

# Candidates espouse ideals at debate

## Bailiff and Carter reveal SGA goals for 2006-2007

By **KIMBERLY WALKER**  
Staff Reporter

The Student Government Association (SGA) held its annual presidential debate Mon., March 20 in the cafeteria. A fairly good crowd assembled to listen to the candidates answer questions from the moderator, Dominique Evans, and questions from Vol State students.

The presidential candidates are Tia Bailiff and DeWayne Carter. Both are members of the SGA. Carter is the president and SGA representative of the Vol State Singers and Bailiff is the current SGA vice president. Both are also involved in extracurricular activities and have spent a great deal of their time helping others.

Bailiff has been known to have volunteered her time to Vol State students by helping with their club activities and has dedicated herself to the SGA, creating new legislature for the past two years, and initiating the first SGA presidential inaugural ball.

Carter recently won the student minority leadership award acknowledging his contributions to the community. He has also volunteered his time to coach junior varsity basketball for the last two years and successfully reorganized the music department's fundraising efforts, grossing the largest amount of funds for them in Vol State Singer history.

The debate began with Bailiff giving her opening statement. She dramatically pulled out a bucket partially filled with mud, from behind the podium, and declared that this was all the mud that Vol State students were going to get from her because she was not going to run a dirty campaign. "When composing this speech I had several choices about what I can speak to you about today. The most supreme of these choices being to continue running a clean campaign or to retaliate against all that has been said about me by slinging mud," Bailiff said.

She said to her this was still no choice and that she refused to degrade the good name she helped established to the SGA by dragging it through a negative campaign. Bailiff went on to discuss what she had achieved such as drafting legislature for two years, helping numerous student organizations with their projects, and assisting individual students as well.

In Carter's opening statement he began by saying, "It is indeed an honor and a privilege to stand before you all today, my peers, my friends, my family." He said that he did not write a speech because he speaks from the heart and wanted to be able to look the audience in the eyes. "I did not prepare a speech today. I was always taught that when you speak to someone you keep eye contact and you speak from the heart," said Carter.

He also went on to say, "Speaking from the heart... I would just like to say... that I held nothing against my

"If you want a president that will work hard, I'm your man. If you want a president that will stand side-by-side with you during the battles, during the fire, during the flames, I'm your man."

In response to Carter's remarks and a question asked concerning the candidate's level of experience, Bailiff reiterated the fact that she had served the students for two years.

"When I say I have served you for two years and you haven't seen me and you don't know my things, it's because I've been working so hard, that I run so fast that you don't have a chance to see me," said Bailiff.

"I'm here for you students," continued Bailiff. "I've been here as the vice president of the College Democrats. I've been on every single committee that the SGA has for one year, since I have been eligible. I am the president of the National Society of Leadership and Success, I'm vice president of your Student Government Association right now. But, all these titles don't matter guys, it's not the titles that constitutes experience."

A Vol State student asked Bailiff, "What are your goals and plans for the future, what can you offer that [Carter] can't and vice versa?" In response to the question Bailiff said, "I don't think it is a question of what I can offer that he couldn't. I think it is more of a question of the ideas I have that I really would like to take action on."

Some of her ideas consisted of strengthening the bonds between the administration and the students and on the support of controversial projects like the Vagina Monologues. Carter said, "I would like to increase the bond between the students and the SGA."

When asked what qualities he had for the position of SGA president Carter said, "I have respect. I'm honest. I'm organized. I'm trustworthy. I'm definitely a working man."

Bailiff responded "I'm passionate for you. Passion is a driving force in each individual thing a person does. I haven't been involved for just one semester; I have been involved for two years because serving you is what I love to do."



SGA presidential candidates Tia Bailiff and DeWayne Carter  
PHOTOS BY SARAH KINGSBURY/TIMMY CLAYTOR

opponent." He talked about issues that he felt the SGA had failed to act upon.

Starting with what was written on his opponent's posters, Carter said, "The posters outside, state that my opponent has served you all for the last two years. My opponent just stated that she has served you all for the last two years. But, it has become increasingly obvious that a majority of you students don't know what the SGA is, don't know what the SGA does, or even how it affects you and to me that is sad." He relayed how the SGA had failed to inform the student body and how his opponent had failed for two years. "How is it that someone could serve you for two years and you not know what they look like?"

He said he wanted to know what kind of president they wanted. He asked the audience what type of president they wanted and if they "want a president that's behind-the-scenes and doesn't inform you or do you want a president that you know is going to work hard, be down there in the trenches with you, and stand before you and let you know what exactly is going on?"

## Reporting error raises questions about eligibility of candidate to run for SGA office

By **SARAH KINGSBURY**  
Editor

The SGA presidential elections spawned debate once again last week after The Settler prompted investigation of the grade point averages of each candidate. The SGA constitution requires presidential candidates to have a GPA of 2.75 or higher.

The office of student life discovered that one of the candidates, DeWayne Carter, does not have a GPA that meets the standards set forth by the SGA constitution.

According to the SGA constitution, it is the responsibility of the election commission to ensure eligibility of any candidate running for office within the SGA. However, according to federal privacy laws it is illegal for any member of the administration at a college or university campus to disclose a student's GPA to another student.

"The office of student life made an error in reporting to the election commission the GPA of one of the candidates," explained Dr. Monique Robinson-Wright, director of student life.

Robinson-Wright emphasized that the mistake was due to no fault by the SGA and that she alerted the election commission quickly after the error was discovered.

The election commission met last Monday to determine what action should be taken and decided to allow Carter to continue with the election, placing him on academic probation, allowing him the chance to raise his GPA by the end of the semester.

However, the judiciary committee met late last week and ruled that the election commission's decision to place Carter on academic probation was unconstitutional.

This decision was overturned once again when Carter discovered a loophole in the SGA constitution which made the decision of the judiciary committee null and allowed the elections to continue as planned.

"They didn't act according to protocol," said Carter. "Since they didn't act by protocol, they can't govern me by protocol."

The elections will continue as planned today and tomorrow.