

Local attorney fills diversity office post

By KIM SWEET
Staff writer

When Alicia Santos took a job as an attorney at the Nebraska Department of Revenue 15 years ago, she expected to be working with dollars and not discrimination.

But after Santos, the newly selected associate director of UNL's Affirmative Action and Diversity Office, took on a case that involved an employee complaint, her involvement in dealing with affirmative action matters multiplied.

Soon she was taking the majority of cases that arose.

The case that started Santos' involvement in discrimination and affirmative action issues has led her to her post at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

And she is looking forward to seeing her job bear actual results — including a more tolerant and culturally aware campus.

"I am really looking forward to working in an academic setting," Santos said. "It will make a difference 20 years from now."

Her duties as associate director will be to watch search committees and perform internal investigations into complaints brought to the university, she said.

She also will provide training to ensure that faculty searches will be done in a way to ensure diversity.

Along with working with administration and faculty, Santos said she wants to be a resource for students who feel they have experienced discrimination.

This includes answering any questions students have relating to affirmative action, equal opportunity or sexual harassment.

"Students will be able to bring forward things they feel need more explaining or more looking into,"

Santos said.

Because of these duties, Santos said, her efforts will be evident on campus.

"All of these things will be beneficial to students and their learning environment," she said.

Another task the new associate director will take on is writing the affirmative action plan for the university.

With her background in investigating complaints and writing affirmative action plans, Santos said, she can give her guidance to the university.

"I know that this has been an area where there needs to be a little more expertise," she said. "Since the university has so many employees, we have to make sure it is effective."

This doesn't necessarily mean targeting one specific group to hire, Santos said, but making sure that the faculty and staff adequately represent the labor pool.

"The affirmative action plan has to be changed every year because the labor pool changes every year," Santos said.

The position of associate director of affirmative action was formerly filled by Linda Crump, Affirmative Action and Diversity Programs director.

Crump said Santos' addition to the Affirmative Action and Diversity Office will allow it to be more effective.

"(Santos) will do most of the compliance part of it, which will allow me to work on more proactive types of things," Crump said.

As Santos became more familiar with affirmative action cases since her first one, she also has developed her own theory of how to deal with them.

"I really believe in being proactive," Santos said, "by making sure that people know the facts and know what the rules are."

Singer supports Osborne program

By ERIC RINEER
Staff writer

Jannel Rap still cherishes those Saturday afternoons watching football at her grandmother's house.

She even remembers tearing up during those 1970-71 seasons when the Cornhuskers won back-to-back national championships.

The 1975 Lincoln Northeast graduate now has the chance to give something back to the Cornhusker football program.

A successful singer-songwriter who now resides in Los Angeles, Rap has released an album to help promote former Nebraska Football Coach Tom Osborne's Teammates Mentoring Program.

The program was established seven years ago and was designed to reach out to students in junior high.

In the program, a junior high student is paired with a Husker football player who serves as a mentor.

Rap, who said her inspiration as a songwriter is to benefit mankind, plans to donate a portion of the proceeds from her acoustic folk rock album, "Sea of Red," to benefit the program.

"It's really important that we all have mentors," said Rap.

"It's good for kids to be around

"

(The song is) to Tom Osborne.
Everyone loves him
and respects him."

JANNEL RAP
singer-songwriter

someone better than them at what they want to become."

Though Rap has been doing benefits throughout her career, she said the mentoring program is a special cause.

"People in Lincoln are extremely giving and helping," Rap said.

Osborne's program was presented with a \$1,000 contribution from the Nebraska Bookstore Sept. 16.

"There's a lot of light surrounding Teammates," Rap said.

The program has grown to include more than just football players, Osborne said. Now, people in all professions from all over the state are paired up with junior high students.

Though the program now involves 160 mentors, Osborne said he wants 800 to 1,000 people involved eventually. Rap said Osborne's program will truly make a difference.

Rap's title track to the album

commemorates Osborne's coaching legacy and the Nebraska football program. It focuses on her experience of growing up surrounded by Husker football.

"(The song is) to Tom Osborne. Everyone loves him and respects him."

Osborne, who is now working to promote his program statewide, said he was thankful for Rap's efforts.

"We've been very pleased she has a heart for young people and wants to reach out in this way," Osborne said.

"Jannel has been interested in doing this for some time, and we appreciate that."

Rap will perform at the Lied Center for Performing Arts on Oct. 4. Osborne will be master of ceremonies.

Her album is available locally at Homer's and the Nebraska Bookstore.

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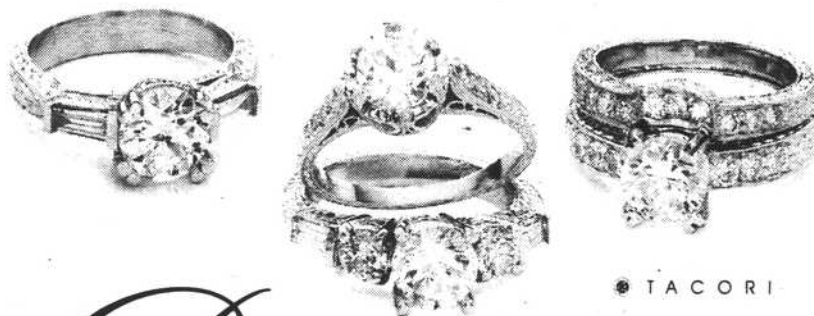
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