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## Minority faculty program increase campus diversity

Lester B. Smith  
*University of Maine*

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• Faculty-in-residence

# Minority faculty program to increase campus diversity

By Lester B. Smith  
*Maine Campus staff*

The Minority Faculty-In-Residence program will bring professors of diverse backgrounds to the University of Maine in an effort to increase cultural awareness on campus.

"The Minority Faculty-in-Residence program is a good way to diversify the campus because it gives you an opportunity to bring in qualified faculty before they

look for tenure positions and allow faculty of color and the university to get to know each other while at the same time creating a network with other universities that send us new faculty," said Shari Clarke, associate dean for Minority Student Services and Multicultural Programs.

Leonard Gadzekpo will be the first minority faculty-in-resident to teach at the UMaine begin-

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## Minority

ning this semester.

Gadzekpo is currently teaching Art in the African American Experience and German.

"The purpose of Art in the African American Experience course is not to only deal with African American art from a historical aspect but use African American art as a gateway into the African American experience in the United States," Gadzekpo said.

Some of the major areas in African American art that will be covered in Gadzek-

po's course are art during the period of slavery, art from emancipation to the Harlem renaissance and cultural and political awareness in art from the 1960s to the 1990s.

According to Gadzekpo, having multicultural professors is a good start to diversifying this campus. Students seem to be enthusiastic about it because many have registered for the course, he said.

"I think it's a good idea that there will be a black professor teaching here this semester because it will motivate many black

students and show us we can achieve our goals," first year student Lamin Sasiy said.

Vesner Lugo, a third year student said that the university could do more to diversify the campus but it's an excellent start to have a black professor because with more black professors there will be more black students attending the University.

"It's good that the University agreed to

have the Art in the African American Experience course," said Jackson Nadeav, a fourth year student. "Now they should expand on that and teach African American History."

"The University has only funded the Minority Faculty-in-Residence program for one semester but I will request that this program continue institutionwide on a regular basis," Clarke said.

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Leonard Gadzekpo. (Dave Gagne Photo.)

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## King

from page 1

dents will be on campus and will be exposed to the scheduled activities. She said there are concerns that if there were no classes scheduled a lot of people might be sleeping in or staying home on an extended weekend.

Some students disagree.

"I don't think we should have school because it is a national holiday and it commemorates a worthy cause," Liza Brown, a second-year student said.

Third-year student Ben Perry said, "I think it's foolish that a state-funded university does not celebrate a state-recognized holiday."

Assistant Dean for Multicultural Programs Adonis Ferreira said he isn't really pushing for the day off, but he emphasized the importance of recognizing King's contributions.

"If we use a day and really focus on what Martin Luther King was about, then we are doing ourselves a service, definitely," Ferreira said.

Ferreira said the events serve to highlight a variety of topics related to King's beliefs and principles.

"When most people think of Dr. King, they think of his 'I Have a Dream' speech, but he was a broader person than that," Ferreira said.

"Dr. King was thrust into the forefront and, with his oratorical skills, he was able to



James Varner (File Photo.)

galvanize the community. He was at the right place at the right time, and he had the right skills," said Leonard Gadzekpo, who teaches Art in the African-American Experience.

James Varner, president of the Bangor chapter of NAACP and co-adviser to the Black Student Union, said he hoped people would "get energized" and that there would be table discussions about how we can keep the dream alive, not just on Jan. 20, but all year long.

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