

Report exposes hate messages on University of Missouri campus

THE MANEATER
University of Missouri

(U-WIRE) COLUMBIA, Mo. — Hate messages around campus have prompted one student group to act.

The Triangle Coalition has published MU's first Hate Report. The report details incidents of hate speech and gives personal accounts of harassment on campus. It also includes field research about the effects of hate speech.

"MU has for too long been on the losing end of the battle against hate with not much progress on the horizon," said Michael Watters, president of the Triangle Coalition, in the conclusion of the Hate Report.

The report, issued April 2, has been presented to administration, curators and local and statewide media.

Many members of the Triangle Coalition found the report's hate log, which contained graffiti found around campus, to be the most disturbing portion. Much of the graffiti was of a graphic and violent nature and, according to the report, more than 70 percent was aimed at homosexual students.

Watters, who typed the hate log, found many of the entries especially disturbing.

"When I reflected on what I had done I realized I had typed 130 things about me; about how people wanted to kill me," he said.

Anthony Cage and Janet Neuman co-wrote the portion of the report "How Hate Hurts." Cage said he and Neuman had to take time off from compiling information because it depressed them. Much of the information pertained to the increased suicide-attempt and re-attempt rates of young homosexuals.

"You sit there and realize that was you a few years ago," Cage said.

References to AIDS were overwhelming in hate speech aimed at gays, according to the report.

"AIDS kills fags dead," and the response

"I'm just so happy you'll die of AIDS and rot in hell," were written on a second-floor study cubicle in Ellis Library.

Increased intolerance of homosexual lifestyles in some places on campus were evident in the report.

The words "These stalls are proof that racism, homophobia, and ignorance, are omnipresent at this university," and the response "That was a pretty big word for a fag," were written in a men's bathroom in Middlebush Hall.

Eleven buildings on campus were canvassed for hate speech and, according to the report, eight contained offensive material.

Buildings graffiti was found in included the General Classroom Building, Arts and Sciences and Middlebush Hall, as well as both student unions.

Tina McDaniel, who participated in the "hate runs," said she had noticed much of the graffiti occurred in places where freshman students spend most of their time. She suggested optional seminars and classes could help ease tension first-year students might feel when faced with people with different sexual orientations.

The Hate Report will be available to students for \$3. The information in the report will be added to the Triangle Coalition's web site. But Watters said he wasn't sure when the information would be available.

The Triangle Coalition's web site can be accessed at <http://www.missouri.edu/~triangle>.

Watters said compiling the report was the most challenging and rewarding thing he had ever done.

"We are proud and that means the world to me," he said.

In a press conference the same day the report was issued, Everett Dietle, coordinator of the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Resource Center, said the administration had reacted positively to the report and some had talked about setting up meetings to discuss it.

Dietle said he could not say which administrators had responded.

Habitat for Humanity hunts for housing-repair volunteers

Hand and Heart project looks to make valuable changes and experiences.

BY LINDSAY YOUNG
Staff Reporter

In its first effort to spend a day making Lincoln houses more livable, Habitat for Humanity believes Hand and Heart project volunteers will have their eyes opened.

Habitat for Humanity's Lincoln campus chapter is looking for more than 300 volunteers to help out with its first annual Hand and Heart project. The project is April 19, and will run from 8:30 a.m. to about 5 p.m.

Volunteers will help with various repair jobs on houses chosen with the help of Urban Development and the First Christian Church.

Jobs will range from painting and spackling to installing porch rails on existing Habitat for Humanity houses. The jobs vary in skill, some requiring more direction than others.

Katie Morrill, Hand and Heart project coordinator, is working to gain support for the first-ever project.

She said people who want to work with the project should focus on what it is about and the good it will do.

"They should try to open their eyes to a new experience, which would help them see how some people actually are forced to live and what circumstances force them to live like this," said Morrill, who also is a UNL Distance Education Department staff member.

Chris Stone, advertising chairwoman for the event, said volunteers need to work on the houses and help out in areas such as driving work groups to sites, packing food and transporting food to sites.

Stone, a freshman dietetics major, said even if people can't work that day, they can volunteer to drive, which would take an hour the morning or afternoon of the project. Packing lunches would take place the night before.

But Habitat for Humanity needs workers more than anything, Stone said.

Stone said she encourages all campus organizations to get involved. Help has already come from the community in the form of lunches donated by Hy-Vee grocery stores. Morrill said money donations also are important since they are used to buy repair supplies. Some supplies also are being donated by the Lincoln/Lancaster Habitat for Humanity.

Those interested can contact Morrill at 477-7764 or Jason Dubs at 436-8952. Habitat for Humanity's e-mail address is habitat@unlinfo.unl.edu.

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