



Tuesday, February 17, 2004

All-Campus Contest Winner

By *Rodney Brown*, OU senior African and African-American studies and performing arts – dance major

Type of program:

Multicultural-educational

Program title:

"Walk in My Shoes: An Experience on Stereotypes and Diversity"

Program description:

The main activity will utilize Oakland University students, faculty and staff. The program is completely voluntary. The students will come to a central area to pick up their "code T-shirts" (black shirts with a colored dot in the center). Different dot colors will be used to classify the student as a particular ethnicity or ethnicity, or someone of a certain economic status or sexual orientation. Faculty and staff will be given a master list that contains the specific dot color meaning. They will also be given a list of stereotypes and situations about the specific groups. Faculty and staff must be willing or committed to act exactly as the stereotype list and situations instruct. Once the students have received their T-shirts they will be allowed to leave and go on with their day as usual. Since the students will have no knowledge of what their dot color means, they will be treated stereotypically because of the dot color, in essence, like the color of one's skin. The students will be able to see first hand what it is like to "walk in someone else's shoes."

The program will go on for a full 48 hours. All those in the program must be committed for the full 48-hour program. At the end of 48 hours the students will meet in the same central area and the students will explain how they were treated and how they felt throughout the two days. The faculty and staff will then divulge the dot color stereotype meanings and open the floor for discussion.

Goal of the program:

"Walk in my shoes" is a community program designed to raise the awareness of stereotypes in today's society. The program will allow the students the opportunity to see first hand what it is like to "walk in someone else's shoes." Students will be more aware of the stereotypes that we place on one another. Students will be able to identify with a more diverse group of students because of this program.

Budget (estimated cost) and resources for program funding:

The cost depends on the scale of the program. The only cost involved is for the T-shirt. Note: the program could be done on a smaller basis with wrist bands or stickers. However, T-shirts would enhance the appearance and success of the total program.

Arrangements:

Reservation of a central location
Faculty/staff master lists
T-Shirts

SUMMARY

Rodney Brown, OU senior African and African-American studies and performing arts -- dance major, earned first prize for his submission to the seventh annual All Campus Essay Contest in Commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

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