New OSU program to unite minorities

By Lynn D'Annibale
Lantern staff writer

Ohio State's Office of Minority Concerns and the Undergraduate Student Government are planning what they believe is one of the most needed programs on campus.

The Campus Unification Program is an attempt to stimulate a movement for developing unity among all minority student organizations on campus.

Stephen R. Jones, program manager for Minority Concerns for Residence and Dining Halls and originator of the program, said that to a certain degree, populations stay to their own kind, and that is a sign of racism.

"People are still severely out of touch with reality on what minority groups have to go through, and this is what people need insight and understanding to," Jones said.

People also need to know the history of minority groups and how these groups live in fear on a daily basis, he said.

Christine Chen, president of USG, and Jim Miller, director of OSU's Multi-Cultural Affairs, are helping Jones with the program.

Miller is giving the program as much support as he can by advocating the program and searching for forums in which the program can be presented.

Jones designed the program not to just sit around and talk about unification, but to do something about it, Miller said.

Everybody suffers from racism at some point in their life, either as a victim or an aggressor, he said.

"Racism is not just a matter between Caucasians and African-Americans, it's a concern for everybody," Miller said.

Chen said one of the main problems is that everybody thinks of minority groups as all being different.

"Many minority groups work separately, but towards the same things," Chen said.

Racism also occurs among the various minority groups, and these things need to be worked out together, she said.

Although plans are still in the making, the program is set to be held Oct. 8 in the Ohio Union.

"All the details are not worked out yet, but we will have keynote speakers and slide shows to help with the presentation," Jones said.

Jones also said he hopes the entire campus will participate and that the program will increase awareness of issues that confront women, different racial and religious groups and other minority groups. He said he hopes the campus will accept the responsibilities for addressing these issues as well.

"I also want offices at OSU to be aware of hiring minority students if they have not already," Jones said.

Most of the students' time is spent at school and work, and these are the areas that need to be making a difference, he said.

Jones said for the program to have any impact, it is essential that it be carried on throughout the year.

"We're making the initial step, but I am putting the responsibility on Ohio State to follow up on the program," he said.