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## Local/Vermont

Thursday, November 29, 2007

### Class turns Champlain students into Darfur activists

Published: Sunday, November 18, 2007

By Matt Sutkoski  
Free Press Staff Writer

BURLINGTON -- Sure, Victoria Lee and Samantha St. Pierre wanted to raise awareness of the situation in Darfur to boost their grade for a project in their class on small-group communications.

But that motivation paled in comparison with the extent of the crisis in Darfur and their desire to do whatever they could to help, the two Champlain College students said. So, they beat the bushes around the college, putting up signs, spreading information and getting persuading 418 people to sign an Amnesty International-sponsored petition prodding President George Bush to work more with the United Nations to end the African strife. They mailed the petition Saturday.

Darfur, in western Sudan, descended into chaos in 2003 and fighting between various factions continues to this day. By some

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Yep..student activists...long on talk, short on action... you kiddies really concerned? Then get your butts over there and make a difference you whining pampered dolts.

Posted: Sun Nov 18, 2007 10:13 am

Darfur, from what it appears, would require somebody to take military action. It shouldn't be the US. Our troops in Iraq have taken enough grief from the liberal-socialist antiwar crowd. Today's soldiers are just as hated as they were during Vietnam, although the hippies of today mask their hatred by transparently focusing it on the President. Why would any of our present volunteer soldiers extend enlistments to put up with crap like that? If US action is required in Darfur, then let the hippie-socialists volunteer for military service in units specifically recruited for service in Darfur. How many would volunteer? How many would re-enlist after seeing news of new "protests"?

Posted: Sun Nov 18, 2007 9:59 am

Always funny to watch the libs want us jumping into Dafur while constantly whining about Iraq. Yawn.....

Posted: Sun Nov 18, 2007 7:13 am

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estimates, 450,000 people have been killed and perhaps 2.5 million others have been displaced. The crisis has eluded international efforts to gain peace in the region.


Human rights advocates such as Lee and St. Pierre want efforts redoubled, including the deployment of U.N. peacekeepers in Dar' fur. "We thought we kind of wanted to tell people to get cracking," said Lee, 22, a senior majoring in social work at Champlain.

Lee said she knows a small group of Vermonters won't in itself turn Darfur around, but the petition is part of a larger Amnesty International effort to pressure world leaders to act on Darfur, she noted. The organization is hoping for at least half a million signatures by Dec. 10, said St. Pierre, 20, a psychology major at Champlain.

The two students, along with Emma Bounty, Blair Tino and Emily Normand, also highlighted their information campaign with tie-dye. They wore tie-dye T-shirts adorned with peace symbols. People connect tie-dye with hippies who promote peace, so the T-shirts became a recognizable shorthand on campus for Darfur awareness, Lee said.

The students' small group communications class project — the Darfur petition — is over, but Lee and St. Pierre said they would continue their Darfur activism. Lee said films on the subject are expected to be shown at Champlain. St. Pierre encouraged people to go online at Amnesty Inter' national ([www.amnesty.org/](http://www.amnesty.org/)) to sign the petition.

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