

BSU Forum Discusses Black Concerns

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In preparation for the organization's upcoming officer elections, the Black Student Union held an open forum for its candidates Wednesday evening in Diefendorf Hall.

Participating in the forum were 10 candidates looking to occupy five positions within the BSU. Former Student Association Vice President Oswaldo Mestre and Terry Lindsay are campaigning for president, while Curt Young and Alphonso Champagne are vying for the vice president post.

The race for treasurer features Antoinette Ransom, Roscoe Henderson and Sandra Chase. Nicole Thompson and Scott Norman are both looking to win the position of activities coordinator.

Elections Coordinator Stacy Glover presided over the forum, which featured introductory speeches from each of the candidates and a question and answer session, during which each candidate fielded questions concerning their campaigns from Glover himself. The candidates then responded to questions from the group of about 55 which

gathered to witness the forum.

Similar goals

The platforms of the individual candidates are remarkably similar, as are the issues at hand. Many of the nominees cited the need for improved lines of communication, both within the black community and between the BSU and other University organizations.

"To be effective as an organization...we need to establish a free flow of communication (within the BSU)," Young said.

Young's opponent for vice president, Alphonso Champagne, agreed by including "lack of communication" as one of the major problems facing the BSU today.

Another area of concern among many of the office-seekers is the morale of black students at UB.

Coordinator candidate Nicole Thompson explained that "in order to succeed, we need to have the involvement of the students. They must give us ideas and feedback, negative or otherwise."

Her opponent, Scott Norman, concurred.

"There are over 1,300 black students currently attending UB," Norman said. "If even half of these students attended a BSU activity, it would be a major success."

Champagne called student morale "very poor, and...in desperate need of change." The way to achieve this change, according to presidential candidate Terry Lindsay (who ran for Student Association President during the recent general elections), is to "heighten the consciousness of black students at UB."

General issues of concern

Some of the candidates touched upon issues pertaining not only to the University's black community, but to all blacks in general.

"What we need to do is revitalize the black culture as a whole," said treasurer candidate Ransom, "not just here at UB but throughout the country."

Meanwhile, Young sought to increase awareness of the South African situation.

"What's going on in South Africa is modern slavery, no matter what anyone might call it," he said. "We must work toward freeing our brothers in South Africa."

Voting takes place April 27 to 29, and while the results won't be known until then, at least one candidate is confident of victory.

"Judging from the amount of work I've done," said presidential candidate Oswaldo Mestre, "I've already won."