

New RHA President elected, sworn in

By Justin Fisher
Staff Reporter

RHA President Kris Larson resigned Sunday evening at the weekly RHA meeting. Larson will graduate Dec. 17.

"I loved nearly every minute of my time in RHA," Larson said in her resignation announcement.

She went on to say, "If it were not for RHA, I could honestly say, I would probably not be graduating from this university."

Larson first became involved in RHA in 1991 as a floor senator. She went on to become an Abel senator and then RHA vice president. She was elected president on a write-in ticket in last April.

RHA Vice President Andrea Casart was sworn in as president following Larson's resignation.

Larson said she was "happy to leave RHA in Andrea's hands."

Larson and Casart both said this semester had been good for RHA. They said they shared credit for the success with executive board and senate.

Casart has selected Jeremy Vetter, current Student Action Team chairman, to succeed her as vice president. With approval from the Review and Recommendation Committee and senate, he will take office at the first meeting next semester.

Casart said she hoped to take advantage of the experiences and seasoning that this semester gave RHA members to make RHA proactive, rather than reactive.

Casart will serve as president until RHA elections are held in April.

In other business, the senate reviewed the results of a survey of residents.

Members found the results of the survey generally favorable, except for the reaction to cafeteria food.

Regarding sack lunches offered at the cafeteria, one respondent wrote, "We want more variety in the sack."

To which speaker Mike DeVries responded, "Don't we all?"

Finally, the Senate discussed a resolution to oppose university housing's ban on burning candles and incense in the halls. This resolution was tabled pending further input from residents.



Black-on-black crime discussed at summit

By Jeff Randall
Staff Reporter

"This is truly a historic event." With those words, Otto Green, co-coordinator of the First Annual Summit to End Black-on-Black Crime, opened the event in Lincoln on Saturday night.

The summit, organized by Lincoln residents Green and Asante Moody, was held at Christ Temple Church, 500 N. 25th St.

"This is an event to learn to take the lead in the issues we find ourselves facing every day," Green said.

These issues included ending black-on-black crime, uniting the black community and creating mentor programs for at-risk youths.

Following Green's opening remarks, state Sen. Ernie Chambers of Omaha gave his insights on several issues facing blacks in both Lincoln and in America.

"This is not a friendly community for people of our complexion," Chambers said.

Chambers said he questioned the attitudes of his own generation.

"Young people see us, the older generations, as being more interested in going along to get along than attempting to change what needs to be changed," he said.

Chambers' comments were followed by remarks from a six-member panel of black community leaders and a two-hour question-and-answer period involving audience members.

Jerry Shoecraft, a Lincoln city councilman, said he was "mystified" by many of the problems that faced the black community.

"Our young people see violence as nothing more than means to solving problems," he said, "and that just startles me."

The Rev. Donald Coleman of Mad Dads appealed to the audience for assistance in both actions and ideas.

"We are working on these problems, but we can't do it without help," he said. "Our question for the community is 'Where are you?'"

Audience member Mike Gaither, a Nebraska Wesleyan student, questioned the motivations of many members of the community.

"We look at ourselves and ask 'What can I get?' not 'What can I give?'" he said, "and there's a real problem with that."

Brother Melvin X, Nebraska's representative for the Nation of Islam, agreed that the solutions to ending

black-on-black crime had to come from within the black community.

"We are now the No. 1 killers of ourselves," he said, "and when you slaughter yourself, no one else really cares."

"We must redirect our energy. We must learn self," he said.

John Ways, president of the Lincoln chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, took a different approach to black-on-black crime.

"Black-on-black crime is not the problem," he said. "Crime is the problem, period."

"This nation was founded on violence, and it has been violent ever since."

Ways said religious faith would end all the troubles in the community.

"I don't have any opinions; I just do what the Scriptures tell me," he said. "If everyone went back to that way of thinking, we wouldn't even have to be here to solve the problems we have today."

Dr. Dolores Simpson-Kirkland, administrative assistant for Lincoln Public Schools Student Assistance Services, attacked the "psychological violence" that is prevalent among black youths.

"Disrespect is killing us as much as any bullet," she said. "Disrespect for ourselves and disrespect for parents need to be ended if we want to save each other."

Many participants cited a lack of positive influences for young blacks as a leading cause of crime and violence.

Gaither said positive role models and support from older community members would make a world of difference for black youths.

"I've been lucky; I've had role models to keep me going," he said. "A lot of kids out there don't have that."

Melvin X said the presence of role models in the community, rather than those in the media, was a necessary element for youth empowerment.

"I don't care if somebody can become the greatest basketball player the world has ever known," he said. "How does that help children in the community?"

Simpson-Kirkland said solving the issues surrounding black-on-black crime would take a lot of time.

"Working together, we can do it. But there is no quick fix to this," she said.

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