Students march at pro-choice rally

By Natasha Bhuyan
The University of Arizona, Tucson

WASHINGTON — Thirty UA students joined hundreds of thousands of activists yesterday to show their support at the March for Women's Lives pro-choice rally held at the nation's capital.

Members of Students for Choice, the Women's Studies Honorary, UA Medical Students for Choice and Planned Parenthood of Southern Arizona attended the rally on the National Mall to support reproductive freedom, sex education and women's rights.

Kelly Knoe, a women's studies junior and president of the Women's Studies Honorary, said she was proud to show the nation that the UA is pro-choice because many people believe Arizona is "some little Republican state."

"I believe that it is extremely important for young people to speak out for issues that are important to them and will impact the future," said Kelley Brooks, a pre-education sophomore and member of Students for Choice.

Demonstrators cascaded through the streets of Washington, D.C., playing drums, chanting and carrying colorful signs such as "Keep your Bush out of my bush," "Pro-child, pro-family, pro-choice" and "Bush supports abortion: lucky Laura."

Organizers said the primary goal of the march was to send a message to political leaders and inspire the next wave of pro-choice movement in America.

"There have been 400 pieces of antiabortion legislation at the state level since 1995," said Kathy Quissell, executive adviser to the Women's Coalition. "It's time to change the social landscape of the U.S."

The $3 million March for Women's Lives, sponsored in part by the American Civil Liberties Union, Black Women's Health Imperative and the Feminist Majority, included a two-mile march.

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Tucson considers 2 percent renters’ tax

By Zach Coleck
The University of Arizona, Tucson

UA students who rent houses or apartments in town say they’re angry that they may have to pay a 2 percent renters’ tax that would help the City of Tucson balance an estimated $1 billion budget.

The Tucson City Council and the city manager will meet tonight at a public forum to discuss the possible renters’ tax, which would help the city pay for new services by taxing the roofs over renters’ heads.

But students say helping the city out of its financial burden isn’t their problem to solve, and it shouldn’t cost them more money.

The city council should try and balance the budget by taking money from people who make hundreds of thousands of dollars per year rather than college students and middle-class families who can’t afford it, said Bryan Kenney, a media arts junior.

"It’s already expensive to rent in Tucson, and since most students live in apartments and homes are UA students who don’t need and who can’t afford an additional financial burden, even if it’s only 2 percent," Kenney said.

Marcos said UA students already contribute "immensely" to the city’s economy, and that the city should look at other means of raising funds before taxing renters.

However, not all council members are in favor of the tax’s creation.

Steve Leal, Ward 5 council member, said he believes the new tax could cause financial stress to both students and middle-class families who have a tough time paying their current bills.

"This wouldn’t be fair at all to families who would be paying more. It would hurt them severely," Leal said. "Too much of Tucson’s money comes from families like those who wouldn’t be able to afford even this 2 percent hike."

But some UA students say the tax is a good idea if it increases city services and helps balance the budget.

See RENT/11

Admin says more minority faculty hired

By Thuba Nguyen
The University of Arizona, Tucson

More than one year after the UA announced a comprehensive action plan to recruit a more diverse faculty, administrators say they have increased faculty diversity, though some faculty say they’ve seen little change.

"There is a diversity agenda, and that is to reflect the population in all areas of the university," said Edith Auslander, senior associate to the president.

Juan Garcia, vice provost for academic affairs, said the university “is making a conscious effort to get more minority faculty.” He added that while some faculty are concerned "it’s been slow," others “say there’s been improvement.”

By taking an inventory of the current faculty in 2002 and using that information to develop a plan, faculty diversity has increased, he said.

The university “has been actively trying to recruit minority faculty,” he said.

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Students ‘battle’ for dorm bragging rights

By Jesse Lewis
The University of Arizona, Tucson

Almost 350 residents of Coronado and Arizona-Sonora residence halls turned out Saturday afternoon for the first “Battle of the Towers” Olympics event between the halls.

The competition, held on the volleyball courts behind Park Student Union, was established between the two towering residence halls to determine the campus giant.

The event featured events like the Chuckey Bury, competition, where students stuffed large marshmallows in their mouths as teammates cheered them on.

The four-hour event also included games like “Saved by the Bell” trivia, football toss and a spelling bee.

Coronado won the competition after the halls tied in seven events, forcing a tiebreaker. For winning the contest, Coronado got a trophy that will be displayed in the hall.

Johanna Kotyk, a political science freshman, said it was great to have the two