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RU Dems hope for high profile speakers

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The RU Democrats held their first meeting this past Thursday at the Student Activities Center, where they discussed plans for the future.

Getting Hillary Clinton or John Edwards to speak at the University is one plan Rutgers University Democrats President Brett Tinder has in store for the upcoming year. This may be difficult since the first Democratic primaries occur in Iowa, Michigan and Nevada. But Tinder is hopeful.

Among other activities, members of the RU Democrats debated over the best Democratic candidate for the upcoming 2008 elections at the meeting.

Also in attendance was Aaron Feibush, field director for New Jersey Students for presidential candidate Barack Obama.

"Our goal is to get 20 percent of the students to pledge to vote for Obama," Feibush said.

Having received a lot of interest at the activities fair four days prior to the gathering, the club may have managed to entice many new first-year and transfer students.

As the evening got underway, Tinder revealed his future ambitions for the organization - the largest political group at the University, according to the group's Web site.

"We want you involved in the 2008 election no matter who you support," said Tinder. "[We also] want to strike a balance between discussion of the election in '08 and [everything else] we do at Rutgers."

The club is planning two debates against the RU Republicans. The first of these, scheduled for later in the semester, will be held at the fourth floor of the Alexander Library on the College Avenue campus.

Also, students are planning on setting up tables at the dining halls in order to collect letters and useful supplies for soldiers stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan. Members will also be working with Martha Guarnieri from the Eagleton Institute of Politics in an attempt to explain why so many college students do not vote.

"Most people in college are very apathetic," said Vice President Brendan Cassidy, a Rutgers College junior. "[Students] write that they are liberal on their Facebooks but don't do anything about it."

Many students who attended the meeting said they enjoyed the opportunity to talk and debate.

"Everyone at the meeting was open-minded and accepting of those who differed in opinion, or who may not have been Democrats," said first-year student Kaitlin Fischer, adding she would be interested in attending the next meeting.

The RU Democrats plan to meet again this Thursday at 10 p.m. in Room 402 of the Student Activities

Center on the College Avenue campus.

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