

# KING OF CLUBS

## The Pugh Center has become the source of debate on club funding, privileges

By DREW BUSH  
STAFF WRITER

Over the years since its construction, the Pugh Center has become known as the Ritz Carleton of club offices. Clubs that receive rooms in the Pugh Center find themselves in well-furnished offices that come with a phone and computer.

According to Student Government Treasurer Rob Painter '01, many other clubs have to pay a monthly fee to have a phone in their office and do not have computers provided for them. In addition, Pugh Center clubs are located squarely in the center of campus while most other offices are located in dorms. Many student leaders question this inequity between how clubs in the Pugh Center are treated compared to other clubs.

"I think it is a problem," said Painter. "By default of being a club in the Pugh Center you get all this great stuff while clubs located in other places have a hard time getting the proper resources."

Clubs are funded in accordance with how many activities or programs they sponsored in the preceding year. However, this equality of funding doesn't change the fact that clubs located within the Pugh Center have an inherent advantage in terms of resources and location.

For example, according to Painter, performing arts club Powder and Wig has had trouble attaining the computer it requested.

"If some clubs have the ability to have free access to a phone and computer, I think all clubs should," said Powder and Wig Vice President Jordan Raphael '02. "We never really had an office and I'm glad that we got one this year."

Part of the explanation for this inequality has to do with the mission of the Pugh Center since its inception. Lisa Plume Hallen, Director of Student Activities, explained that the Pugh Center was built to



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*Rob Painter '01*  
SGA Treasurer



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*Lisa Plume Hallen*  
Director of Student Activities



REBECCA SOLOMON

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*Rebecca Solomon '00*  
Director, Colby Volunteer Center

"provide a hub and a common ground for activities that promote understanding in an increasingly diverse community."

In addition, the Pugh Center was designed to hold spaces specifically for the Asian American Student Association, Asian Cultural Society, Hillel, The Bridge, Colby Christian Fellowship, Colby International Club, Muslim Group, Newman Council, Students Organized Against Racism, SOBHU, the Woman's Group, and Student Government Association. Two additional vacant offices were filled by Amnesty International and Four Winds.

"We don't deliberately intend to give more support to certain clubs," said SGA President Benjamin Humphreys '00.

While Painter added that he doesn't feel that other clubs should be simply moved into the Pugh Center, because it would take the center a step away from its goals, he feels other clubs have the right to phones and computers paid for by the college. In addition, he has tried to make sure that all clubs wanting an office space have one this year.

"It's hard for us to afford the phone in

our office because this is only our second year," said Mark Paustenbach '01, editor of the Political Affairs Reader. "So it's difficult to pay just the costs of printing and running our magazine."

Recently, the Pugh Center has also come under criticism because some of the clubs have not been very active. According to Humphreys, many of the clubs located in the Pugh Center do a good job organizing activities related to multicultural understanding; however, there are some clubs that don't do such a good job. He cited, for example, clubs that have a membership as

low as four students.

One club, for example, that has come under question is the Four Winds, which is devoted to expanding understanding on campus about Native American cultural diversity, history, and contemporary issues. The club has been criticized because some students feel that last year it was relatively inactive. This year, the club is not even funded by SGA. Yet, no other clubs were ever moved into its office space.

However, Jeffrey Anderson, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and advisor to Four Winds reports that this year there are 10 students involved with the club and they have "already helped to sponsor two major speakers, Charlene Teters and L.J. Foley."

"The myth about Four Winds inactivity from last year was based only on the fact that the officers were remiss in reporting their activities as required at the end of the year," he said.

In addition, Anderson continued that he supposes "the counter-argument would be that more students would be served by reallocating the Pugh Center office currently assigned to Four Winds."

"On the basis of the principal of utility, or what serves the good of the greatest number, American Indian lands were taken, Africans were enslaved, and other minorities have had their humanity set aside," he said. "It is really a bad principal when it services only to numbers."

According to Humphreys, the fact remains that there are clubs that are still relatively inactive. Naturally, this criticism begs the question of whether these inactive clubs should have their placement in the Pugh Center reconsidered. The situation becomes even more complicated when it is also taken into consideration that there are many, more active clubs.

"My main point is that I want the CVC

See CLUBS, continued on page 4

**CLUBS: Pugh****Center office  
space creates  
controversy***Continued from page one*

to be more accessible to people who stop by," said Director of the Colby Volunteer Center, Rebecca Solomon '00. The CVC is located in what used to be a closet in Eustis. "The offices [in the Pugh Center] are dead. I feel that if more mainstream clubs were placed in the Pugh Center, even on a rotating basis, it would liven up the center. It's unfair to the minority groups there that more people of other groups don't come into the Pugh Center often. It would help everyone on campus."

According to Painter, when the Four Winds Club was thought to be inactive, an attempt was made to move the CVC, the second largest club on campus, into the vacant space. For reasons relating to the charter of the Pugh Center's goals, this move didn't take place.

"You just can't do it," said Painter.

According to Hallen, in order for clubs to maintain spaces in the Pugh Center they must attend monthly Pugh Center Alliance meetings, sponsor one program each semester around set themes and sponsor a collaborative program once per semester with another department or program.

Furthermore, Hallen noted that whenever spaces become available "notification will be made to all sanctioned student organizations."

"Any sanctioned student organization may apply for vacant space," she said. "A group consisting of the Dean of Students for Intercultural Affairs, the assistant Director of Student Activities, and a representative from each group currently housed in the Pugh Center will review the request and make a recommendation to the Dean of Students."

In terms of finding a comparable office space for the rest of the clubs on campus, Humphreys felt that "If [clubs] organized and expressed need and interest it could motivate the school" to do something.

While many of the clubs in the Pugh Center remain active participants in Colby's community, student leaders and administration say the debate's core question remains unanswered: How can we revitalize and best use the office space that the Pugh Center provides while remaining true to its stated goal of multiculturalism?