

Students discuss troubles with interracial dating

BY SUE BUCK
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Love and friendship have no barriers.

But those outside some relationships can make life difficult.

That's the message from students who attended a cross-cultural conversation about interracial and intercultural relationships Thursday.

They were part of a student conference called "The Next Generation: Coming Together, Society's Children Speak," which included a dozen sessions on issues surrounding diversity. About 250 students from Farmington, North Farmington, Harrison and Mercey High Schools, attended the day-long event at the Farmington Training Center.

Students who focused on dating said the perceptions and prejudices of others create an uncomfortable atmosphere for their relationships.

For one North Farmington High School student who is Jewish and dating a Catholic boy, continuing that relationship means dealing with some sharp family criticism. She dissolved in tears after the session, when she spoke with Pat Torres, a Harrison teacher.

"He was my best friend first," the girl said during the session. "That's what really matters to me. What matters is that a person is a good person."

Some biracial students volunteered firsthand knowledge and understanding of the strengths and challenges of these relationships, even if couples choose activities in somewhat "neutral territory."

"Your child will experience racism wherever you go," said Diana Ebiware, a Farmington High School student who is in an interracial relationship.

Any change in attitude would begin with the students, said Farmington School Board Member Pam Christian.

"My son dates who he likes," Christian said. "That's what I would encourage everyone to do, date who you like, date who you like being with. My son has dated out of his race. We talked. I said, 'As long as you are feeling OK with it, I am feeling OK with it. Whatever you love I love.' It doesn't matter the color. That's how I was raised. Each of us has to look within."

Strong biases and ill feelings were cited among girls who were criticized by other girls for dating outside their race. For instance, white girls going with African American boys have experienced jealousy expressed by African American girls.

Students of the same race who live in Detroit and Farmington Hills also hear critical remarks, said one student.

"Anywhere you go, you are going to be looked at differently," said Shantay Gentle, a North Farmington High student.

Cliques are everywhere, said Sam Wells, who attends Farmington Community School. "Some people are haters," Wells said. "You have to throw off the haters. Diversity is like art. It's like painting a picture, with different colors. The color is what catches your eye. It gives the picture more volume."



STAFF PHOTOS BY BILL HANSEN

Stereotypes: Sana Baig comments on the responsibility of males to share child care duties. The session addressed gender issues and stereotypes.

Cliques from page A1

"I can sit anywhere," Rosenberg said. "I think the hallways are bad. The hallways are really segregated, not the cafeteria."

Stepping out, making one's self available and not being locked into one group were also points made in the discussion. The challenge is to get that message out to students who need to hear it, said Erin Deroo.

"People who come to diversity conferences are not the problem," the Farmington High student said. "We need to focus on people who don't come. I know a lot of us come from backgrounds where our families are prejudiced. It's nothing that they outright do. They aren't outright racist. It's the little things that they do or say."

Initiating change is everyone's responsibility, Kelly told the group. "It starts with you."



Career paths: Henry Martin III explains some of his thoughts after a moderator asked questions about sex roles in choice of careers, specifically, why more men don't become nurses.

New shows on public access cable for you

CABLE CONNECTION

New and exciting changes are beginning to take place at SWOCC Studios. We have the exciting experience of moving into a new building with a new studio, increased staff, state-of-the-art equipment, more productions and, of course, TV production workshops!

The move-in date will be late summer, but it is looking more like a TV studio everyday. The spring showers will soon start, so don't get soaked outside, learn a new hobby and volunteer your time inside at SWOCC studios!

The first step to doing television is attending our two-hour orientation, which introduces you to SWOCC and the staff, reviews our policies, procedures, and explains the workshops in detail. From there, you are eligible to sign up for more. You MUST take the orientation before you can sign up for any of our free workshops. The next orientation is March 8th from 7-9p.m.

Please call Melissa Cohn at 248-473-7286 ext. 14 to sign up.

We offer a variety of workshops, beginning with the basic and most popular, Camera Basics. This year, one of the major changes taking place is the breakdown of the six-week studio workshop, we are now taking each section and teaching them separately. This way if you want to learn the camera, you can do it in just one night!

Another workshop we are offering is the Audio Board training. This two-hour class meets one night to learn the basics of running audio for studio productions. It will also highlight the proper way to mic talent and learn the basic audio equipment to run an in-studio production.

For the first time at SWOCC, we are offering a Producer's workshop! This new workshop will be covering the steps in becoming a producer, it will cover topics such as pre-production meeting, set design, finding talent, copyright laws, rules and regulations. And that is just the tip of the iceberg. SWOCC Studios also offers a directing workshop, remote workshop, editing

overview class, and even a van workshop.

The year 2002 has brought some new and exciting shows to INFO TV-12, such as "HA HA Comedy," hosted and produced by access user Pauline Navoy. This is a show focused totally on making you laugh at professional and amateur comedians in their stand up routines.

Navoy says "The SWOCC staff has been very supportive. Public access is a great experience if you want to broaden your horizons. Take advantage of all the free classes offered here."

"Unique Celebrations," which is hosted and produced by access user Jackie Pudelek, takes you through the steps in planning a holiday party, from the food to the table settings.

"The Learning Show," which teaches you to speak the language of Portuguese, is hosted by access user Helena Gallagher.

"Visiting Kitty Cats," a new show in production by Susan Kudla, will show you (up close and personal) a day with an array of kittens. Susan was January's volunteer of the month at SWOCC studios. She started here early last spring and she had this to say about public access: "This is a good experience, but you have to be patient, and value the building relationships you make with the SWOCC staff and volunteers. Don't burn your bridges, these volunteers are here to help make your show ideas a reality."

As you can see, many new shows are popping up, why not make yours? If you have an idea for a show, please don't wait another minute, call the SWOCC offices today to sign up and experience the excitement of learning how television production works!

Melissa Cohn is the Public Access coordinator of SWOCC Studios (Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission). The next Cable Access Committee meeting is Tuesday, March 12, at 7 p.m.

Bridal Trunk Shows

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A Representative

will be here from

Amsale on

FRIDAY, MARCH 1

10 - 6 pm

SATURDAY, MARCH 2

10 - 5 pm

(Gowns arrive on Thursday,
February 28)



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