

Force of the black family

Addresses wide range of issues



“

(The theme of the conference is) so deeply rooted in everything.”

DONNY WHITE
APU president

to divide us as a people. ...

“... (The walls) have broken apart the Black family – our extended Black family – the force that had once been a source of strength within our Black communities.”

Other workshops include: ACTION! A Common Sense Approach to Improving Your Campus Climate; Ethically Speaking; and Afri-Technology Advances,

Inc. Toward Stabilization and Salvation.

Shanks hopes participants gain an understanding of the theme by the time they leave on Sunday morning.

“I hope they gain the idea of togetherness, the idea of how to build coalitions on their respective campuses (and) build a love for the arts.”

*Photos by
Jay Calderon*

Another page in the history of diversity

Conference evolved from common goal to build unity

BY JOSH FUNK
Senior Reporter

Common problems brought Big 8 Universities' black student leaders to the University of Missouri's campus in 1977 hoping to build unity.

They have.

And, somewhat accidentally, they kicked off the inaugural Black Student Leaders Conference.

At that first meeting, students established the Big 8 Council and Conference on Black Student Government – a forum for addressing the problems, concerns and ideas of black students attending the predominantly white colleges and universities in what was then the Big 8.

“They found a lot of common ground with the lack of diversity and other problems,” said Leslie Bell, logistics team leader for this year's 21st annual conference, which will be held in Lincoln today through Sunday at the Cornhusker Hotel, 333 S. 13th St.

The conference works to build leadership and communication skills, promote academic success and political awareness and reinforce educational and

cultural developments of aspiring black scholars.

“The conference sought to unite all the black student organizations,” Bell said.

The conference also provides a strong support system for black leaders, Bell said.

Conference speakers, many of whom are nationally recognized, share their insights with and motivate students.

The council, established at the first conference, meets four times a year to address problems black student leaders are facing on their respective campuses.

Both the council and the conference rotate from school to school each year.

This weekend will mark the third time the University of Nebraska-Lincoln has played host to the event.

This year will also be the first Big 12 Conference on Black Student Government.

“The conference brings young leaders together to challenge the boundaries,” said Jimmi Smith, director of multicultural affairs.

Black leaders hope for the opportunity to contribute to society, Smith said.

“Society is moving forward, and we want to make sure it doesn't leave black people behind.”

**Big XII
Black
Student
Government**

