



From The Center Out

*The Newsletter of the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research ... A voice for good government
January-February-March 2004*

CENTER EVENT FEATURES FOUR TOP POLITICAL CAMPAIGN CONSULTANTS

On March 25th, the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research will hold our biennial event open to Center members and the public. This year, we'll feature "An Evening with Four Political Campaign Consultants." The panel discussion will feature two Democratic and two Republican political campaign consultants — two of whom work nationally and two of whom work mainly in North Carolina.

The Democratic campaign consultants are Gary Pearce of Raleigh and Diane Feldman of Washington, D.C. Pearce advises political candidates and a number of corporate and nonprofit clients on issues, political strategy, and media. He directed Jim Hunt's 1992 and 1996 campaigns for Governor and John Edwards' campaign for the U.S. Senate in 1998. Feldman is one of the nation's top women pollsters and political strategists. She was the consultant for Dan Blue's campaign for the Democratic nomination for the U.S. Senate in 2002, she handled nine states for the Clinton-Gore Presidential ticket in 1996, and she was the pollster for Sen. Bill Bradley and the late Sen. Paul Wellstone.

The Republican campaign consultants are Neal Rhoades of Kernersville and Whit Ayres of Washington, D.C. Rhoades has worked for Richard Wirthlin's polling firm and was a consultant for Elizabeth Dole's campaign for the U.S. Senate in North Carolina in 2002. He also was southern political director for President George W. Bush in 2000. Ayres' firm's clients include U.S. Senators Bill Frist and Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, and Paul Coverdell of Georgia. His comments and analysis appear periodically in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* and on CNN's "Inside Politics" and "Crossfire."

"The work of political campaign consultants, pollsters, and media strategists is a mystery to many people. We hope this event will help open up the process to the public and help citizens understand the important role that campaign consultants play in our democratic election process," says Ran Coble, director of the Center. Coble says the event also will give citizens a preview of major campaign themes these consultants think will be important in the 2004 general election and of the political parties' differing visions for the state's and nation's future.

This is the fifth event the Center has co-sponsored with the N.C. Cable Telecommunications Association and Time Warner Cable since 1996. Mack Lee of Time Warner Cable's News 14 Carolina channel will serve as moderator. The event also will be videotaped and shown on cable TV stations across the state.

The event will be held the evening of Thursday, March 25th at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel in Research Triangle Park. Each Center member will receive a special invitation. Members of the public also are welcome. Call Laurita Ray at the Center at (919) 832-2839 for details or register by emailing lray@nccppr.org. Write us at P. O. Box 430, Raleigh, NC 27602, fax (919) 832-2847, or check our website at www.nccppr.org.

Coming Soon from the Center!

March: 3/25/04: *An Evening With Four Political Campaign Consultants*

- April:**
1. *North Carolina Insight* theme issue on areas where race, ethnicity, and state government intersect
 2. *Rankings of the Effectiveness of the Members of the 2003 N.C. General Assembly*
 3. *The University of North Carolina Board of Governors: Selection, Powers, and the Board's Relationship to Campus Boards of Trustees*

Center Offers Workshops on Policy Analysis and Evaluation of Higher Education

In partnership with The Ford Foundation, the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research is conducting a three-part series of workshops for students, faculty, and members of the public interested in policy analysis and evaluation of higher education. The workshops are being provided at no charge to students and faculty in North Carolina colleges and universities with programs in public administration, higher education administration, and public policy analysis. These sessions are being held at the Albert Coates Local Government Center in Raleigh, the space courtesy of Margo Christensen and the North Carolina League of Municipalities.

The purpose of these workshops is to nurture a group of young professionals and help expand the number of policy analysts in the field of evaluation of higher education programs. The Ford Foundation and the Center are convening the workshops as part of a major project to evaluate the governance of North Carolina's public university system and as a service to faculty and students in our state's public and private colleges and universities.

The Center is using various aspects of its previous research and of the current study of public university governance to illustrate real-world challenges in the analysis of public policy with a focus on the special challenges of analyzing higher education policy. At the first workshop in February, Center director Ran Coble presented case studies from some of the Center's previous work which highlighted the importance of framing fair, balanced, open research questions. His examples were drawn from the Center's studies of the governance of higher education in all 50 states, the pros and cons of state lotteries, and North Carolina's experiment with charter schools. Center policy analyst Sam Watts discussed the importance of obtaining good data and explained how the Center goes about defining information needs. His examples included comparing three different sources of data on North Carolina's college-going rate and various ways of comparing North Carolina's rankings among states in spending for higher education.

At the second workshop in April, the Center will review the challenges in analyzing research findings and writing policy papers and reports that the public and policymakers will want to read. At the third session, also in April, we'll discuss the process of releasing policy reports to the public and the challenges of placing an important policy issue on the public agenda and gaining the attention of policymakers. If you are interested in attending, please email Tammy Bromley at the Center at tbromley@nccppr.org.

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A New Option on Your Tax Form for Public Financing of N.C. Judicial Elections

North Carolina income tax filers will find a new option on their income tax forms this year which will allow them to designate \$3 toward the North Carolina Public Campaign Financing Fund. Checking the box will not reduce the amount of your refund or increase the amount owed to the state. The program will provide public funding for candidates for the state Supreme Court and Court of Appeals and also will cover the expenses associated with publication and distribution of a nonpartisan Voter Education Guide to appellate-level judicial elections. Candidates decide to participate in the program by agreeing to limit their overall spending and fundraising from private sources. The public financing provisions accompany a shift to nonpartisan elections for appellate judges, similar to the system now used at the trial court level.

Two former governors, Democrat Jim Hunt and Republican Jim Holshouser, have endorsed the check-off. If you have questions about the new program, call the nonprofit N.C. Center for Voter Education at (919) 839-1200 or email Danielle Brown at brown@ncvotered.com. The box on the state income tax form will look like this:

N.C. Public Campaign Financing Fund	
This fund pays for a nonpartisan voter guide and helps fund judicial candidates who accept strict fundraising and spending limits. Do you agree that \$3 should go to this Fund? Filling in a circle below will not increase your tax or reduce your refund.	
<u>You</u>	<u>Your Spouse</u>
<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> Yes
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