

## The Daily Tar Heel

URL: <http://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2012/08/bicycles-shared-on-south-campus>

Current Date: Wed, 22 Aug 2012 15:17:31 -0400

# Bicycle sharing program started on South Campus

By [Liz Crampton](#) | The Daily Tar Heel

Updated: 08/21/12 12:56am

Students daunted by the long trek to class from South Campus may soon find an easier way.

Tar Heel Bikes, a two-year pilot program created by juniors Daniel Allen and Akhil Jariwala, provides free bikes for certain South Campus residents to check out for one-day rentals.

The program's bike racks are located outside Hinton James, Craige and Ehringhaus Residence Halls. Thirty bikes are available for rentals, but only to the residents of these three halls.

But Allen said he hopes the program will expand to include bike racks across campus after the pilot is finished.

Allen and Jariwala created the bike share program to encourage sustainable alternative transportation on campus and around Chapel Hill.

"This program is pretty innovative in the sense that it's closely linked to living," Allen said.

The pilot is sponsored by the Residence Hall Association, the Department of Housing and Residential Education and several other organizations.

Grants and donations from the sponsors pay for the program, which costs about \$40,000, Allen said.

The process for renting a bike is similar to checking out items from residence halls, said Heather Robertson, RHA president.

Bikes are to be returned before midnight on the day they are checked out. Damage or overdue rentals will result in fines, Allen said.

Allen said the program is not just about convenience.

"We want to encourage bicycle transportation as a healthy, clean, sustainable alternative to motor vehicle transportation," Allen said.

"Part of the goal is for students to take the bicycle transportation knowledge and carry it with them their whole lives."

Allen and Jariwala thought of the idea for the bike share two years ago, and approached the environmental affairs committee of student government with a proposal.

The committee then coordinated a bike share task force, made up of 20 students, who researched the possibility of bringing a bike share program to UNC.

"The grants and donations cover all the costs," Robertson said.

"It's essentially a free program."

Jenna Koester, co-chairwoman of the renewable energy special projects committee, which co-sponsors the project, said her group donated the largest sum of grant money.

"We're hoping that with our money and faith it will grow and find some bigger supporters."

"I think it will take a while to catch up but because its tackling a new group of UNC students who aren't familiar with campus life yet," Robertson said.

Robertson said racks were placed in locations where people will use them the most.

"Some people don't like to walk or ride the bus so the bikes are a good option."

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Published August 19, 2012 in Campus

