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Bead It

Dual shows featuring artwork made of beads open in Lincoln today. A&E, PAGE 14

Spring a ding

The Daily Nebraskan spring sports preview offers a season of change. OPINION, PAGE 5



KEITH PARKER, the assistant dean of graduate studies, works with a year-old exchange of students and faculty members between the historically black Alcorn State University in Mississippi and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He said: "It's tough to get people to look beyond the blinders of the community they grow up in."

Lydia S. Gonzales/DN

MISSISSIPPI Learning

Exchange makes students, faculty the minority at schools

By Kimberly Sweet

Staff writer

It's a long way from Lincoln, Neb., to Lorman, Miss. The distance to drive from here to there is just more than 1,000 miles.

But thanks to a year-old exchange agreement between Alcorn State University in Mississippi and UNL, miles mean nothing.

The agreement, signed last Martin Luther King Jr. Day by officials from both universities, declared the Mississippi university UNL's sister school.

Since then students, faculty members and administrators have traveled freely between the schools—sharing knowledge about teaching, learning and research.

At first glance, it seems the similarities the schools share are few.

Alcorn State has an enrollment of 3,100; the University of Nebraska-Lincoln has 22,000.

The University of Nebraska is a Research I institution, while Alcorn State is not.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln is predominantly white. Alcorn State University is a historically black institution.

But administrators and faculty members who have facilitated the exchange say the differences between the schools is what is making the exchange successful.

"There is the perception that historically black universities are inferior institutions," said Melvin Davis, vice president of academic affairs at Alcorn State. "The position at both universities is that both institutions bring different things to the table."

The first person to make the trip between the two schools was Alcorn State Chemistry Professor Thomas Bolden.

Months after Bolden's first visit, numerous undergraduate students, prospective graduate students, faculty and staff from both schools have followed in his footsteps, taking the opportunity to go out of their comfort zones and experience the culturally diverse climates.

Both institutions are land-grant universities, but Alcorn State University has the designation of being the first state-supported institution for the higher education of blacks in the United States.

Keith Parker, the assistant dean of graduate studies who is working heavily with the program, said experiencing different cultures is a lot of what the exchange is all about.

"Students at UNL are very parochial," Parker said. "It's the

"... both institutions bring different things to the table."

Melvin Davis

Students immersed in culture

By Kimberly Sweet

Staff writer

During the first days of UNL junior Erin Gartner's semester-long stay at Alcorn State University, a historically black institution, she was bombarded with one inquiry.

"Everyone asked if I was an athlete," Gartner said.

The question was ironic to Gartner, one of three students from Nebraska to participate in a semester-long exchange program with the college in Mississippi.

Usually, the same connotations are connected with black students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Gartner said.

The experience is one of many that Gartner said comes down to one thing: being a white minority at a college where black students are in the majority.

After spending three weeks at Alcorn State, Gartner said word has gotten around that the three aren't athletes.

Despite feeling singled out during the first days, Gartner, along with juniors Scott Worrall and Bill Alcorn, said they are beginning to feel welcome at their

temporary school.

"Now everyone knows us as the kids from Nebraska," Worrall said.

For two of the students, the journey to Alcorn State began at LeaderShape last spring.

The weeklong leadership seminar put Worrall and Alcorn in contact with two students from Alcorn State who also attended.

The two got a taste of what attending Alcorn State would be like after they became friends with the students.

After James Griesen, vice chancellor for student affairs, told the LeaderShape students he was looking for candidates to attend Alcorn State during the next year, Worrall and Alcorn jumped on the opportunity.

Gartner, who wanted to have an experience away from Nebraska, decided to join the two.

They became the first three undergraduate students from UNL to participate in the exchange that aimed to increase cultural awareness for both student populations.

Melvin Davis, vice president for academic affairs at Alcorn State, said he was surprised about the students' enthusiasm

"He said, 'If I saw this roomful of white people, I'd get a to-go tray.'"

Erin Gartner

UNL student studying at Alcorn State

to come to a new school for a semester.

The three came down for a day in November to check out the campus. Much to Davis' surprise, the students committed to coming, registered and signed up for classes before they left that day.

Davis said after giving the students his home phone number on the first day of classes, he hasn't received one call.

That's good news, he said. Four weeks into their stay, the three students said everyone is friendly.

"Every single person you meet is so

Please see **STUDENTS** on 3

Speaker: 'Horrendous crimes' of Holocaust teach nothing

By Tony Moses

Staff writer

Last night, Peter Novick raised doubts about the lessons that can be learned from the Holocaust.

"I don't know what these lessons are or what we're sent to learn from the Holocaust," Novick said. "What is it that contemplating the horrendous crime teaches?"

Novick, a history professor at the University of Chicago and author of two books on the Holocaust, spoke to a full auditorium in the

Nebraska Union on Thursday night. The Harris Center for Judaic Studies sponsored the event.

Novick surmised that any lesson that could be extracted from the Holocaust could only be the result of a specific purpose.

He accused pro-life groups, animal rights activists and anti-death penalty groups of adapting the Holocaust to promote their causes.

"What are the grounds that we accept lessons as legitimate, and what are the grounds that we accept as illegitimate?" Novick asked. "The severity of the Holocaust limits the lessons it can provide in the ordinary world."

Novick was more concerned with the lessons

from everyday life that can be taught.

"All of us are repeatedly witness to injustice, which none of us make a fuss," he said.

Novick pointed to a famous experiment conducted by Stanley Milgram.

In this experiment, Milgram asked subjects to administer an electric shock every time another person made a mistake. All of the subjects willingly delivered the shocks, and most knowingly delivered lethal shocks.

Novick wondered if this experiment had a better lesson than the Holocaust. The experiment was used as a reference to the silence of the German people during the Holocaust.

"It is the extremity of (the Holocaust) that makes it a poor source of lessons," he said.

Novick does not dismiss the concept of teaching history, however.

"One thing the study of history does is expand our experience," Novick said.

He emphasized that "vicarious experience" was the best way to learn, and history should be used to broaden that experience.

"One of the ways of being thoughtful and human is thinking about the past and our place in

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