Students confront police about underage drinking

By Ty Young

Students banded together to show their displeasure with law enforcement tactics and motivations at the underage drinking forum last night. The forum, organized by Republican City Councilwoman Kathleen Dunbar, addressed issues relating to neighborhood relations and community standards, but students in attendance were most vocal about their thoughts on recent police attempts to quell underage drinking.

"You think the guy whose fake ID you took this past weekend is not going to drink this weekend?"

ASUA Senator Kartikeya Kayriwal.

"He's probably going to drink more because of it."

Kayriwal was one of two students who said the problems caused by underage drinking are based in American cultural norms. He said the crackdown on underage drinking will not sway students from finding their way to alcohol.

"Enforcement is not going to stop the drinking," he said.

Much of the student frustration was directed at Capt. John Leavitt of the Tucson Police Department. Leavitt, a vocal supporter of stopping underage drinking, got into a number of exchanges with students questioning police tactics.

"I'm taking shots from people who will grow out of it," he said. "Look, I understand where they're coming from. I was a student once too. But the issue is that people are being raped, beaten and killed."

Dunbar received a measure of criticism from Daniel Lattis, Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity alum board president.

"I think you are walking a fine line, possibly violating people's civil rights while attempting to get your point across," he said.

He added that fraternity houses are in unfair situations when surrounded by residential homes in the Jefferson Park neighborhood just north of campus.

"We all at all times have at least six people on the premises," he said. "We are going to have to have a lot of cars...