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# BSU working on diversity

Jeff Teunisen  
Staff Writer

In an effort to bring together all black students on campus and in effect, the whole student population through dialogue and events, the Black Student Union is making its mark on campus as a positive organization.

Once known as the African American Student Association, the BSU welcomes all students, not only African Americans. It is a policy that, its members say, will bring cohesiveness to the group and much needed dialogue between students at the university.

"The BSU serves as a support system and as educators on black culture to the university community," Shari Clarke, associate dean of multicultural affairs said.

Clarke said the lack of black students at UMaine is limiting exposure between the black and white community, and hopes that events supported by the BSU will help educate all UMaine students.

Currently, BSU members are working diligently and voluntarily on creating a newsletter addressing the concerns of a variety of multicultural groups on campus. The newsletter will consist of mostly poetry, opinion writings and standard newspaper pieces from a wide variety of students and multicultural groups on campus.

"We really don't have a voice on campus," junior Paula Codrington said. "The newsletter really opened our eyes to how silent we are on campus."

Codrington said the BSU is compiling a

variety of works done by students to be printed for the general population. She and others in the BSU hope the newsletter will come out more frequently in the future.

"Reading someone's writings gives you a better perspective of what they're saying," said Elix Brown, a senior and BSU member. "We need to get different voices heard."

And that is the basic premise of the newsletter. Varieties of voices and different views hopefully will bring the student population together.

"There might be some controversy about the title; it's BSU because we want to extend it to people interested in black people throughout the world," junior Thula Gwebu said.

The target date for the first newsletter is March 25, or possibly the first week in April. The newsletter, which will be in a tabloid format similar to *The Maine Campus* (minus the advertisements) will bring alternatives to the current media available on campus.

"The issues in the United States are important to other issues in the world. The African-American Student Association limited those from other countries," Gwebu said. "The Black Student Union is not limited to black people only."

Scott Labby and Chris Bragdon, co-chairs of the BSU, said they were both ecstatic about what has happened with the organization and the community over the last year.

"We have a way to go, but we're on our way," they said.