Gruwell: Every kid deserves another chance

By Lauren Marget
Staff Writer
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Ass. Around the Campus Editor

Erin Gruwell told the distinguished speaker’s series audience Sept. 15 that originally she wanted to fight battles in the courtroom. She then decided to fight battles in the classroom and make a difference in a teenager’s life.

“Every kid deserves that second or third chance,” Gruwell said.

The movie, Freedom Writers, based on her life, was shown a week before her speech. Freedom Writers is about Gruwell’s journey as she taught teenagers in a racially divided high school during her first year of teaching.

During her speech, she referred to Darius and Maria, two of her students in her class. Darius had said, “I felt like I came from an undeclared warzone.”

The first day of class, Maria walked in with an ankle bracelet and a probation officer.

“She, Maria, as her students called her, knew this was going to be a challenge, but she was going to try anyway. Her 150 students were told constantly by others, that they were “dumb, stupid and were not going to amount to anything.” So the question was, “Did she wanted to believe it? Gruwell knew she had to do something different.

Gruwell went out and spent her own money on the Audio of Time book week for students to read. Surprisingly, they became very interested in the story.

Gruwell may have been shot down by administrators, but she did what she had to do change these kids’ lives around. And she did just that.

Gruwell was very inspired in her speech and brought keeping up the fact that there was a group of high school students sitting in the audience.

At the end of her speech, a student asked a question, “What were your initial thoughts on when they wanted to make your story a movie?”

Gruwell responded, “We wanted it to be believable, so it was scary at first, but we made it work when we held auditions for ordinary kids from everywhere in the U.S.”

Begin being involved in a diverse classroom is thought to be a beneficial learning tool for all students.

“Diversity creates a better learning environment because students are able to see different ideas from students of other cultures,” said Dedra Sanderson, box office director.

Students in need of it, but have been inspired to attend class and collaborate with students from different cultures.

By Dustin Porter
Around the Campus Editor

Despite repeated warnings by the University, the number of illegal downloading of peer-to-peer (p2p) files remains at the highest level as last year, according to Dr. Robert Orr, associate vice chancellor for information resources and chief information officer.

“We’ve seen a lot of them,” he said. “Same as last year.”

Due to the Higher Education Reauthorization Act, we have to let the entertainment industry monitor our network,” Dr. Orr said.

One important about this act that requires UNCP to let the big guys monitor our little campus?” Financial aid for students.

By Kalehe Sampson
Layout Editor

Colleges and universities around the nation stand out for different for different reasons. Some emphasize sports, others promote academic programs or their student life environment.

While all these areas of college life are important, UNCP stands out among other universities in our region because of its diverse student population.

UNCP was recognized in U.S. News & World Report as one of the “most diverse universities in the South.” In the spring semester of 2010 the total minority enrollment was 58 percent.

Although student diversity may not be a major concern for most prospective students, it is an important element in the campus environment that should be considered when selecting a university to attend.

“It is important to understand other cultures and respect them,” said Robyn Deemer, study abroad coordinator.

The diverse student population at UNCP provides students with the opportunity to interact with students from different cultures.

“Diversity is important because it helps students appreciate the way other people see things,” Deemer said. “It provides another viewpoint.”

UNCP students are able to attend class and collaborate with students from around the world. In the spring semester of 2010, 106 international students representing 14 countries visits the University for teaching has inspired current teachers like South Carolina’s teacher of the year, Carol Jackson, who will be featured in a book titled “Erin Gruwell: No Lessons Lost” about her colleague speaker and help change the U.S. education system.

“I thought that she was really driven,” James Bell, a junior, said. “Being an education major it’s good to hear a story like that.”


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University recognized as most diverse in Southeast

By Kailehe Sampson
Layout Editor

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Illegal file sharing still high

By Dustin Porter
Around the Campus Editor

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