

# Changing for the better

## Floyd accomplishes goals through campus involvement

By Josh Funk

Editor

There were times when LaTonya Floyd questioned why she was at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

After Sigma Chi Fraternity members burned a cross as part of an initiation ritual in 1997, Floyd wondered what kind of place she was paying to attend.

A year later former English professor David Hibler sparked controversy with what many called a racist e-mail, and again Floyd wondered.

But instead of leaving, the graduating marketing and finance major got involved on campus and worked to make a difference.

"Sigma Chi prompted me to get involved," said Floyd, who was in the middle of her freshman year then. "I went to those meetings with the chancellor, and I found myself having to ask questions."

Floyd demonstrated a talent for leadership both actively and by example, said Assistant Director of Student Involvement Reshell Ray, who has known Floyd since she was a freshman.

"LaTonya takes kind of an unassuming role, but her influence and presence are still felt," Ray said of Floyd's leadership.

During her four years here Floyd became involved in many different organizations where she knew that she could contribute.

"LaTonya was aware of issues on campus relevant to students of color, and she was willing to speak up," said Ray, who worked with Floyd as director of the Culture Center until moving to Student Involvement two years ago.

Floyd, who attended Papillion High School after growing up in Aberdeen, Miss., said that she has had to learn to balance her personal life and her activities.

After the cross burning, Floyd said she decided to get more involved with the Afrikan People's Union and the Big 12 Black Student Government.

Floyd helped plan the gospel extravaganza for the 1998 Big 12 Conference on Black Student Government, held in Lincoln.

From that base, Floyd found other involvement opportunities for herself.

Floyd's resumé, which is too long to list, includes Mortar Board, LeaderShape, the honors program, being a resident assistant, numerous advisory boards and several internship programs.

Ray said Floyd did more than join and help lead organizations. She always found ways to get others involved.

Floyd said she learned that trait from her mother, who would always invite other people's children into the house to feed and take care of them.

"I'm always promoting involvement. That's just my nature," Floyd said. "My responsibility is to make sure students of color know about opportunities on campus."

Despite her heavy involvement, Floyd never complained of being overburdened, Ray said.

"LaTonya did not view it as being overtaxed," Ray said. "She got what she wanted out of her involvement."

In addition to Floyd's leadership and hard work, Ray said she would also miss Floyd's infectious giggle that permeated the Student Involvement office even when Floyd was stressed.

Floyd said that her experiences taught her to be open-minded and that leadership within a group can be as important as the leader in front.

## Abel residents benefit from Knobbe's work

By Lindsay Young

Senior editor

Matt Knobbe always questions things when they're going smoothly.

It's the type of guy he is.

"I sit back and ask, 'Is everything going smoothly because this is the right thing to do, or is it because no one cares enough or is outspoken enough to suggest a different course of action?'" said Knobbe, a graduating senior in computer science.

He likes to cover all the bases.

He said his girlfriend hates to go shopping with him because it's always a "process." He must go to a few different stores to make sure he gets the best deal.

"Hopefully that'll translate into the business world," he said, smiling.

It's already translated into his work in the Residence Hall Association, which he was a member of the five years he was at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Talking to fellow RHA members will tell you that. He's well known for playing devil's advocate.

Jadd Stevens, who has known and worked with Knobbe for four years, said Knobbe is often the voice of reason.

"I've seen him get into conversations that need to be steered," Stevens said. He said Knobbe gives suggestions but never knocks down someone's idea.

Knobbe lived in Abel Residence Hall throughout his tenure, serving as a floor president, hall senator and hall president. For a hall with a lot of resident turnover, Knobbe was a constant. He also was chosen as the election commissioner this year because of his ability to separate politics from rules, said Stevens, former RHA president.

"It would've been a big challenge," he said.

Throughout his time in RHA, he worked at connecting his hall with other organizations for activities such as Abelpalooza, a band festival that raised money for a program that provides resources for underprivileged children. His hall worked with his fraternity, Pi Kappa Alpha, to organize the event.

Knobbe was a founding member of the fraternity a couple years ago — he thinks maybe he was the fourth member.

He said he had always wanted to be in a fraternity, but most don't recruit year-round, and most don't recruit from upperclassmen. Pi

Please see **KNOBBE** on 11

As she looks forward to starting work at Mutual of Omaha's corporate office after graduation, Floyd said she knows she will be prepared for the demands of life, in part because of the experiences she had in college.

## Schweer committed to raising awareness

By Veronica Daehn

Staff writer

In four days, Laura Schweer's work at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will be done.

Even though the UNL senior psychology major is graduating, her work will continue.

From the time she was a sophomore, Schweer was involved with promoting eating-disorder awareness at the university.

At the start of her junior year, she started Eating Disorder Education and Prevention, a group that worked to plan Eating Disorder Awareness Week and bring light to eating-disorder issues.

Last summer, Schweer decided more needed to be done.

"This is such an important issue that we need to talk about this more than one week a year," she said.

So she started SHINE, Students Helping Individuals Nurture Esteem.

The group consists of 10 students chosen to be peer educators on the issues of eating disorders, body image and wellness.

The students began giving presentations in February and were overwhelmed with requests.

"This is definitely something that's going to grow," she said.

Sonja Hegge, a junior news-editorial major, will take over the SHINE program when Schweer graduates.

Hegge said she got to know Schweer through helping with Eating Disorder Awareness Week and the SHINE program.

"I've been the one who's worked the closest with Laura," Hegge said. "Since she's leaving, I'm going to take over for her."

Schweer's work with eating disorders is related to what she wants to

do in the future.

In June, she will begin graduate school at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. She plans on getting a doctorate degree in psychology, specializing in eating-disorder therapy and public speaking.

"It was easy for me," she said. "I loved psychology. I knew I wanted to be a therapist."

Schweer, also a 4.0 student who will graduate as a Chancellor's Scholar, said she wants to make a difference in the lives of people struggling with eating disorders.

"I've seen so many people personally affected with these issues," she said. "Most girls aren't superficial, but that's how they're made to feel. I hate that."

"Women deserve equal rights. They won't ever achieve that if they're so focused on appearance."

She not only wants to promote awareness of eating disorders but also wants to encourage people to be healthy.

"If people eat right and are exercising four or five times a week, whatever size you are is fine," she said.

Schweer was involved in more than just eating-disorder awareness during her stint in college.

She was president of Phi Mu Sorority last year and membership director the year before that.

This year, she was named to the Homecoming Court and was recently named the Innocent's Society Outstanding Senior.

It was never hard for her to do everything she did, she said.

"I've always been a perfectionist," Schweer said. "I didn't come here with the intention of doing (all these things). It just kind of happened."

## Matt Knobbe's work benefits Abel residents

**KNOBBE** from page 10

Kappa Alpha does both. Knobbe said there's more diversity in his fraternity than most.

"It's a much-needed shot in the arm (for UNL's greek system)," he said.

After he graduates, Knobbe will be continuing at Interact Inc., a telecommunications company in Lincoln.

Knobbe won't be remembered as a talking head for or against aborted fetal tissue research or another controversial cause. He said though he had opinions on such things, he devoted himself to what is more immediate and important to students:

"My cause has been making the residence halls a better place to live. I guess I could say I'm doing that for myself," he said.

"But really, I treat every year like I'm going to be back the next year, not the 'I'm-out-of-here mentality.'"

Stevens said Knobbe worked during his final year to fill the shoes he was leaving behind. He said an increase in government activity this year in Knobbe's hall has, in turn, increased interest by its residents.

"I think they're going to be pretty well off," Stevens said.