Coordinator Hopes to Reach Community
by SCOTT DAMELIN

Tufts Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Community Coordinator Donna Penn said yesterday that in her newly created position, she hopes to create outreach programs to the Tufts community as well as a broad-based coalition with other students organizations.

Penn, who also teaches an Experimental College course, was hired to serve in the part-time position for a one-year period.

In an effort to promote outreach to the Tufts community, Penn said she would like to be invited to classes and explorations to discuss lesbian, gay and bisexual issues.

“We want to educate the broader Tufts community, provide support to our constituency and become more visible and accessible,” Penn said.

She said she needs to establish a groundwork to be as effective a coordinator as possible for the group, but that because her position is part-time, it will be hard to accomplish this task.

“I haven’t faced any insurmountable problems here as of yet,” Penn added.

At the end of October, TLGBC will be cosponsoring an AIDS Awareness Program with other groups, including the Dean of Students Office, the Tufts Community Union Senate and the Health Education Department. There will be a table and video at the Campus Center to provide information on AIDS.

“We want to demystify the idea that AIDS is primarily a gay disease,” said Penn.

Penn also said that the TLGBC will produce a journal in April concerning the lesbian, gay and bisexual experience in another outreach attempt.

Penn said that the two rooms that TLGBC has in the Hayes House do not provide enough space to satisfy the growing needs of the group. She added that she sees TLGBC, page 18.

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was unsure whether any efforts were being made to get a center for TLGBC, but that work would be done during the year to acquire better facilities.

“So far, the problems I’ve had are largely in communications. I’m in kind of an awkward position because I’m being paid by the Senate, not the Administration, so I don’t always hear about some meetings and other things until it’s too late. I’m sure it’s a kind of Administrative oversight,” she said.

Penn’s salary of $4500 is being paid by the Senate for the year, according to Senate Assistant Treasurer Matt Freedman. “Our original hope was that the Administration would pay an additional $4500 for a total salary of $9000, but that just didn’t happen,” he said.

Freedman said that this was really an Administration expense and should not have to be paid out the Student Activity Fund.

Last April, following an appeal from the TLGBC, the Senate allocated $4500 to create a position for a part-time, professional coordinator for the TLGBC. The Senate had urged the Administration to assume full responsibility for hiring the coordinator.

He added that although no major action is now being taken, the Senate’s views have been presented to the Administration and the TLGBC has been encouraged to follow it up.

Penn received a B.A. in History from the University of Massachusetts at Boston and a M.A. in American Studies from Brown University. She is presently working on her Ph.D. dissertation at Brown.

Penn has previously taught at Brown and is now teaching an Experimental College course titled Homosexuality in America: A Historical Analysis.

Penn is also an editor of the Radical America, a local journal from Somerville that deals with leftist and feminist politics and history.