

Omega National President Wants Auburn Students Charged With Hate Crimes

By Roland S. Martin
BlackAmericaWeb.com

The international president of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity wants all of the Auburn students who attended a Halloween party where several participants dressed in blackface and Afro wigs to be charged with committing a federal hate crime. Lloyd Jordan, a Washington, D.C.-based private practice attorney, told BlackAmericaWeb.com that the wearing of Afro wigs with Omega shirts, as well as t-shirts with FUBU written on them was a clear sign of the insensitivity and hatred the white students have for African Americans.

"What they are trying to do is kill the intelligence and kill the black (Auburn) youth from getting an education," said Jordan, who has visited Auburn since the incident and met with university officials.

"It is a clear threat and it clearly fits (within federal hate crime statutes). The case law is very strong on things like this and even less.

"This is racial harassment, racial hatred and racial terrorism at its best." Auburn suspended 15 students who wore Ku Klux Klan costumes and wore blackface at the October 27 party for violating the school's harassment and discrimination rules. They were members of Delta Sigma Phi and Beta Theta Pi.

The university also created a task force to discuss opening a multicultural center on campus and expand course offerings on tolerance and diversity. Auburn suspended the fraternity chapters, and their respective national organizations closed the chapters.

"We felt that anything less

would not do justice to the many, many people who were hurt and offended by the actions of the members of our Auburn chapter," said Delta Sigma Phi national president John Boma. "The actions of these men were intolerable, and we felt that decisive action needed to be taken in this situation."

Delta executive director Jon Hockman said the closing of the chapter "is a categorical statement that our organization will not stand for behavior such as this."

The Beta Theta Pi fraternity earlier suspended 13 members, and its General Secretary David Wright said the chapter was closed because of their involvement and the fact that others in attendance did nothing to stop them.

"A culture that allows this type of thing to occur cannot be permitted to continue," Wright said. Jordan said the actions of the fraternity members have only highlighted the problems black students at Auburn have had to endure. You have to be down here in Auburn and see the fear in the face of some students and see how it has disrupted the community," he said. "There is spillover and threats from other organizations to (black) students there."

But the issue has deepened after a judge reinstated 10 white students last week. Lee County Circuit Court Judge Robert Harper's decision at a Wednesday hearing came after the Delta Zeta chapter of Beta Theta Pi fraternity sued Auburn University, several university administrators and the national office of Beta Theta Pi.

Harper, however, did not

grant a request for a temporary restraining order barring the university from pursuing further disciplinary action, including possibly expelling the students. The lawsuit, which seeks \$300 million in compensatory and punitive damages, names Auburn interim president William Walker, the Auburn University Board of Trustees, Auburn's director of student affairs Wes Williams, and Beta Theta Pi General Fraternity.

The lawsuit claims that Auburn officials and the national office of the fraternity violated the students' constitutional and civil rights, including freedom of speech, freedom of association and privacy guaranteed by the First and Fourteenth Amendments. The suit also claims that university officials defamed the students and portrayed them in a false light by identifying them as racists.

The Beta Theta Pi chapter also claims university officials had ulterior motives for suspending the students and kicking the chapter off campus. They said university officials used the incident to defend their failure to meet court-required minority recruitment.

Beta Theta Pi fraternity members say that since the incident, they have received death threats and threats of having their fraternity house burned down.

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Honda All-Star Team Takes FSU On A Ride

By Garrett N. James
Staff Writer

"We are the champions" is the phrase that Guy Outlaw, member of "Full Force," bellows. He and along with Aisha Brooks, Arlisa Broadnax, and team captain NeKeith Brown, brought home the first place trophies in the annual FSU Honda Campus All-Star Challenge. The second place team was "The Cortex," which consisted of members Mitz-Ann Alexis, Roger Belton, and Jacqueline Carr.

For those who don't know, the Honda Campus All-Star Challenge is a question and answer game similar to jeopardy. The question topics range from history, science, math, and current events. Sixty-four of our nation's HBCU's participate in the game.

FSU has finished in the top 16 over the past 8 years and has collected over \$45,000 in scholarship money over the last 4 years. The JV and Varsity teams, along with two other alternates, were picked from the FSU tournament according to who answered the most questions. The Varsity team (which has not yet been revealed) will get the opportunity to play in the national tournament, which will be held during the week of April 4-8, 2002 in Orlando Fla.

The top 10 players are as follows in no particular order: Ray Adams, Roger Belton, NeKeith Brown, Leon Chittams, Lauren Christian, Rhoshawnnah Clark, Arkeem Fleming, Agnes Allen-Mclean, Marcus McRae, Aretha Ward and the two alternates, Thomika Segar and Trey Scott.

NeKeith Brown, the most experienced player on the team, said that the Honda Challenge is a great way to showcase intellectual talent versus mere athletics talent as in sports. He says that this year's tournament was a success because of Mr. Carroway, the volunteers and the student participation. Because he has finished in the top 8 percent last year, he's expecting to continue to do well this year.

The only freshman on the team, Arkeem Fleming, said that he's here to change the freshman image. He's tired of hearing, "You don't have any credit hours," and he's willing to do his best even though he is so new to the program.

Mr. Carroway, the FSU team coordinator, had nothing but positive words for the Bronco's Voice. He just wants the team to work hard and continue the FSU winning tradition.

International Students Talk About Diversity

By LaKeshia N. Denson
Staff Writer

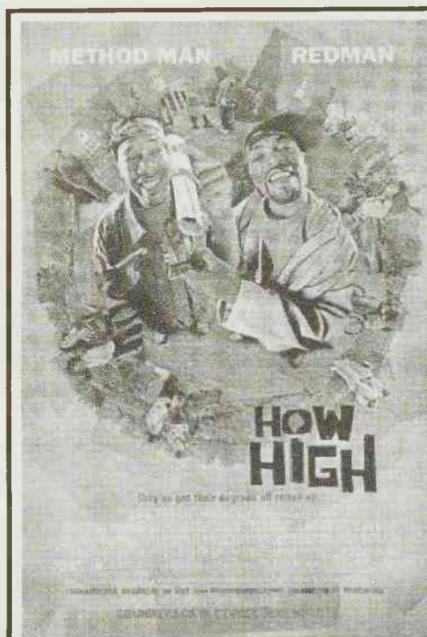
Tapestry is a patchwork quilt of many races and faces that coexists in this space. It's an embroidery of threads from the cloth of Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas, weaving a new fabric of many colors and textures. A pattern of the peaceful coexistence of all people and a tribute to the emergence of a new world, a new tribe, a new vision. "Tapestry" was the theme of the 2nd Annual International Education Week sponsored by the International Students Association of FSU.

One of the highlights of this week was an open invitational banquet. The speaker Dr. Avis Jones-Petlane, a professor at Montgomery College, spoke on the topic of diversity and how FSU could become a more diversified campus.

"Diversity starts within the student body but administration also needs to diversify faculty and the curriculum as well," said Dr. Jones-Petlane. Attendees of the banquet agreed with Dr. Jones-Petlane's advice, especially the ISA president, Deon Winchester, "To have an understanding of people from

other cultures that understanding or learning process begins here on campus. Learning about one another provides a better world for us and our children." Dr. Petlane-Jones also shared her experiences during her trip to Ghana along with her other adventures in the eclectic countries of Africa. Dr. Petlane-Jones made comparisons between the way of life in African countries to those in the Americas, and she displayed her fascination of the many different discoveries and realizations she arose to through her learning process of different cultures. Her excitement and satisfaction of her new-found knowledge of different cultures was enough to motivate her listeners to ride the bandwagon of supporting the need for multi-cultural education in the classroom.

"This event was very informative. The speaker highlighted many aspects that will enhance the cultural development of the campus," said Mitz-Ann Alexis, a member of the International Students Association.



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