

Interns

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He said finding a way to foster in a positive light the variety of ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds represented on campus is what's important to him and his colleagues. But to do so, he added, "we need institutional change."

Jessica Billingslea agreed. Citing one of the demands made at Johnson Hall as a reorganization of the administrative infrastructure, she has made researching other universities' policies her task this summer.

"I was involved with the sit-in, and what we were demanding is very important to me," she said.

Specifically, Billingslea has studied the possibility of reinstating the now-vacant post of a vice president for student affairs at the University.

She said such a position did exist, in conjunction with the current posts of vice presidents for Academic and Administrative Affairs, but was eliminated about five years ago.

"There isn't an official meeting student needs in a direct manner," she said. "It's like having no one to turn to."

Kathleen Workman is dedicating her time as an intern to "reaching the middle majority"

on campus, or those who don't think they're directly affected by a lack of diversity here. She is actively investigating bringing a research institute to campus to look at diversity issues and to train people to facilitate discussions in and out of the classroom.

"It represents more of a vision of what we're trying to bring to campus," she said. "More important than specifically training students, but letting them come to their own consciousness of what it means to have a diverse campus."

In general the interns report being pleased with their progress thus far, while simultaneously acknowledging "there's still lots of room for improvement."

Jason Mak, working with the Asian Pacific Student Union, said effective strides are being forged.

"I'm very heartened by the progress we're making," he said. "Getting people to think about diversity, creating a dialogue, is the most important thing, I think — communicating."

"It won't happen overnight nor be completed over this three-month time period," Ong said. "But embracing diversity as a top priority will at least provide a platform where different opinions

can be heard."


Workman asserted that this is only a beginning on a long road toward an enriched and diverse community.

"We will continue with this work and see these issues through," she said.

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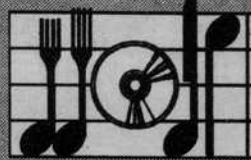
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