

RHA candidates offer diverse representation

By Patty Pryor

Communication needs to be strengthened between students and the Residence Hall Association, RHA presidential candidate Ane Jensen said Monday in announcing her candidacy for the March 4 election. "Relations between RHA and the students it serves have gotten better over the years," she said, "but see a need for improvement."

Jensen and her CLASS Party (Campus Leaders and Student Support) want to heighten resident involvement in RHA by publishing questionnaires and newsletters, posting RHA office hours, publicizing the office's location and encouraging more students to attend the meetings by posting their dates, times and agendas in the Daily Nebraskan.

Students should feel free to approach any RHA member with an issue that concerns them, she said.

"Right now, a lot of students don't know what RHA is, so we're going to try and be a little more visible," said the junior life sciences major from Smith Hall.

Other members of CLASS include vice presidential candidate Russ Pahre, a freshman engineering major from Abel Hall, treasurer candidate Heidi Friesen, a sophomore business major from Selleck, and secretary candidate Vicki Wagner, a freshman horticulture major from Burr Hall on East Campus.

Because the candidates all reside in different complexes, the platform states the CLASS Party can provide "more diversified representation on the RHA executive council."

With representation from both City and East Campuses, Jensen said she hopes to strengthen relations between the two.

More activities involving residents of both campuses should be planned, she said.

The combined experience of the CLASS Party is a definite advantage, Jensen said.

Because all the candidates are involved in RHA, she said, they all ready have the necessary contacts with administrators.

Through these contacts, she explained, a good working relationship has been established, which is important to RHA's success.

"The fact that the regents passed a new visitation policy shows that they'll consider our proposals when we go through the proper channels," she said.

The channels include moving a student's concern through RHA, taking it to the Housing Department and to Richard Armstrong, vice chancellor for student affairs and finally to the NU Board of Regents.

"With a good working relationship (between RHA and administrators), we can accomplish a lot for students," Jensen said.

Architect...

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His last means of grievance would have been to sue the college dean or department chairman.

"The point is not sue anyone for money," he said. "That in no way would correct the situation."

"The only way we could prove we were right was to have the (NU) Board of Regents tell me to go back to work," he said. "It turns out they couldn't do that" because no federal law could back it up.

Dunn, therefore, contacted Sen. Rumery before the beginning of the legislative session, requesting he sponsor a bill.

"I really don't see why we can't have a law that simply says a person or political body shall not discriminate against any person for any reason. Period," Dunn said.

If the bill passes, Dunn said, he will then file a formal complaint with the Equal Opportunity Commission, which enforces the Fair Employment Practice act.

According to Commission Director Larry Myers, the commission position is neutral.

"If the senators and the Legislature believe it's a problem, then we'll carry it out," Myers said.

He said he expects the commission would have no more than a couple of complaints on the "state origin" clause each year and that it would not have a fiscal impact.

According to Rumery's staff attorney, Cynthia Johnson, the addition to the state employment act would not preclude employers from "discriminating" in favor of Nebraskans for hiring.

"If being a Nebraskan were a bonafide occupational qualification then an employer could hire that person," Johnson said.

Dunn said if he were to pursue any further action on the case, it would be to contact U.S. senators for a change in the federal law excluding governing boards from federal discrimination laws.

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