

avallier Daily

Charlottesville, Wednesday, February 8, 1978

Number 80

Elkins, Martin named program cochairmen

By ROBERT MELTON

Third-year College student Bob Elkins, who a year and a half ago faced removal from his Resident Staff position because of his professed homosexuality, has been named co-chairman of the first-year Resident Staff.

Elkins, currently a Lefevre dormitory Program Assistant, was named to the post along with third-year College student Kerri Martin.

The official announcement of the appointments will be made today, according to Assoc. Dean of Students Chester R. Titus.

Page dormitory Senior Resident Clay Carpenter and Watson Resident Assistant (RA) Aldridge also applied for the co-chairmanship, but were turned down by the Committee on the Resident Staff, which made the appointments.

Elkins is also co-chairman of the Counselor's Committee on Human Sexuality.

A major controversy arose in September, 1976 around Elkins, then a Hancock dormitory RA and president of

the Gay Student Union (GSU), after University President Frank L. Hereford Jr. appointed a committee to advise him on the possible removal of Elkins as an RA.

The eight member committee considered whether a conflict existed between Elkin's position as an RA and his professed homosexuality. After six days of secret deliberations and testimony the panel recommended that Hereford not remove Elkins, a recommendation that Hereford followed. The committee did say, however, that a "potential for conflict does exist."

Elkins' abilities as an RA were "borne out by his efforts with the students assigned to him," the panel concluded.

Elkins had resigned as GSU president a week before the committee made its recommendation.

All four candidates went through a two-step interview process before being named to the co-chairmanship: a presentation and interview before the First-Year Executive Committee of senior residents and program assistants

and an interview by the Committee on Resident Staff, which includes Titus, Dean of Students Robert Canevari and is chaired by Assoc. Biology Prof. Fred Diehl.

When asked whether the appointment to the post might cause further controversy, Elkins said "I don't think so: it (the appointment) has been approved.

Hereford said last night he was "delighted" by Elkins' and Martin's appointment. Hereford declined to speculate on whether the appointment would be controversial adding that, "I was glad to concur in their appointment."

In a prepared statement Elkins said, "I am very happy to have been selected for a position I feel I am well qualified for, and I hope to perform that job to the best of my ability. Furthermore, I am grateful for the support shown to me through all levels of the administration."

Titus said Elkins and Martin will start their new duties this spring when the selection of next year's RAs begins.