

Diversity conference draws attention to UNL

BY DANE STICKNEY
Staff writer

For the fourth year, the People of Color in a Predominantly White Institution conference will draw people from across the nation to UNL.

The two-day conference starts today at the Clifford Hardin Nebraska Center on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's East Campus.

Wayne Babchuk, program specialist for Academic Conferences and Professional Programs, is the main organizer of the event.

Babchuk said the conference was important because it was devoted to in-depth analysis of issues surrounding campus diversity.

"People who come to the conference have the

opportunity to delve deeply into issues," he said. "Often times, conferences only expose the surface of a topic, but this conference strives to do more."

Because of this commitment, Babchuk said, the conference was highly regarded across the nation, and this year it would draw more than 200 people from 20 states.

Michael Knisely, co-chairman of the Chancellor's Commission on the Status of People of Color, said the conference helped put the university in the national spotlight.

"The value of this conference is that it brings national prominence to the university," he said. "It speaks volumes for the university's proactive role in promoting diversity issues."

Some issues that will be discussed include recruitment and retention of culturally diverse stu-

dents, new teaching techniques and equity.

"We have over 50 concurrent sessions," Babchuk said. "We have the ability to cover a lot of topics and themes."

The conference will feature four nationally known speakers who will cover campus diversity topics.

Lena Wright Myers, an Ohio University professor, will speak about African-American women and the academy.

Carlos Munoz Jr., a professor at the University of California at Berkeley, will speak about diversity and the new American identity.

Molly Tovar of Oklahoma University and Wayne Powell of Oklahoma State University will speak about building diversity in graduate and professional schools in predominantly white institu-

tions.

Babchuk said one of the highlights of the conference would be the Faces of America performance, which will be at the Continuing Education Auditorium at the Clifford Hardin Nebraska Center from 7 to 9 p.m. this evening and is free.

"The performance company is from Los Angeles, and the show is supposed to be fantastic," he said.

The show depicts the lives of nine young Americans from different cultural backgrounds and addresses the importance of diversity.

Babchuk said this year's conference should be good.

"This is the best-developed conference yet," he said. "The overall quality of the keynote speakers and the number of sessions is very strong this year."



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Caribou presentation given

BY LINDSAY HENSHILWOOD
Staff writer

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln last night played host to the sounds and images of Alaska in a presentation in the Nebraska Union.

An audience of about 130 was treated to a stunning display by award-winning photographer Ken Madsen and Gwich'in, Alaska, native Norma Kassi.

This was the first of a series of presentations to be made throughout America between now and next May as Madsen and Kassi aim to draw awareness to the plight of the Porcupine Caribou Herd.

The Porcupine Caribou are currently under threat from development by American oil and gas industries.

Madsen described the scene, close to Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, as "industrial Los

Angeles dumped on the coastal plain."

"It is essential that a portion of land within the refuge that the gas and oil companies want to develop remains untouched because it is vital for the survival of the Porcupine Caribou," Madsen said.

Last year, Madsen spent 100 days following the herds of caribou across 1,000 miles as they migrated to the coastal plains on the Alaska-Yukon border to calve.

After arrival on the plains, the female caribou look thin, but every year somewhere in the region of 40,000 calves are born.

They are protected from their main predators, wolves, which live in the mountains and will not come down to the plains.

Norma Kassi, an activist and spokeswoman for the Gwich'in Nation, then spoke about why the caribou are vital to the existence of the people.

To the people, every creature has a purpose to its existence, and the Porcupine Caribou Herd are particularly sacred, she said.

This is because after the females have calved, the male caribou are then

"The entire survival of our people is based on the caribou coming back."

NORMA KASSI
spokeswoman for Gwich'in Nation

killed by the Gwich'in in early June and provide enough food to last them until the next year.

There are now 7,000 Gwich'in, but there used to be hundreds of thousands, and their decline has been attributed to a similar decline in the numbers of caribou.

"The entire survival of our people is based on the caribou coming back" Kassi said.

Julia Lee, a junior political science major, described the presentation as "breathtaking."

"It made me realize the seriousness of the situation"

"The Arctic is a beautiful place we share. Surely we've learned our lessons by now," Kassi said.



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CORRECTION

Wednesday's issue of the Daily Nebraskan, Arlys Reitan's name was misspelled. He was one of three founders of the Wachiska Audobon Society.

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Wed., October 27, 2PM MATINEE

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