

U-M's Black Recruits: A Veep Has A Reply

Editor: From the reactions we have had to a recent column on the University of Michigan and black students, Tim Richard has wide readership in the Observer Newspapers.

Hopefully, this letter will clarify for your readers some aspects of a situation which may not be well understood. First, the 1075 Black Student enrollment goal is for 1973-74, not 1972-73.

Secondly, the population from which that enrollment will be drawn is not only the current 6% black proportion of high school graduates in Michigan, but also will be drawn from junior and community colleges, other four-year institutions, and from persons who have decided to extend their formal education after some work experience. Also, the fact should be known that the university has a 40% graduate enrollment.

Thirdly, Mr. Richard refers in his column to academic standards and relates them to admissions. As you may know, the admission criteria at U-M are not only the "objective" test scores and high school grades.

For example, our admissions people know that an "A" from one high school may represent a different level of achievement than the same grade from a different school. Those differences are taken into account. As for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, there is considerable evidence that these young people are not accurately judged by test score devices generally applied to those from relatively advantaged backgrounds. Motivation becomes more significant in predicting success than high school grades.

In judging the probability of success among students from disadvantaged backgrounds, the university is operating from a base of more than five years of experience.

In 1964, U-M enrolled the first Opportunity Award Pro-

READERS' FORUM

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gram freshman class of 70. That first year we lost about a third of the students for one reason or another, including academic attrition. By last year, the loss rate had been cut in half. This year, with nearly 800 Opportunity Award students—and about 85% of them black—the retention rate is expected to improve further.

On the matter of performance standards, we do not expect to lower them. We recognize the need for supportive services, but performance required to attain the degree will not be lowered.

One also should understand that about half the black students at the university are not Opportunity Award students. That is, they are not receiving an different financial and/or counseling and/or academic supportive services.

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In Defense of Thingamabobs

EDITOR: I cannot let Dan McCosh's editorial on educational technology go unchallenged. Even though some of his statements are not entirely untrue, I am responding to the way his title wraps up all technology in a grimy little package. "Bah," indeed!

Let me categorically try to shoot him down.

1. The Environmental Theatre, with its fingers of foam rubber, was a gimmick, a PR public relations device, not an educational tool.

2. The full closet of movie projectors and slide projectors are part of the teachers' tools. We use them in the same way a newspaper tries to increase efficiency by using a linotype machine rather than setting type by hand.

3. Mr. McCosh says that writing and mathematics are

the only way real ideas are communicated. Perhaps we should do away with our art museums, theaters, television and pictures in newspapers.

4. Pictures stir kids up, give them some "motivation." What else, Mr. McCosh, what else? If we can stir them up and give them motivation, learning will take place.

5. Educators rejected most programmed instruction and teaching machines a decade ago. Those which are used have been carefully selected, and most teaching machines, if used, are inexpensive molded plastic. The only "derblinker lights" types which I have seen are those which commercial companies have tried to sell schools.

Many of Mr. McCosh's "mechanized thingamabobs" are worthless, but many others are very valuable. Research shows that learning can take place faster and more efficiently with films, filmstrips, slides, records, etc.

Please, Mr. McCosh, don't try to take them away from us.

And thanks for leaving us the tape recorders and the computer terminals.

WILLIAM MOORHEAD, Coordinator, Audiovisual Instruction, Livonia Public Schools.

A Woman's 'Emotional Hell' Rescue Squad Wins Thanks

EDITOR: In answer to Mr. R. Linford of Redford on "Abortion Vs. Right of Life," I am a part of that "silent majority" you speak of. We, as women, have for centuries been the "silent majority."

You speak of the unborn child's right to be born. I agree. That child does have a right to be born into a home where he is wanted, needed and where he will find food and clothes, not into abject poverty, or a home filled with

hate and bitterness. I wish I could impart on paper the emotional hell a woman endures even under the best of circumstances when she has to decide to ask for an abortion. It is not an easy decision, and I do not take it lightly.

I have four children I love very much, and yet I sought legal abortions for the last two. I was turned down even though my medical history said I was in great danger. Do you have any idea what it is like to go through a pregnancy like this? You become bitter.

What happens when a woman takes precautions, tries to avoid conception and still conceives, when she begs for a doctor to cut and tie her tubes and is repeatedly refused? Where does she go from here? She is literally damned if she does and damned if she doesn't.

We talk of planned parenthood and population explosion in the same breath, yet deny the one law which is needed if we are truly to be able to plan our families. Do you know who we hurt the most by not passing liberal abortion laws? We hurt ourselves.

We have to live with the results of the unhappiness generated by women who have given up hope and a multitude of children who never had any hope.

Mr. Linford, I will fight like a tiger for you to be able to exercise your constitutional rights. To choose and practice any religious faith you choose as long as it does not affect my private and personal rights. But I warn you, I shall fight equally hard for those same rights for myself.

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