups within professional schools (Law and Business) however, their emphasis is on supporting the student and spouse who attend that professional school. There is also an emphasis on the spouse in a supporting role which does not represent the larger University community, especially undergraduate students. In addition these groups are not involved in providing practical resources or opportunities for activism.

Gains for UNC SPA through University Recognition

1. Use of specified University facilities, property, services, or equipment pursuant to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s Facilities Use Policy.
2. Use of the University’s name in the organization’s title, so long as University sponsorship or endorsement is not implied or stated.
3. Access to funding from the Student Activity Fee and other University sources reserved for officially recognized organizations (grants etc).

4. Assistance of the Division of Student Affairs including, but not limited to, Carolina Leadership Development, Carolina Union, Disability Services, and the Student Activities Fund Office. Available services include: leadership training and educational workshops, general organizational advisement, assistance in publicity and marketing and program planning advisement.

Membership: Membership is targeted toward pregnant and parenting undergraduate, graduate and post doctoral students; however membership and participation is open to all students without regard to race, color, age, national origin, religious status or historic religious affiliation, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

Structure: Meetings and/or social events will be held monthly as determined by the social chair or leadership team. The leadership team will actively work to create a visible presence of the group on campus.

Leadership Team: [officers and duties]

- A. Faculty Sponsors from 3 UNC Institutions
 1. Carolina Women's Center
 - a. Campus wide outreach
 - b. Administer Child Care Scholarship fund
 - c. Advocacy for parents
 - d. Participate in student leadership selection and transition
 2. Campus Health Services and/or Counseling & Wellness Services
 - a. Campus wide outreach
 - b. Advocate for healthcare services for parenting students (esp. relating to maternity care and mental health care services)
 - c. Participate in student leadership selection and transition
 3. UNC HR Work/Life Office
 - a. Initiate Childcare student fee request annually

- b. Promote childcare opportunities through Carolina Kids Camp, Helping Heels List and other methods as available.
- c. Participate in student leadership selection and transition
- d. Updates UNC Resource Guide annually

B. Co-President(s): One undergraduate and one graduate student

- a. Presides at meetings
- b. Serves as liaison between students and university community
- c. Assists in planning activities
- d. Must be a full time student

C. Vice President

- a. Oversees budget
- b. Maintains financial records
- c. Fundraising
- d. Applies for external funding
- e. Assists in planning activities
- f. Performs duties designated by president
- g. Must be a full time student

D. Secretary

- a. Maintains web presence
- b. Maintains listserv
- c. Advertising for events
- d. Maintain record of meetings and events
- e. Must be a full time student
- f. Update application for appointments

E. Special Projects Manager

- a. Oversees long term projects (ex. Child Care Co-op, Resource Guide distribution)

- b. Open to part time student

F. Social Chair(s) [this position is on a monthly rotation basis]

- a. Plan monthly social or speaker event
- b. Open to part time student

Transition of Leadership: A leadership transition will occur in Feb/March for the upcoming academic year. Leadership is by appointment with current leadership identifying viable candidates or member's at large expressing interest. Leaders will be selected by a committee of the faculty sponsors and outgoing President(s) and Vice President. Applicants must provide the following information to be considered:

1. Completed Application
2. Current Resume or CV
3. References(2)
4. Sign authorization for a background check

Addendums: Addendums must be approved by majority of the leadership team. Renewal of University recognition must be completed by the Secretary by Sept. 30th of each academic year. Details on renewal can be found online @ http://carolinaunion.unc.edu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=56&Itemid=91

