

Diversity Players combat ignorance

BY LINDSAY YOUNG
Assignment Reporter

involvement

Abbie Thompson wants to fight the racism she has seen throughout her life.

Thompson is white and has a brother who is black and because of this, she said, she and her family have firsthand experience with racism.

The Diversity Council's skit group, the Diversity Players, gave her the opportunity she wanted.

Although Thompson, a sophomore broadcasting major, may not have the time to stay involved with the group, she did take something from the training.

"Training was eye-opening for me," Thompson said. "I learned very much that I'm still a racist person."

Diversity Council members hope the Diversity Players, who plan to take stage in university classrooms by Feb. 2, will do the same for students and generate similar discussion on diversity this semester.

The Diversity Players will perform skits based on diversity issues which will show examples of discrimination and how to deal with discrimination when students encounter it.

If audience members do not think the real-life situations in the skits are being handled correctly, they can jump in and take care of the situation the way they see fit.

Skits will include more than just race and ethnicity issues. They will also deal with greek housing and residence halls, gender, age, ability, religion and creed, and gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender issues, organizers said.

Ben Wallace, former moderator of the Diversity Council, has participated in similar skits.

Wallace, a junior French major,

said the role-playing approach is ideal because it gives students experience in confronting real-life issues. When students do come upon a situation confronting discrimination, they will feel more comfortable, he said.

John L. Harris, special assistant to the vice chancellor for student affairs, said the skit group will help a lot of students.

"I'm excited that if it's done right then it may be one of the best things that has come to our campus in a long time," Harris said.

Deanna Zaffke, a Diversity Players organizer, agreed.

"It's going to be a real service to the entire campus," she said.

It will bring students face to face with diversity issues and will generate discussion where there may not have been discussion before, organizers said.

Harris said just as racism and cultural ignorance don't just happen overnight, neither does a quick fix for these problems.

Rachelle Winkle, Diversity Council moderator, said 16 classes already have asked the Diversity Players to perform.

Those interested in becoming a member of the Diversity Players can pick up an application in 218 Andrews Hall or can call (402) 472-1880. Applications can be returned to Zaffke in 218 Andrews Hall.

The Diversity Players require a commitment of one to four hours a month after the training is complete, Zaffke said.

"I hope people will be interested and will add their voice to the growing chorus that is in favor of diversity."

Nebraska congressmen await due process of law

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is alleged of having with Lewinsky.

"I don't think we all have to be preachers up here," he said, "but I think the public should expect more out of our leaders."

What people across the country have taken notice of, it seems, are the federal crimes of perjury and obstruction of justice the president has been accused of committing — and the seriousness of those crimes.

News polls taken over the weekend indicated that more than 50 percent of those polled believed the president should step down if it is found that he lied under oath.

And nearly the same number said they believed Clinton did have some kind of sexual affair with Lewinsky.

'Brain gain' bill presented

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Nelson said he didn't want students to feel chained to the state; the bill would encourage students to explore opportunities in Nebraska.

"This will be a scholarship to plug the drain," he said. "We want to accelerate the brain gain."

Dennis Smith, president of the University of Nebraska, said the proposal would aid NU's quest to improve academic rigor, as well as Nebraska's business climate.

"Any scholarship program such as the one the governor is proposing will further enhance our competitiveness," he said.

Two honors students, Mary Nabity and Travis Fisher, appeared with Nelson in support of the measure.

They said the bill encouraged students to look closely at a Nebraska future.

However, those same polls indicate presidential approval ratings have remained nearly the same or have dropped just slightly since the latest scandal erupted.

U.S. Rep. Bill Barrett said both Republicans and Democrats were wearing frowns in light of the recent string of accusations.

"There is a lot of concern on both sides — a lot of concern for the country," Barrett said. "Nobody is happy about this."

Hagel said people would look at the entire situation differently if any of the president's alleged criminal — or sexual — activities are proven.

"I think it is going to give America some time to pause and sober up a little bit," he said, "to not dismiss early signs of misconduct in people's lives."

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