Frat member ignores ‘taboo’

By Cynthia L. Quigley
Lantern staff writer

A psychology major and participant in campus activities, Phil Baskerville leads a life much like other students at Ohio State.

But, he has broken a university taboo—he is a black member of a predominantly white fraternity.

Baskerville, a senior from Prospect, Conn., is a member of Acacia fraternity.

He said he was drawn to the predominantly white greek system because he was already familiar with many of the fraternities and sororities. He received literature in the mail from the Interfraternity Council about the greek system and decided to participate in fraternity rush.

Subsequently, Baskerville was invited to join Acacia.

He said he had never really heard of the predominantly black greek fraternities. “The first time I was exposed to the predominantly black greeks, was at Ohio State.”

Baskerville said he is aware there is segregation in the greek system.

Although black and white fraternities are basically different, there are some similarities. One goal of the Women’s Panhellenic Association and the Interfraternity Council at Ohio State is to bring the black and white fraternities and sororities together, especially for philanthropic projects, since community service is a common goal of both organizations, Baskerville said.

He cited some of the differences between black and white fraternities and sororities in areas such as pledging, general running of their organizations, and housing.

When asked if he would choose the predominantly white greek system if he could do it all over again, Baskerville answered, “Yes.”

This is the last in a three-part series on segregation in the greek system.

Baskerville’s feelings for Acacia run deep.

“Acacia holds for me a place I can call my home away from home. I have my brothers, people I can rely on in times of need.”

Baskerville said he hasn’t been treated differently because of his color.

He has been an active member of Acacia—holding the offices of song chairman, vice president and president.

As well as being active in the greek system, Baskerville has been a Buckeye cheerleader for three years and a member of the Men’s Glee Club.

John Mazor, a junior from Highland Heights and president of Acacia, said Baskerville has contributed to the fraternity.

“He’s an outgoing and friendly guy,” Mazor said. “His image of being a cheerleader is good for the fraternity and he has brought a lot of prospective members to the house.”

Baskerville said he has plans to go to graduate school after getting his undergraduate degree either this coming winter or spring quarter.