

Harambee unites Behrend community

by Erin McCarty
assistant features editor

On Wednesday, in the midst of the shock and confusion following Tuesday's terrorist attacks, over 60 Behrend students, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds came together to celebrate "unity in diversity" at the annual Harambee Dinner.

Harambee, which means "unity," could not have come at a more important time, when America's citizens and people across the globe must unite in order to face this terrible tragedy.

In their welcome to the dinner, Jacqueline Jackson and Khalif Rhodes noted they had

and a moving prayer delivered by student Adrienne Abney. At this point in the program, Interim Provost and Dean Dr. Jack Burke stood up to say a few words.

Burke first began by encouraging students to take advantage of the resources available on campus for dealing with the stress of this crisis. Common feelings associated with crisis stress are fear, grief, anger, shock, and anxiety, he explained. He also noted that Director of Student Affairs Dr. Ken Miller sent out e-mails to every student with information on these resources and the offices which provide them, namely personal counseling, student affairs, student activities, health and wellness, and the campus

tolerant." He warned against pointing any fingers as it has not been determined for certain who orchestrated these attacks. Even if the perpetrators were known, Behrend students of the same nationality or cultural heritage still have nothing to do with the terror.

"Timothy McVeigh lived just north of Buffalo, which is where I'm from," Burke continued. "He was a terrorist. I am not." In other words, being from the same country, city, or ethnicity as a terrorist doesn't make someone a criminal.

After this call for tolerance, the regular program proceeded with a dramatic presentation of the Nikki Giovanni poem, "The Reason Why," which was performed by Dollissa Stevens. Stevens was garbed in a long purple robe with golden embroidery and a matching scarf which went over her head but did not tie under the neck. The recitation began and ended with Stevens soulfully singing the strains of a gospel tune with her hands folded before her. Stevens' adaptation awarded her a standing ovation from the audience.

At this point, those assembled were invited to the buffet tables, where guests could choose from chicken, dinner rolls, salad, rice pilaf, vegetable medley, vegetarian casserole, and meatballs. The beverages were a choice of fountain punch, coffee, tea, or water, and the dessert was iced marble cake. After leaving sufficient time for the guests to consume their meal, the next presenter stepped forward.

Kim Moses, known on campus for her exuberance, did not disappoint as she introduced the guest speaker, her brother Elder Hayes Moses, who currently lives in Detroit.

Elder Moses, an ordained minister, launched into his speech with equal vigor, explaining how he had decided to speak from the heart in light of the recent events of the week. Moses noted ironically Winston Churchill's characterization of the aftermath of World War II as "our finest hour."

"Who we are doesn't show up when things



PHOTO BY KRISTIN RODGERS

Elder Moses, an ordained minister in Detroit, spoke at the Harambee Dinner, urging students to practice compassion. Moses is the brother of student Kim Moses.

are doing good," Moses said, adding that being involved in these events is a challenge in which compassion must be learned. "If it don't break you," Moses said, "it'll make you."

The inspirational snippets continued as Moses rallied the students behind him. When the audience had promised to join in "the church of love," Moses' speech ended with a standing ovation.

Closing remarks included thanks and calls for unity. The event ended with a prayer by Nicole Greene in which every member of the audience participated by clapping hands with their neighbors and standing.



PHOTO BY KRISTIN RODGERS

Behrend students and Ken Miller, director of student affairs, enjoy the fare at the Harambee Dinner on Wednesday night in the McGarvey Commons. Harambee means "unite" in Swahili.

considered canceling the event. But they considered it more important that time be taken to strengthen the bonds of school community despite the differences between individual students. They also praised the reaction of Behrend students thus far: comforting one another without regard to race, nationality, or gender. "That," they said, "is what diversity is all about."

This welcome was followed by a moment of silence for the people killed in the attacks

ministries.

"Everyone here has been affected by what happened," Burke said. "It is probably America's greatest tragedy." In response to this tragedy, Burke urged students to find positive ways to react. Several organizations are working on fund-raising and blood drives for the victims, while the campus ministries continue to conduct prayer services.

"Most of all," Burke said, "I want to stress the importance of staying cool, staying

QUESTION OF THE WEEK



"What we thought was safe isn't and our government keeps things from us."

Tammy Sudul
Psychology, 01



"I'm from Sudan and things like this happen all of the time there, but America is supposed to be a safe haven. There is no safe place now."

Kennedy Lora
Communications, 03



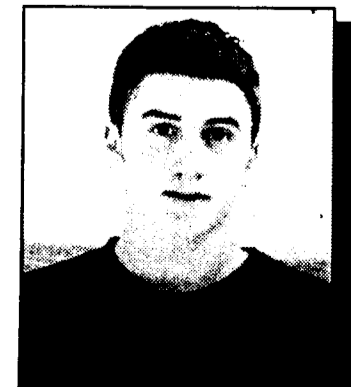
"I feel less secure and more vulnerable."

Terra Allen
DUS, 01



"We are a lot more vulnerable than I thought. This shows man's inhumanity to man."

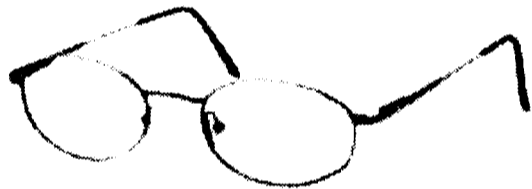
Linda Surovic
CDC/Personnal Counseling Office
Manager



"I feel less protected — more vulnerable."

Mike Moon
MET, 01

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