

Official: System not to blame for black plight

By Amy Edwards
Senior Editor

William Parker gave about 45 people a "lesson in black history" Friday night at the Nebraska Union as a part of Black History Month.

Parker, vice chancellor for minority affairs at the University of Kentucky, gave an account of the problems in the black community and his solutions for them.

Parker cited several reasons for the deterioration of the black family, most of which have taken place only in the last 20 years.

Forty-eight percent of all prisoners in America are black males, he said, while blacks make up only 13 percent of society.

In 1940, 17 percent of black families were run by women -- today, 43 percent of black families are run by women, Parker said.

Of all the blacks killed in the United States, 98 percent are killed by other blacks and 61 percent of all

armed robberies are committed by blacks, he said.

Parker also said there was an estimated 60 percent dropout rate for blacks.

But Parker said blacks cannot "blame the system" for these problems.

Some of them exist, Parker said, because many people believe that blacks are still in slavery.

"I don't really believe that we are in permanent slavery," Parker said. "I am not a descendent of slavery. I am a descendent of Africa that just stopped off in slavery."

Racism still exists, Parker said, but the solution to racism and other problems the black community faces is education.

Parker defined the slump in the black community as being at "crossroads."

"We finally made it to the train station and now we don't know which train to take. We're sitting there waiting for someone to put us on the

train." But blacks can, and do, become successful, Parker said. He offered this formula for success: SC + SE2 + U - F = Success.

'We finally made it to the train station and now we don't know which train to take.'

--Parker

SC is self-control, Parker said. "You cannot allow anyone to control your destiny and you cannot blame anyone else for your failure," he said.

SE stands for self-esteem. It is needed to get back up after a failure. U is you, in any situation that comes up, Parker said.

A university is a bureaucracy -- a prototype of the world, he said. Students who survive it and adapt can survive elsewhere, he said.

"College is designed to send you home. Only the strong survive," Parker said.

F equals the fear of fate. To be successful, people must be risk-takers and not be afraid of what might happen, he said.

"I do not encounter much racism because I demand respect and I give it," Parker said.

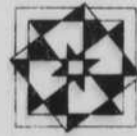
Responding to questions after his speech, Parker said that all schools should have a course in multicultural lifestyles.

"The way the world is today, I think students need to learn something about other people."

Terry Goods, president of the Afrikan People's Union, presented Parker with a plaque on behalf of the black students and faculty at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln at the end of his speech.

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