

Taking action against discrimination is a better way



by Deanne McLeod

TOO OFTEN: Jocelyn Biggs (l.) and Kim Hunter say racist discrimination evident in the way retailers deal with some customers.

Continued from page 1

These are 12 accounts of Bennett women who have dealt with and faced discrimination. They will give specific incidents on what they have experienced as a black woman in the '90s.

Annette Peatross - As an employee at Belks and especially around Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays the older employees would tell her to look out for suspicious colored people. - "If you're not flashy, you're considered to be a suspected shoplifter, if you're black."

Leslie Starnes - When applying for a job at family Dollar, she waseventually called in for an interview. When she arrived, the same lady

that she had talked to on the phone with the same voice and name told her that she didn't call. Leslie noticed afterward that no blacks worked there.

Jocelyn Biggs - One day while in the Limited she noticed a sweater that was priced over \$100. As she was observing it, a sales clerk approached her and said, "Here's one in a price range that you can afford."

Kisheena Wanzer - When her and her friends entered The Gap, a sales clerk approached them and asked if they needed any help. Kisheena responded, "No thank you." Eventually the sales clerk approached them again and said to them, "Please let me know if

you all want anything. Please don't shop-lift or steal from us." Kisheena's response, " We have money ma'am and we were ready to purchase some things from you, but now, no were not. This was one of my favorite stores and I enjoy shopping here, but I refuse to give you my money when you can't even treat me like and equal adult."

Carmel Owens - When her an her friends were going to get an application at Sears, a little old lady behind the counter was giving out applications. In a twangy, nasty tone, she said to them, "May I help you people."

Allison Thompson - While in Stuarts with a group of friends they noticed a white sales clerk following them, when they complained to the manager he said to them that she had a right to do so if they were acting suspicious. There was also a group of white kids looking around too. They weren't followed.

suede? The sales clerk rudely responded, "Yes!" When a white lady entered the store she immediately went straight to her. -"It takes a lot for me to see discrimination; I wasn't going in there looking for it, it just happened."

Kim Hunter - Within a week of starting a new job at Ormonds, a black girl stole an item worth about \$5 and the store pressed criminal charges. Three days later a white girl stole an item worth about the same price and they let her go with a warning.

Tracey Justin - While an employee at Wal-Mart, she asked her manager if she could go home for Thanksgiving. Her manager told her that she knew the day after Thanksgiving was their busiest time. What did he want her to do, hang a sign on the window that said cash register gone home to California? He then told her that she was nothing but a high-classed yellow nigger.

So what are the best possible

"He then told her she was nothing but a high-classed yellow nigger."

A student's account of a run-in with a store manager.

Tonva Williams - While planning to purchase some clothing in Bennetton, she gave the sales clerk, a check. The woman wrote BF on the check (black female). The sales clerk also asked for her social Security Number, phone number at school and home, her father's name, did she work, what school did she attend, date of birth, and her charge account number.

Jeradva Roland - At Red & White Supermarket, a white man behind the counter told her that if she used food stamps it would be cheaper.

Necole Tinsley - While in Bass Shoe store, she noticed that no one in there except herself. When she looked at the sales associate, he turned the other way. The whole time she was in the store he did not acknowledge her presence.

Tammi McCall - While looking at an article of clothing in Lillie Rubin, Tammi asked a sales clerk if it was

solutions for a black person in this society to handle discrimination the next time entering a store?

The most important thing to remember is to keep your cool. When you fly off the handle nothing gets solved, and you end up looking more ignorant than the person who started it.

Instead of getting angry, calmly express your displeasure to the person who offended you and then ask to see their manager. If the manager takes no disciplinary action against the employee write a letter to the company or in some cases file a suit. Writing a letter for instance goes a long way with professional people than merely calling on the telephone. It shows thay you took the initiative to seriously think out what has happened to you.

Remember, don't let discrimination get the best of you. You get the best of it.

LEAD STORY

Petitions spur resignations

Continued from page 1

Shelly Markham, a senior political science major and last year's Student Government Association president, drew up a petition stating that the senior class officers had done nothing; there had been no class meetings, the senior class deficit had not been eliminated, and there had been no senior class activities planned. The petition called for impeachment of the class officers.

As a result, about 25 seniors met with Ms. Oliver, the class advisor, on Jan. 26 in Black Hall auditorium. During the meeting, Holt apologized for neglecting her duties as the senior class president and asked for a second chance. Consequently, the senior class officers were placed on a two-week probation period. During that time, they had to complete all activities listed on a student activities calendar presented at the meeting. They also had to show that they had raised \$150 for student activities.

Two nights later, seniors gathered again in Black Hall. This time, the debate was whether to go along with the probation granted at the earlier meeting, or simply impeach the officers as demanded in the petition.

There was a motion on the floor to vote on the petition not being served. The vote was 18 to 7, to give the senior class officers a second chance under the probation, with modification. It was voted that instead of the officers raising \$150, that they raise \$300.

Senior class president Patrice Holt and senior class president Shahnaz Chowdhury both resigned at the beginning of February. During the probation period the senior class did complete the class activities for the month of February. The activities did not raise the \$300 goal that was set for the senior class. The total raised from activities was about \$140.

After the resignations, a senior advisory board was put together, because there was not enough time to go through the election process. Seniors that were appointed by the SGA are Shelly Markham, Erica Warley, Mona Perry and Tracy Sherd. The other seniors that were chosen by the class includes Betty Mulins, Staci Green, Yancisca Loften and Christine Clyne. Since the board was appointed, it has sponsored a series of student activities and made a final decision made on the senior class song.

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