

Lack of funding curbs GLBT center's goals

BY JILL ZEMAN

A single bookcase with four shelves of books sits in the corner of the GLBT Resource Center.

Informative materials litter the few tables in the room, pictures and magazine cut-outs line the walls and a large poster of kd lang overlooks the room.

And that's about all that's in the Gay Lesbian Bisexual and Transgendered Resource Center.

But those involved in running the center say it's not their fault the group's office doors are open irregularly, printed materials are outdated and staff turnover rate is high.

The answer, they say, is simple — it's money.

The GLBT center, unlike the Women's Center and the Culture Center, is not funded by the university.

It's located on the second floor of the Nebraska Union and provides resources and a place for anyone to hang out and talk, said Bea Carrasco, a graduate assistant for Student Involvement who works at the center.

Student Involvement pays one part-time graduate assistant, Carrasco, to work at the center. Other than that, the group is on its own and relies on the help of student volunteers.

The center is the headquarters for three student organizations: Allies Against Homosexuality and Homophobia, GLBT Graduate Student Organization and Spectrum, an undergraduate GLBT student association.

And everything the center and these organizations want to do comes back to money.

There are no new books in the center — all have been donated and most are out-of-date, Carrasco said.

This can cause a problem for students, because some professors assign projects that require the center for reference, she said.

The office must also pay its own bills, such as telephone charges and any magazines it subscribes to.

To pay for this, student organizations have fund-raisers and apply for grants, Carrasco said.

But with the limited number of staff members spending their time fundraising and writing applications for grant money, not as much time can be focused on providing services for students, she said.

Other student organizations sometimes hit roadblocks when trying to obtain university dollars, but Carrasco said the GLBT center deserved university money because it represented a group of students on campus who were often over-

Health insurance premiums spike for staff, faculty

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"We made it clear to the Legislature we need to be at the level to be taken seriously," he said.

Based on percentages, if insurance costs \$100 a month, the employee's share will go from \$15 to \$21 — a 40 percent increase.

The university's share, which comes from state funds, will drop from \$85 to \$79.

Rowson said although he thought the increase was a good idea, the premium hike "eats into the raises" given to the faculty by the regents.

But ensuring health care coverage for employees is the ultimate goal, despite the higher costs, he said.

"It's good to guarantee we'll have coverage for all of our employees," he said.

Not all employees agree with the university's decision to ensure coverage.

Margaret Bolick, president of the UNL chapter of the American Association of University Professors, said she

"We should be funded because we serve a group of society, just like the Women's Center and the Culture Center."

Bea Carrasco
GLBT center employee

looked.

"I'm not trying to say other organizations shouldn't have funding," she said. "We should be funded because we serve a group of society, just like the Women's Center and the Culture Center."

The center does not receive money from the university because it was not founded as a resource center, as Women's and Culture centers were, said Gina Matkin, assistant director for training and development at the Nebraska Unions.

Rather, the usage of the room was requested by several GLBT student organizations, not an official center, she said.

But because there is no office for GLBT issues on campus, the student-run room eventually came to be known as a resource center, Matkin said.

"People just started turning to it," Matkin said.

There is no official director of the center, rather a handful of people coordinate events, supervise and support the students, she said.

"Many people go above and beyond their full-time responsibilities," she said.

Carrasco's goal is to have the center open eight hours a day, five days a week.

But that's not always possible, as Carrasco is a student herself, and all the gaps must be filled by student volunteers, she said.

With a small group of people staffing the center and an entire campus to target, volunteers sometimes feel as though they aren't accomplishing anything at the center, she said.

"It frustrates people — they feel they're unheard and not respected," she said. "That's something I deal with every day."

Mary Itzsch, a junior English major and GLBT center volunteer, said it could be frustrating to devote so much time to the center without seeing tangible results.

Many students volunteer for a few weeks and then quit, leaving the center with just a few people who continually put in time to help out, she said.

Itzsch volunteers about nine hours per week at the center, as well as worrying about classes and her part-time job.

"I kind of feel like one person, doing it all myself," she said.

was concerned about what could happen to support staff, such as secretaries and custodians.

The rising insurance costs come at an inopportune time, as parking prices were also recently hiked, she said.

Bolick said while the Board of Regents voted to raise faculty salaries, these two factors could wipe out any surplus employees could have seen.

"It's not going to be easy," she said. "The costs are being passed down to the faculty and staff."

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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Glass blower brings craft to UNL

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Scientific glass blowing is a specialized field. Salem Community College in Carneys Point, N.J., is the only school in the United States that offers a degree in the field.

The school admits about 20 new students each year for its two-year program. After graduation, it generally takes 10 years for glass blowers to work their way up to a position at a major research facility.

There are about 2,500 scientific glass blowers in the United States, and Duke estimates he is the "only one" in Nebraska.

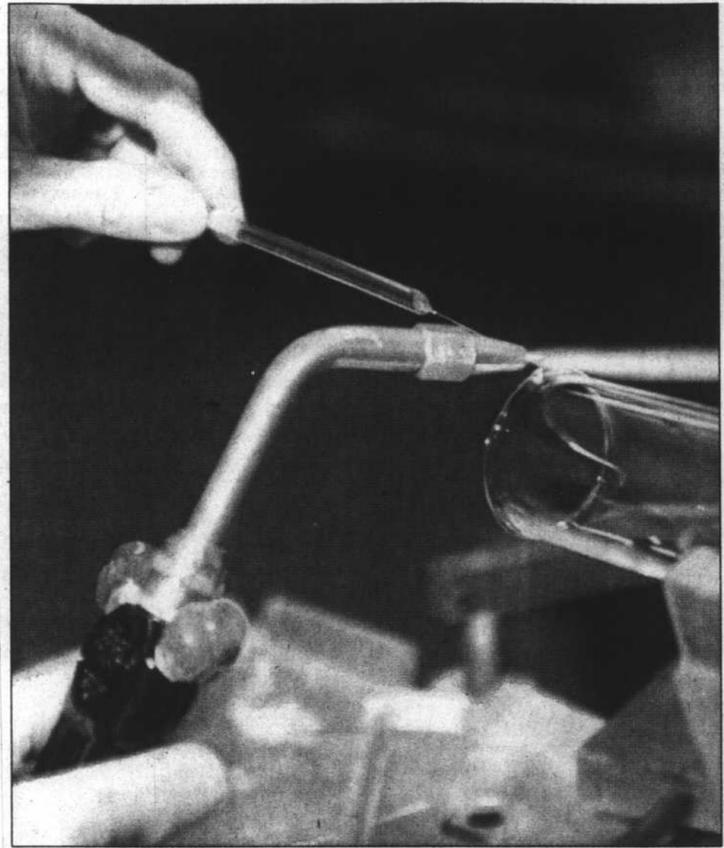
Within this small and specialized field, the demand for talented glass blowers is growing.

"Without glass blowers, you wouldn't have computer chips," Duke said. "A glass blower is needed to make the wafer carrier used in (silicon) chip production."

For UNL, having an in-house glass studio helps keep the research facilities competitive.

In describing the importance of an on-campus glass facility Belot said that he used the glass shop "almost every day."

"Hadrian is a really talented glass blower. We were very lucky to get him," said Belot. "A good glass blower can help you build instruments that you just can't buy."



Sharon Kolbet/DN

Hadrian Duke shapes Pyrex using gas flames and a graphite rod. As Nebraska's only scientific glass blower, Duke is responsible for both repairing and creating laboratory instruments for the university.

Candidates' negative antics mar campaign

NEGATIVE from page 1

Cady said Nelson was merely raising the possibility at that time, not endorsing it.

Stenberg also objected to Nelson's claim that Stenberg wanted to eliminate the U.S. Department of Education, costing Nebraska \$100 million in aid to education.

"I've never proposed reducing Nebraska's funding from the Department of Education," Stenberg said. "I think it could be increased if we eliminated some of the federal bureaucracy

and sent more of it back to schools to help our kids.

"I call on Ben Nelson to stop misrepresenting and distorting my positions on the issues."

The two sides continued to squabble over a GOP TV advertisement, no longer airing, which encouraged viewers to call Stenberg at his Capitol office number and thank him for his work as attorney general.

Nelson and the Democratic Party criticized the ad, and said state employees should not have to answer partisan campaign phone calls.

Stenberg agreed, but said he could not pull the ad because campaign finance laws prohibited him from requesting that the state GOP do so. He said the Democratic Party, by continuing to press the issue, was engaging in political harassment.

But Anne Boyle, chairwoman of the Nebraska Democratic Party, said the issue was still relevant because state employees in the attorney general's office had referred campaign-related phone calls to Stenberg's campaign headquar-

ters.

"Because employees in your office have passed on messages to your campaign during working hours now raises questions of state personnel rules," Boyle wrote Wednesday in a letter to Stenberg.

With less than seven weeks left until the Nov. 7 election, both sides have said they expect the campaign to heat up.

Voters can see Nelson and Stenberg in action today, when KETV broadcasts their debate at 6:30 p.m.

Trade vote for China to positively affect state, world

BY JOSH FUNK

The Senate's decision to permanently normalize trade relations with China will have positive effects worldwide and in Nebraska, experts said.

Tuesday's vote was the first step toward China's admission to the World Trade Organization, which is expected later this year.

As part of its WTO membership and the permanent normal trade status, China will have to open its markets to American businesses and western influence.

"By opening trade to participate in international markets, China has to move more towards the rule of law," said political science assistant professor Andrew Wedeman, who also heads UNL's Asian studies program.

To guarantee contracts and other business agreements, China will have to establish open, independent courts, which can better enforce the Communist country's existing human-rights laws, Wedeman said.

The granting of permanent trade status will end the annual review of U.S.-China trade relations that has been a source of contention between the two countries.

"In return for normal trade relations," President Clinton said, "China will open its markets to American products, from wheat to cars to consulting services, and we will be far more able to sell goods in China without moving our factories there."

He added that new trade status and WTO membership could affect the Chinese far more profoundly. "Our high-tech companies will help to speed the information revolution there."

Wedeman said the exchange

of information may have a greater long-term effect on China than any trade policy.

"It gets harder and harder for the regime to control the flow of information," Wedeman said. "When the regime no longer has control of the information, it can't lie as easily."

Nebraska Senator Chuck Hagel supported the measure both as the proper way to deal with China and an exciting economic development.

"Trade is the common denominator in today's world," Hagel said in a statement. "Granting (normal trade relations) will help to increase the Chinese people's interaction with the rest of the world and their standard of living."

Hagel and Nebraska Gov. Mike Johanns cheered the agreement as a positive prospect for the state's industries.

In November 1999, Johanns visited China with a delegation of Nebraska officials to promote trade.

"I witnessed Nebraska businesses already doing business there and the potential for more

"I witnessed Nebraska businesses already doing business there and the potential for more Nebraska business in China."

Mike Johanns
governor

Nebraska business in China," Johanns said in a statement.

And the agreement will not mean a great change in existing U.S. policies, Wedeman said.

"This doesn't open U.S. markets any more than they already were," Wedeman said. "Almost all the change in the relationship will be on the Chinese side."

Detractors of the measure say the U.S. government was putting dollars ahead of principles and sacrificing a policy tool that could help force China to stop proliferating weapons and start improving its human rights record.

China has held most-favored nation trading status with the U.S. since at the early 1980s.

Almost every year of that relationship the U.S. Congress

threatened to remove status. Wedeman said withholding trade from China to compel adherence to international human rights standards was both ineffective and unlikely.

"The threat of withholding trade is a case of 'The Boy who Cried Wolf.' China knows it's an idle threat," Wedeman said.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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