

Grand jury probe finds more 'illegal' voting at UCSC

The problem of illegal voting on the UC-Santa Cruz campus hasn't been solved yet, if the latest report of the county grand jury is accurate.

The grand jury reported last week that its current investigation — which is a continuation of the probe carried on by the preceding grand jury — had determined that nearly 200 people voted on the UCSC campus in last November's election who did not reside on the campus.

If that figure is accurate, the best that can be said for it is that it represents at least some progress from the situation in the 1983 Santa Cruz City Council election. The grand jury

charged that at least 472 votes were cast on campus in that election by people who didn't reside on the campus.

That charge led a coalition of Santa Cruz conservatives to challenge the results of the election, which had kept the conservatives in the minority on the City Council. In the subsequent trial, however, Superior Court Judge Harry F. Brauer ruled that only 110 of the votes had been cast illegally, not enough to influence the outcome of the election. That decision is now on appeal.

During the trial, Judge Brauer — who has since been elevated to the state Court of Appeal — sternly lectured the other challenged voters, mostly

students, and urged them to register in precincts in which they actually resided.

The grand jury's latest revelation indicates that many continue to maintain their registration on the campus even though they have moved to off-campus residences, or perhaps never lived on campus at all.

Grand jury Foreman Paul Bihler said that the jury used records subpoenaed from the university, as did last year's grand jury, to arrive at its conclusions. He said the names of the approximately 200 individuals who voted at the university illegally will be turned over to the district attorney's

office. Included, he said, are the names of 75 people who did not even attend the university at the time they cast their ballots.

Bihler said the investigation also turned up the information that precinct workers on the campus "allowed over 50 (individuals) to vote at the university," even though "they had entered on the roster an off-campus address as their place of residence." The foreman said that information will be given to the elections department "for corrective action."

Aside from the allegedly illegal voting, the grand jury probe also discovered "over 600 names of individuals who no

longer live at or attend the university" and who did not vote but "continue to be listed on voter registration rolls."

Bihler said this "graphically illustrates the need for Santa Cruz County, through the Board of Supervisors and the elections department to petition the State

Legislature" for permission to conduct a program to purge the voter-registration lists of such names.

Bihler said the grand jury is continuing its investigation and "will analyze selected precincts throughout the county" for possible similar violations.

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