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# Hip hop posters pulled for Ushuaia fundraiser

By Angela Flandaca  
Staff reporter

The president of the University of Maine's Hip Hop Dance Club said the club is reluctant to conduct business with the nightclub Ushuaia again after a recent incident of misleading public relations.

The group planned a night of fun for last Friday, Oct. 24, at the Orono nightclub for the purpose of earning money for uniforms. According to Mandee Nadeau, the club's president and a third-year food science and human nutrition student at UMaine, Ushuaia employees told club members that they would handle the public relations and design a theme for the event. This led to more

problems than the Hip Hop Dance Club expected.

Nadeau said she was not part of the fundraising team that made arrangements with Ushuaia and did not know what went wrong until Kenda Scheele, director of Campus Recreation, contacted her.

Scheele showed Nadeau a flyer for the event that was created by a UMaine student who works for Ushuaia. The theme was "Pimps and Hoes" night. The graphic was that of a black male with his arm around a white, blonde female. The title read "UMaine's Dance Team." This was an incorrect statement, as UMaine was not sponsoring the event, which was sponsored by the dance club, not the dance team.

"We told them very specific guidelines of what we did not want on the poster and they did not follow them," Nadeau said.

Ushuaia's employees were told not to include the terms "UMaine" and "team" on the posters, Nadeau said.

Scheele said the issue is more than just a matter of principle or a bad reflection on the university.

"If there are a lot of posters out there portraying African-American males as pimps, that's not very welcoming," Scheele said. "Diversity on campus is a very important thing. African-Americans would not want to come here if flyers like this emerged. That's unfortunate."

Ethnic stereotyping is not accept-

ed within the Campus Recreation department or at UMaine, Scheele said.

Scheele said Ushuaia's manager, Alex Gray, reacted as though he was unaware of any problems with the flyers. She said he considered the flyers to be "MTV-like."

"Well, I don't think MTV is what we're trying to portray here," Scheele said.

"They didn't see a problem," Nadeau said. "They could have easily avoided putting a person on [the flyer]."

Gray did not return repeated phone calls for comment.

Nadeau said that when members of the club's fundraising team were given the flyers they immediately

decided not to post them and burned them.

"[The flyers were] ridiculous," Nadeau said. "It was pretty crazy. I don't think we'll do that again."

Scheele said she was proud that the club decided against posting the flyers and that the act showed the club members' maturity.

"That's an attribute to the club that it got pulled back," she said. "That's a very positive thing to do all that they did to try to minimize the sensitivity to this controversial issue."

No flyers were posted, however an e-mail was distributed with the term "Pimps and Hoes" and was removed from FirstClass as soon as Scheele spoke with Nadeau.