

# Counselor earns gay honor

■ UNL awarded counselor Luis Diaz-Perdomo for his efforts in helping students.

BY KIMBERLY SWEET

A UNL counselor who has spent years helping gay students and serving as a "staunch advocate for minorities and oppressed people" received the second-annual award for Outstanding Contribution to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Community on Wednesday.

Luis Diaz-Perdomo, who works as a psychological consultant in Counseling and Psychological Services, received a standing ovation after recently appointed Chancellor Harvey Perlman announced he was the recipient of the award at a reception in the Nebraska Union.

Perlman said Diaz-Perdomo's work on behalf of gay students, as well as other minorities, made him worthy of the award.

Diaz-Perdomo has led and sustained the gay men's discus-

sion group on campus for the last 15 years, Perlman said.

"His counseling, in the beginning, was a one-man effort because he was providing services that were nonexistent anywhere else in the community," Perlman said.

Pat Tetreault, UNL sexuality education coordinator, said Diaz-Perdomo's "pioneering" work with HIV and AIDS in Lincoln, as well as his leadership in the discussion group, makes him a role model others should follow.

"I think he has done wonderful work," Tetreault said. "He relates to people from his heart, and it shows."

Vern Williams, a member of the selection committee and last year's award winner, said Diaz-Perdomo has helped many students struggling with their sexual orientation.

"Many students have been helped immensely by his individual contact," said Williams, a career counselor in Career Services and professor emeritus of educational psychology.

Diaz-Perdomo said he was honored to receive the award.

"I definitely know I am not deserving of this honor, but I accept it on behalf of all the students over the years I have had a privilege working with."

The last few months have been both good and bad for members of the gay community, Diaz-Perdomo said. The passage of Initiative 416, the amendment that bans same-sex marriage in Nebraska, was a defeat, he said.

But the news that Angela Clements, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln lesbian student, won a Truman Scholarship was good, he said.

"That sends a message to all GLBT students," he said.

Diaz-Perdomo grew up in Havana, Cuba, attended college in Montreal, Canada, and Madrid, Spain, and returned to Cuba to get his doctorate degree.

He came to the university in 1969 to take on the position of residence director of Selleck Residence Hall.

The Rev. Don Hanway of St. Mark's On The Campus, 1309 R St., was the other nominee for the award.

# UNL will showcase research

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The seventh annual Undergraduate Research Conference will be held this weekend with more than 60 University of Nebraska-Lincoln students presenting their research projects.

The conference, sponsored by UNL's Honors Program, will take place Friday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. in the CBA building.

The conference is not a judged competition but an opportunity for students to present their research in a professional setting, said Karen Lyons, assistant director of the Honors Program.

Students will also create posters detailing their research, which will be on display in the Nebraska Union on Friday.

Lyons said a "wide variety" of research topics will be covered, including robots, science-oriented projects and arts-based research.

## Law & Order

### Fire department investigating three suspected arsons

Lincoln Fire Department investigators are looking into three suspected arsons committed early Wednesday morning.

Police said they received a call at 4:21 a.m. reporting a fire at the EZ Mail in the Clocktower shopping center at 70th and A Streets.

At 5:04 a.m., police received another call reporting another fire at 1529 C St. The four-stall garage

at the residence was on fire, causing considerable damage to the two vehicles inside.

Police then received a third call from a resident of nearby 1544 B St., No. 2, who said she smelled smoke and discovered a birdhouse on fire behind her porch. Police did not say whether any birds were harmed in the fire.

Compiled by Charlie Kauffman


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# We are the majority.

The majority of NU students (74%) have 5 or fewer drinks when they party.\*

\*1999 Ominibus study.

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