

Daily Nebraskan
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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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EDITORIAL

Colorblind

UNL police poorly handle Harms follow-up

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Police Department's handling of a follow-up in the investigation of the disappearance of UNL student Candice Harms further shows the need for closer attention to the feelings of minority students on this campus.

The follow-up started when a student in Harms' anthropology class told police that Harms sat near and talked to an African-American man on the day of her disappearance.

Officers contacted the five African-American men in the class, asked them a series of questions and photographed them. The effort was well-intentioned but poorly handled.

The police, in their attempt to solve the case, may have to grasp at whatever straws they can find. But that is no excuse for singling out five students in a lecture class because of their race.

If Harms' conversation with a classmate was enough to warrant questioning a group of students, then every student in the class — not just the five African-American men — should have been approached. And none of them should have been made to feel like suspects.

As it was, only a handful of students were questioned based on the color of their skin.

Phil Bates, one of the students questioned by police, summed it up best.

"People like to discount things," he said. "A lot of non-minority students are thinking, 'Oh, no way would the police do something like that.' But what people need to do is wake up, take a look around and say, 'Is this the way it should be?'"

"Well it isn't."

Prove it

Clinton must act on promises of change

It's over. It's done with. The end.

After months of rallies, questions and polls, Americans know Bill Clinton will be the next president.

But the show has just begun.

Now, show Americans what you can do for them, Mr. Clinton. You promised change. Deliver.

You said you would help students.

You said, "I want the young people of America to get a college education by opening the doors of college education to all Americans without regard to finances."

Prove it. Install your plan to make dreams come true for students who can't afford to pay for college. Let them pay back loans by serving for two years as teachers, police officers or health-care workers.

You said you would improve health care. You said you would help us rebuild the economy. You carried the banner of change.

Don't go back on your word. Don't neglect the members of the middle class, the people who gave you a new job on Tuesday.

The majority of voters looked past your flaws, past the character questions. They looked to you with hope.

You didn't make them promises, but they're still expecting a lot out of you. They trusted you. Don't forget them.

Provide more jobs. Tax the rich; give to the poor. Help the middle class. Make the economy better. End gridlock. Get things done.

Make America work again. It's up to you, Mr. President. Don't let us down.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 1992 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents. Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author. The regents publish the Daily Nebraskan. They establish the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily production of the paper. According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its students.

LETTER POLICY

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others. Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject all material submitted. Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. The editor decides whether material should run as a guest opinion. Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Letters should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted. Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sen. Chambers

This letter is in response to the recent articles concerning Sen. Ernie Chambers' allegations that UNL has violated the rights of a black University of Nebraska-Lincoln student by questioning him in the Candice Harms case. At the risk of gaining the university an enemy, I would like to address Chambers on a couple of items.

First, I find it appalling that a state senator would make such obvious threats against the university using his position in the Legislature as leverage. This is a blatant abuse of his position as a lawmaker and is totally unprofessional.

Second, Sen. Chambers should review his own reasons for championing Bates' cause. I suggest that if the individuals questioned had been white that he would hardly have noticed or cared. Therefore he is acting in an official capacity based on the color of someone's skin. This reeks of a double standard.

Third, law enforcement officials have a responsibility to the public safety and especially to the family of Candice Harms to determine Harms' whereabouts and bring to justice those responsible. This responsibility includes following every tip or lead. University officials were only doing their job by cooperating.

Fourth, responsible citizens have the responsibility to cooperate with law enforcement officials when information that we may help in the solving of a case such as this. We all expect law enforcement to be there when we need it, therefore it should be our moral obligation, as well as a legal one to assist. Bates should realize that if it were a member of his family that was missing, he would want the public to cooperate.

Based on these reasons, I believe that Chambers has made an error in judgment. I sincerely believe that he creates more racial hatred by his actions than he could ever hope to solve in his lifetime. I am not a racist, Chambers and it is who you are and what you do, not the color of your skin, that causes me to have no respect for you.

Bill Scheele
senior
mechanical engineering

Discrimination

For the last four to six weeks we have been consistently reminded of the racial discrimination that exists on campus and elsewhere. Having this issue in the front of us is good. We need to be reminded that it is up to us in our day-to-day living to see that discrimination is not tolerated. We

need to speak up when we are aware of a situation where discrimination exists. I would like to address discrimination of another source that has no racial barriers. It affects people of every color. I am talking about discrimination toward people with disabilities.

While the month of October was "National Disabilities Month," I don't recall seeing any mention of this in the Daily Nebraskan. Sure there was the article on Dave Temple, which I read as an interview about his position here on campus and not as an issue of his physical challenges.



Since I have been on campus this year, I have seen people ignore the physically challenged, looking the other way, not daring to make eye contact. I have seen people who are responding to a question raised by a physically challenged person not even having the courtesy to look at the person when addressing the question. I have seen people cut in front of the physically challenged in line at campus bank because it takes a little longer to maneuver a wheelchair than it does to step forward in line.

I have seen people in group situations totally ignoring a physically challenged person when distributing handouts because that person doesn't "look normal." Think about it. Why would people with disabilities be in a university setting if they were not academically competent? The answer is: They wouldn't.

When you think of campus security at night for students walking alone, what about the hearing impaired student who cannot hear someone coming up from behind them? Campus lighting is a very real issue for them.

When you go from place to place on campus or anywhere, think about what it would take for a physically challenged or a visually impaired per-

son to have access to these same places. We take for granted access to a classroom, store, restaurant or movie theater, making a purchase, getting a haircut or going out to eat.

If you think it's hard for you as a university graduate to secure employment, try being disabled and see what discrimination you come up against — especially if your disability is physical. Most people don't get past the physical limitations to your mind. They are hung up on what they see.

While discrimination in any form should not be tolerated, and it is up to each of us to see that it is not, we cannot forget people of all colors, people with disabilities. It is our responsibility.

Deb Anderson
freshman
undeclared

'A better idea'

I am very interested to know why the university is making a park on the land between 12th and 13th streets and Q and R streets. It would seem that since the university is on such a strict budget, we could not afford to cancel businesses' leases to create a park that will cost money to build and will not create any income.

A better idea, since the businesses have already been closed, would be to create a commuter student parking lot on this land. I understand some spaces will even be removed if they do create this park. A parking lot would be cheaper to make because we don't care if it's even a gravel lot, as long as we can park there.

It would be nice to have a park, but considering the parking and budget problems on this campus, it probably should not be a priority. There are plenty of beautiful places on both campuses where students can meet and where New Student Enrollment members can gather. Also, there is already a small park in front of the Lied Center for Performing Arts where its patrons can meet.

Other reasons why a park is not a good use of university money is that the weather in Nebraska is intolerable to walk through for a good portion of the year, let alone to sit in a park. A parking lot would be used to capacity almost year round. Besides the fact that the money for building a park would be of much better use in Richards or Burnett halls.

Stephanie A. Kindelan
graduate student
psychology