

Di Phi Helps in Improving Speech
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University seniors can show their oratory skills in a speech contest sponsored by the UNC Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies.

In a seven to nine-minute speech, entrants must present and defend a view on a subject appropriate for a University society and relevant to today's concerns, said Di Phi Historian Angela Lamm, a junior from Rocky Mount.

Any senior is eligible for the contest to be held March 25 at 7:30 p.m. in the Dialectic Chambers of New West. Entry forms are available at the Union desk and must be turned in to James Pence in 211 Bungham no later than March 20. An outline of the speech must be submitted to Pence by March 22, and participants must turn in a full manuscript of the speech the night of the contest before taking the floor, Lamm said.

Four faculty members and one student will judge the contest, and the winner will be announced after the speeches have concluded, Lamm said. The winner will be awarded the Willie P. Mangum Medal, a gold medal that he will receive at a Chancellor's banquet on a later date, Lamm said.

Di Phi is the oldest organization at UNC, starting in 1795 after the campus opened, Lamm said. It is a speech and literary society, but Di Phi once served as the student government and produced the Yackety Yack, Lamm said.

Originally he separate Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies, Di Phi combined as one society in the 1950s, Lamm said.

"Carolina's colors originated from the fact that one society adopted blue and the other adopted white as their colors," said member Rick McGee, a senior from Lookout Mountain, Tenn.

Lamm added that Thomas Wolfe was a member of Di Phi.

"The purpose of Di Phi is to practice public speaking and to have a forum open to different opinions," Lamm said. "We have many different programs at our meetings, ranging from speakers and debates to readings from plays and literature."

McGee said his ability to communicate had improved because of Di Phi. "People become more self-confident and (Di Phi) sharpens your way of speaking, even though it is not a high pressure group."

DI Phi's meetings begin with light topics, known as ice-breakers, that produce spontaneous reactions from group members. As the meeting continues, heavier topics are introduced.

"It is an opportunity for people to become better speakers in a less formal setting, " Lamm said, "We can try different things, and not have to worry about saying them"

Membership is open to all UNC students and alumni. To become a member of Di Phi a student must attend three meetings. On the third visit, the student petitions either Di or Phi, then gives a three to five minute-speech on any topic he chooses. Current members then vote acceptance of the petitioner.

Lamm said that students living east of Orange County petitioned the Phi Society, while those living west of Orange County petition the Di Society. Out-of-state students can choose which society to petition, she said.

Di Phi has 15 to 20 members, and Lamm said she would like to see the membership grow.

McGee said, "It's more than I had bargained for. I urge students to come by."

Di Phi meets Mondays at 7:30 p.m. in the Dialectic Chambers on the top floor of New West.

For more information about the speech contest contact Angela Lamm at 967-3728.