

Programs aid minorities

Engineering recruits youths

By Rainbow Rowell
Staff Reporter

In the late 1970s, minorities represented less than 1 percent of UNL engineering students.

But two programs through the College of Engineering and Technology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln are working to attract minority students to engineering and prepare them for college.

Tom Sires, a professor of construction systems technology at UNL, said the Mid-America Consortium for Engineering and Science Achievement and the Minorities in Engineering Program were started because something had to be done to enroll and graduate more minority engineers. MACESA began at UNL in 1988, and MIE was started in 1988.

Sires is the coordinator of both programs.

In the past, Sires said, recruitment attempts failed to produce minority engineering students who remained at the university beyond their freshman year.

But with help from cooperating businesses, he said, MIE and MACESA work with schools across

the state. Donations from Chemical Industries for Minorities in Engineering enable the MACESA program to work with students in western Nebraska high schools.

MIE begins recruiting students in the eighth grade, while MACESA works with students in grades nine through 12.

Sires said this year was MIE's first year in Lincoln Public Schools.

At the junior high level, he said, engineers visit students and explain their jobs as well as different types of engineering.

During the summer, Sires said, a week-long on-campus learning experience is offered to selected eighth-grade minority students from schools across the state.

Participants stay in a UNL residence hall and take engineering classes designed specifically for them, he said. All are hands-on classes. Last summer, students built personal AM/FM radios.

"At that age level, it has to be hands on," he said. "They really don't get anything out of a lecture."

At the high school level, Sires said, MACESA is treated as a club and directed by a teacher within each school.

MACESA students at participating universities can attend a yearly two-week summer program,

he said.

Mela Goner, a sophomore mechanical engineering major at UNL, said she became involved with MACESA in the 11th grade. The summer program helped her choose which subfield of engineering she wanted to enter, Goner said.

"We listened to different engineers talk about their fields, and they made the decision easier for me to make," she said.

Goner said she thought the program was helpful even if a student did not pursue a career in engineering.

"It helps minority students to become focused on the future — on a college education," she said.

Sires said he had many goals for the programs, including getting more Nebraskan students involved earlier in school.

He said he would also like to see female students of all races included.

"You see some of these kids, and at some point someone has told them that they can't and they won't," he said. "But you give them a chance, and they can, and they will, and they do."

"We are trying to give the opportunity to succeed to people who have never had that opportunity — to give them the idea of the American Dream."

UNL looks for ways to increase day care

By Sean Green
Senior Reporter

Budgetary and space concerns may hinder plans to improve day-care services on East Campus, an official said Monday.

Because of renovation and a lack of funds, day-care services on East Campus are operating at 60 percent capacity, said Karen Craig, dean of the College of Home Economics at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Craig spoke to members of the Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Women, which is considering ways to increase day care on both City and East campuses.

CCSW serves as a resource for those interested in the status of women at UNL and provides opportunities for women on campus to exchange ideas and offer support to other women.

East Campus' day care—the Ruth Staples Lab—is understaffed because of budget cuts to the home economics college, Craig said.

Four staff members are in charge of the 92 pre-school-aged children cared for by the lab, she said.

Craig said the primary mission of the lab was to provide student-teaching experience for students interested in small-child care.

A second mission of the lab is research, Craig said. Research activities were suspended because of badly needed renovation, she said.

The final mission of the lab is to provide child-care services to the community, she said, but those also have been cut back because of budget reductions.

Craig said she had suggested that the lab consider raising child-care fees from \$70 to \$80 a month, but that plan was rejected because it would have prevented lower-income fami-

lies from utilizing the service. The plan also would have taken away the opportunity for student teachers to work with children from those families, she said.

"Philosophically, I am in favor of increasing child care on East Campus," Craig said. "But the financial reality of that goal is another matter."

Craig said the lab also was one of the most inexpensive and most ethically run day-care centers in the country that emphasized research and instruction.

"I have lots of empathy for those having problems with day care," Craig said. "But in dealing with the reality of our situation, I don't know how much we will be able to do."

Mary Beck, chairwoman of CCSW, said she asked Craig to attend the meeting to open the dialogue and to involve the College of Home Economics in the effort to increase day care.

"We want to start looking for some way to increase day care on East Campus," Beck said. "But we shouldn't develop a concept or proposal without the help of the College of Home Economics."

Judith Kriss, a counselor at the UNL Counseling Center, said the problem of insufficient day care was a hidden problem because many potential students did not enroll in classes until they had child care.

Craig said another problem with day care was that students only had pre-school-aged children for a few years and then had no need for day care.

"Each few years there is a different group of people who need day-care help," she said. "But there continues to be a sizable work force needing day care, and I agree we should try to do something about it."

Family

Continued from Page 1

UNL employees would have 12 weeks in consecutive 24-month periods for family leave, he said.

Employers would have the right to negotiate terms of the leave with their employees, he said, if the leave would cause "undue hardship on the department or university."

The University Association for Administrative Development, the University of Nebraska Office Personnel Association, the Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Women and the Academic Senate participated in discussion about the policy, Russell

said. Although operational questions may arise about how it will work, he said, many UNL faculty support such a policy.

Discussion about a family leave policy at UNL began several years ago, he said, but stopped when Congress addressed similar legislation that eventually was vetoed.

Russell said he had been working on the policy ever since.

"We wondered what we were going to do," he said. "We began to draft a policy as a university. We hope to finalize it and that people will be comfortable with it."

Russell said the policy was drawn up to "reflect what is happening in

society." "There are a lot of dually employed (couples) who need time off for child care," he said. "Things have changed and become more complicated in 10 to 20 years."

"People are taking care of elderly parents, and they need a mechanism to allow them the time off without the threat of job loss."

Copies of the policy have circulated among university employee advocacy groups, and Russell said he hoped the groups would take the policy to their constituents for feedback.

He said that ideally, the policy would be in place by July 1. But he projected it would be in place by the fall semester.

Culture

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Leadership II: Changing the Face of Leadership," was organized to help minority students learn why it was important to get involved on campus.

The conference will be split into two parts. The first part will begin at 11 a.m. with a keynote address from Sen. Ernie Chambers of Omaha, followed by a number of sessions.

The sessions will cover a range of topics, including self-motivation, networking skills, women of color as leaders and how to keep one's iden-

tity on a predominantly white campus.

Minority student leaders and their accomplishments will be recognized during the second part of the conference, a ceremony set for 7:30 p.m. at the Culture Center.

Scott Butterfield, principal of Saratoga Elementary School, 2215 S. 13th St., and a member of the Winnebago tribe, is scheduled to be the keynote speaker for the ceremony, Ray said.

The idea for the recognition conference came from students, she said. Coordinators expanded on the Shades of Leadership conference held last

year. The students have worked hard to see this year's conference become a reality, putting together everything from the agenda to the topics, she said.

Ray said she hoped the conference would become an annual event. With more time to plan next year, she said, officials hope to make the conference a bigger event.

Ray said 75 to 100 students were expected to attend the conference.

Anyone may attend the conference, she said, although it is targeted toward minority students.

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POLICE REPORT

Beginning midnight Saturday

3:33 a.m. — Pizza and bag stolen, Sigma Nu fraternity, 625 N. 16th St., \$49.

8:29 a.m. — Vehicle passenger window broken, Abel Residence Hall parking lot, \$100.

10:59 a.m. — Party trespassing in vacant house, 1950 T St.

Beginning midnight Sunday

3:48 a.m. — Gate arm damaged, parking lot at 14th and U streets, \$25.

3:48 a.m. — Light pole damaged, hit-and-run accident, parking lot at 14th and U streets, \$1,000.

1:54 p.m. — Vehicle window broken, Cather Residence Hall parking lot, \$200.

7:38 p.m. — Bike stolen, Abel Residence Hall, \$150.

10:36 p.m. — Follow up on false report, GEO Research Building, one person arrested.

10:36 p.m. — Follow up on two stolen compact discs, GEO Research Building, one person arrested.

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