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## Campaigns: Political activists support candidate in blogs

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tasks," DuSaint said.

Her experience is typical, Candee said.

"Students are usually given the more mundane tasks to test them and then get the more exciting assignments later," Candee said.

Most interns and volunteers end up canvassing neighborhoods, answering phones, stuffing envelopes or doing other campaign chores.

Despite that, DuSaint has been happy with the internship.

"It's been a great experience," DuSaint said.

"She's learned a tremendous amount," Candee said. "She really didn't have a lot of experience, and now she's a lot more competent."

Stan Pulliam, political director for Republican gubernatorial candidate Kevin Mannix, sees student involvement in campaigns as a good jumping off point for a career.

"They learn how to work in a business setting in a high pressure environment," Pulliam said. "It's the best way to make politics a career."

A former chairman of the University College Republicans, Pulliam said his campaign work as a student helped him make contacts and forge relationships which have helped his career in politics.

"It gives the campaign a way of testing a possible staffer," Pulliam said, "and gives the student a way to figure out if that is a career they want to pursue."

Candee has headed the internship program at LCC for 16 years and said working with campaigns can teach students things they never could learn in a classroom.

"They get an appreciation for the complexity of campaigns," Candee said.

Feedback he has gotten from campaigns over the years has shown that campaigns aren't worried about a student's lack of experience.

"They aren't concerned about skills coming in," Candee said. "They're willing to train, as long as the students are willing to commit."

Candee sees a possible lack of commitment as the main drawback to using students as volunteers.

"There is the possibility of a student losing interest or dropping out," Candee said. "If they're getting credit or a grade, the reliability level and commitment is larger."

Cost is another big reason why campaigns will take on a student with very little experience, Candee said.

"There's the old saying that if you give them a title you don't have to pay them," Candee said.

He sees the pool of cheap labor as a major advantage to local campaigns that may not have the resources to advertise and must rely on door-to-door meetings and other tactics.

Kim Leval, Sorenson's campaign manager, said students bring a new perspective to their campaign.

"They bring energy, great ideas and help us stay in touch with different generations," Leval said.

She also appreciates the work of students, which helps free her time so she can concentrate on other activities for the campaign.

Sara Walker, campaign manager for Sorenson's potential opponent Vicki Walker, sees campaign

involvement as a way for students to influence the candidates they work for.

"During the legislative session, a small percentage of calls come from students," Sara Walker said. "Involving students helps drive issues that matter to students."

Though students may not have experience, they make up for it in other ways, Sara Walker said.

"We have experienced people on our staff," Sara Walker said. "It doesn't take experience to go door to door. It doesn't take experience to tell someone why Vicki Walker should be governor. That comes from the heart."

Some students have found other ways to support candidates besides volunteering or interning.

David Gulliver and Miles Rost both want to see Sen. Jason Atkinson (R-Central Point) elected governor, and they are working to make that happen. But neither works officially for the campaign or has ever set foot inside the campaign office.

The two University students are both bloggers and members of the Jason Atkinson for Governor of Oregon Blog Network, an organization Gulliver set up to unite bloggers who support Atkinson.

Gulliver runs "Resistance is Futile!" (gullyborg.typepad.com) and Rost runs "Do or Die" (semperfidordie.blogspot.com).

Before the network was created, Atkinson reached out to Oregon bloggers through e-mail and set up a meeting with the pair, solidifying their support.

Gulliver sees Atkinson's support of new media as an example of what all politicians should be doing. He sees traditional campaign advertising, such as television commercials, as less capable of integrating all the facets of a campaign together the way the Internet does.

"Those commercials will suggest you contribute to the campaign, but they don't give you a way to do it," Gulliver said. "You can have a great Internet page, and here's a button so you can donate to the candidate."

Gulliver sees blogs in particular as having other advantages.

"My blog is not simply an Atkinson campaign tool," Gulliver says. "It's a source of information on a variety of subjects that can reach out to a broader audience. People who are interested in those subjects find my blog and then stumble on the Atkinson Web site."

Rost sees his role as a blogger for Atkinson as pointing his readers in the right direction to make their own decisions.

"When someone looks at my page and sees the network, I want to be able to tell them 'here is the information' and let them do the investigating," Rost said.

With more than a year until the general elections next November, most campaigns still have very few students involved, but now that school has begun and the elections begin to loom closer, that could change.

Students looking to volunteer for a campaign should contact the campaign's headquarters.

Contact the city, state politics reporter at [chagan@dailyemerald.com](mailto:chagan@dailyemerald.com)

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