

Students protest Chick-fil-A

BY VIVIANA BONILLA LOPEZ
STAFF WRITER

College students nationwide are accusing Chick-fil-A of promoting homophobia along with their chicken sandwiches.

But UNC students haven't fully taken up the cause.

Students at nine universities are demanding the fast food chain be banned from campus due to what they consider to be company support of anti-gay organizations.

"Chick-fil-A preaches hate, it funds hate and it actively works against the equal rights for the LGBTQ community," said Tyler Offerman, student leader of the petition at Florida Gulf Coast University.

Students at Offerman's university sponsored the first online petition at Change.org — a website that allows anyone to start a petition for social justice issues — in January.

The petitions started in response to student governments' efforts to put the franchise in their recently renovated student union.

As of 10:45 p.m. Tuesday, 19,564 people from all over the U.S. and abroad have signed Florida Gulf Coast University's petition.

Their goal is 25,000 signatures. UNC's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Center is taking a neutral stance.

"They are a private business," said Terri Phoenix, the center's director. "People have the ability to support a private business or not."

Chick-fil-A is being criticized for supporting organizations like Ruth Institute, which promotes the idea of "one man, one woman for life."

The food donations and funding

Petitioning at:

- Louisiana State University
- University of Mississippi
- University of Arizona
- Indiana University Bloomington
- Texas Tech University
- University of New Orleans
- University of North Texas
- Florida Gulf Coast University

of retreats to these organizations is the main reason for the petitions, said Michael Jones, an editor of Change.org.

"We are a platform for these students to raise awareness about Chick-fil-A's anti-gay ties on campus," Jones said.

But at UNC some students are reluctant to start a petition.

"Food and beliefs are completely separate," said UNC sophomore Rayna Singh.

Some students said they will boycott Chick-fil-A, but not sign a petition.

"I haven't eaten it since I found out about that," freshman Stephen Mooneyhan said. "I don't think I really would justify taking it away from other people."

Campus food service administrators said removing Chick-fil-A from campus dining would have economic consequences.

"Since we have three Chick-fil-A's on campus it would cost from \$1 million and a half to \$2 million," said Mike Freeman, director

BY THE NUMBERS

20,960

signatures gathered by colleges as of 8 p.m. Tuesday.

41,500

Overall signature goal

9

colleges which have petitions on change.org

of Auxiliary Services at UNC.

The school's athletic department also has a contract with Chick-fil-A, which sells food at games, he said.

Chick-fil-A has denied that they are homophobic.

"We have no agenda against anyone," said Dan Cathy, Chick-fil-A president and chief operating officer, in a recent press release.

"While my family and I believe in the Biblical definition of marriage, we love and respect anyone who disagrees," he said.

The company pledged to support marriage.

"To do anything different would be inconsistent with our purpose and belief in Biblical principles," Cathy said.

Contact the State & National Editor at state@dailytarheel.com.

BIGELOW

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him down.

"We can't have a town that's the judge and the jury," he said. "I don't see the town doing anything until they're made to. We may have to continue the fight."

After their original appeal hearings with Deputy Town Manager Florentine Miller were unsuccessful, Bigelow and Clark each requested an additional open hearing with the town's personnel appeals committee.

The results of Bigelow's second appeal, which were originally set to be released Feb. 17, are slated to come out today.

Town Manager Roger Stancil can choose to follow the advice of the committee or make a different decision.

No matter what decision the town makes, both Bigelow and Clark said they will continue to try to regain their jobs.

"I'm prepared for whatever they say," Bigelow said. "I'm living my plan right now, and I'm on the right track."

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NURSING

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order to make the mandated budget cut, Swanson said.

Chancellor Holden Thorp told administrators to plan to enact cuts of at least 5 percent.

Even if universities don't directly reduce enrollment, cuts in faculty or course offerings would hinder students from completing a nursing degree on time — if at all, Grant said.

"It may not seem like it's going to be such a big impact here in the Triangle, but it definitely will in other parts of the state where they're already grossly underserved," Grant said.

Western Carolina University's School of Nursing will not cut

MENTAL HEALTH

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nothing has been finalized.

David Carter, chairman of the Alamance-Caswell board, said the board began to meet and talk with other entities but decided on Piedmont Behavioral Healthcare because of its vast experience in the Medicaid system.

Mental health care providers are also encountering regulations because of a reform movement aimed at providing better services to county residents.

The introduction of the Critical Access Behavioral Health Agency system required smaller providers to conform to certain state regulations to receive Medicaid reimbursement funds.

To fit the model, agencies must provide five core services, such as outpatient therapy and a community support team.

"There were services that were not being offered by these agencies because they were not lucrative," said Mark Van Sciver, spokesman for the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services. "They were only providing services that were making money."

Van Sciver said some providers

did not fit the requirements and were forced to merge with others to fit the model.

Truitt said the system has addressed many problems, but no one anticipated how many agencies would be certified as Critical Access agencies.

As of January, 1175 agencies had been certified, according to a speech by Beth Melcher, assistant secretary for mental health, developmental disabilities and substance abuse services for the health and human services department.

"That was an unintended consequence of the CABHA effort. The state thought a lot of the agencies would not be able to achieve the status," Truitt said. "We have limited resources — (the state) can't support all of the providers."

Carter said he has mixed feelings on the health care reform that sparked these new regulations.

"It's hard to move forward when we don't have the funds to back it up. Someone isn't receiving the services they need," Carter said.

"Did North Carolina handle it the best way they could? No, absolutely not."

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School of Nursing.

But if cuts exceed 5 percent, school administrators would first increase class sizes, ask faculty members to teach more classes or decrease the number of part-time faculty members, Baldwin said.

If those measures don't save enough money, the school will consider cutting enrollment, she said.

"When you start cutting student enrollment, that means you've got to cut faculty," she said.

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ART FOR THE ILL



DTH/JAMES CARRAS

Julie Pace, director of the Brushes with Life: Art, Artists and Mental Illness gallery, opens the exhibit on Tuesday. The gallery features work by patients at the UNC Neuroscience Department. All revenue goes to the artists. Read the full story at Canvas at dailytarheel.com.

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