

Viewpoints

Affirmative action important to diversity

Special to *The Clarion*

Bob McLendon, Vice-President and Dean for Admissions and Financial Aid at Brevard College, is the 1996 president of the CACRAO (Carolinas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers) and has recently published a column in the organization's newsletter. Here is an excerpt from his article on affirmative action, which we believe will be of interest to the students and the greater Brevard community.

Few issues have aroused more debate in higher education than affirmative action. Should we eliminate factors such as race, ethnicity, and gender from consideration in the admissions process? Recently, in a lower court decision the affirmative action plan of The University of Texas Law School was challenged. In California, members of the Board of Regents voted with great fanfare to abolish racial affirmative action. Also, House Bill GH.R. 2128 seeks broadly to limit federal affirmative action programs. I believe carefully designed affirmative action in pursuit of campus diversity is right and constitutional. Supreme Court Justice, Lewis Powell wrote in 1978; 'Seeking diversity in its student body is clearly a constitutionally

permissible goal for an institution of higher education.'

We should remember that exceptions or special considerations are made in the admissions process beyond race and gender. For example, as the admissions staff considers the pool of applicants, consideration may be extended to students with special talents, such as musicians, artists, athletes, legacies, and extraordinary experiences with community service.

College students and professors benefit in countless ways from the opportunity to live and learn among peers whose perspectives and experiences differ from their own. We should be allowed to select students not only on the basis of what they have already achieved academically, but on evidence of what they can contribute to the larger society.

Neill Rudenstine, President of Harvard, recently wrote: 'Race historically has been and still remains a powerful feature on college campuses. To say that race may be taken into account in the admissions process certainly does not mean that it should be elevated above all other criteria. It does not imply efforts to achieve quotas. It means the applicant race may be considered as one factor among many considerations of a person who has the potential to contribute something distinctive.'



McLendon, Vice-President and Dean for Admissions, has been involved with the issue of affirmative action. Special to The Clarion

Minorities and women in this country still face discriminatory barriers in securing housing, credit, employment, and in dealing with the daily indignities that minority citizens face in shopping malls, department stores, or something as basic as getting a taxi to stop for them. Today there is

still a compelling need to remedy the effects of past and present discrimination in society and in higher education. American education has grown stronger because of affirmative action and for the courts or the federal government to change our course would be a mistake.

Vandalism shows lack of student maturity

Manabu Okawa

Guest Commentary

I am sick, not only physically but mentally. A route of this sickness is tough to identify. It might be coming from some Captain Molligans I might have taken. It might be coming from the stress of my classes. Most likely, however, the sickness is caused by the unpredictable incidents happening since the beginning of the semester.

Fortunately, we have had a lot of suggestions brought up by you. Also, we benefit by having an opportunity to be able to realize these proposals. Some are promised to be realized. Some are still in the process. So what is the problem? Unfortunately, something has prevented the improvement of our campus life from being realized. I believe you know what this means.

We have been saying to the college staff and faculty, "Do not treat us like

little kids. We are in college, not in high school." Right!! We must have a right to be treated as adults, as long as we act like responsible adults. What if our behavior is not acceptable as adults? Do adults deliberately break anything? Do mature adults commit vandalism? Do responsible adults ruin the Christmas tree?

A lot of things, such as the dance parties, are created by the Office for Campus Life including Twister Productions and the SGA. Of course, they have an obligation to provide the students some fun and see this as a first priority. They never expect to be appreciated, though. The Underground and the Gameroom which were built last fall, for example, have been loved and appreciated by a lot of students and should not be threatened by any unacceptable action. We do not want them to be closed, do we? Anyway, Coltrane Commons has been forced to

shut its doors early at midnight due to the vandalism.

The SGA has been proposing a lot of improvement, such as the fruit juice vending machines, vacuum cleaners,

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and 24 hour visitation. And Brevard College administration takes it for granted that the students will be responsible for their own actions. Considering what we have done (ruined), the BC administration might not want to give 24 hour visitation to the students who behave like high school students.

I know that you all did not steal some cheap balls. I know that you all did not ruin the Christmas tree. I know that you did not steal money from the coffee shop. But the fact is that somebody at Brevard did. I hope they are from Brevard High School since their childish, ridiculous behaviors might be acceptable at some high school?

Please remember that people who behave as responsible adults are the only people who deserve to be treated as adults. Otherwise, you will not get anything. To those who have committed vandalism, I know you must be upset about something. Please come and complain to me. We, the SGA, are on your side. We are the only link between the students and the administration. Adults know what to do to improve our life. My friends, I believe you are all adults.