

# Opportunity is key, EOP students say

Editor's note: This is the last in a three-part series on the Educational Opportunity Program.

By SARAH BANDA  
Collegian Staff Writer

Although some Educational Opportunity Program participants criticize the program, at least one student thinks EOP is one of the University's more positive entities.

Lee Coffey (18th-architecture) said EOP gave him an opportunity to enter college and excel.

"I am proud to say I am an EOP student," the 28-year-old Coffey said.

**"Look, I'm an EOP student and I got to Harvard."**

— Lee Coffey

Coffey said he is particularly proud of the 4.0 he earned last spring while studying in South America under a foreign studies program.

Another source of pride, he said, is his taking part in graduate architectural design courses last summer at Harvard University.

Coffey said he tells students to open their eyes and let nothing block their goals.

"Look, I'm an EOP student and I got to Harvard," he said.

Coffey said EOP was a program in name only when he entered the program in 1971.

There were some EOP counselors then, Coffey said, but he received most help from some experienced EOP students who recruited him for EOP after he served in the military.

Coffey said he has been able to watch changes in the community and the program during his five years in EOP.

For example, he said he does not see the unfair stereotyping of EOP students that formerly existed since the University's colleges have started working with EOP.

Professors once thought EOP students were dumb, he said, adding that an EOP student had to work harder than other students to avoid stereotyping.

Coffey said he is glad to see that EOP now involves blacks, whites and other minorities because the program was about 99 per cent black in 1971.

One new service that pleases Coffey is the freshman Developmental Year program.

He said the DY remedial courses do for students what he would like to have had his first year.

DY gives EOP students the cushion they need before getting started, he said.

In addition, DY allows students to adjust and determine their weak and strong academic areas, he said.

No remedial courses were offered when he entered the University, Coffey said, so he had to take additional courses to strengthen his deficient areas.

Coffey said the constant changes in EOP staffing has helped

in getting the best qualified staff to fulfill EOP student needs.

Another EOP student, Gregory Borichevsky (11th-mining engineering) also said the EOP program has improved despite constant repositioning of staff members.

He said the staff has done a successful job though new people unfamiliar with EOP operations coming in every year can hamper a program.

Borichevsky said he entered EOP in 1971 when the University suggested he apply through EOP special admissions after his initial application was rejected.

Like Coffey, Borichevsky said the DY courses give students an introduction to college.

EOP kept close watch on students through counseling and tutoring when he entered the program, but only offered a short orientation for new students, he said.

One problem Borichevsky had to face himself is getting financial aid, he said.

EOP can counsel on how to get aid, Borichevsky said, but he had to find out his eligibility for various aid through the

student aid office.

Although older EOP students think the DY courses can be beneficial, some newer EOP students think differently.

Sharon Johnson (1st-liberal arts) said she likes the EOP program as a whole but would like to get out of her DY courses except for the speech course.

Johnson said she thinks she could have entered University accredited courses after a two-week refresher program.

She found out about EOP through an Upward Bound program at Uniontown High School, she said.

Another student said she was put into DY courses last Fall and Winter Term even though she had taken academic courses in high school and was prepared for college.

The fourth term student said she felt she was put in the DY reading course to fill a quota.

The EOP counselors can be very beneficial to students who need someone to listen, she said, but she did not like the DY instructor's attitudes. She said the instructors underestimated the abilities of the students in the remedial classes

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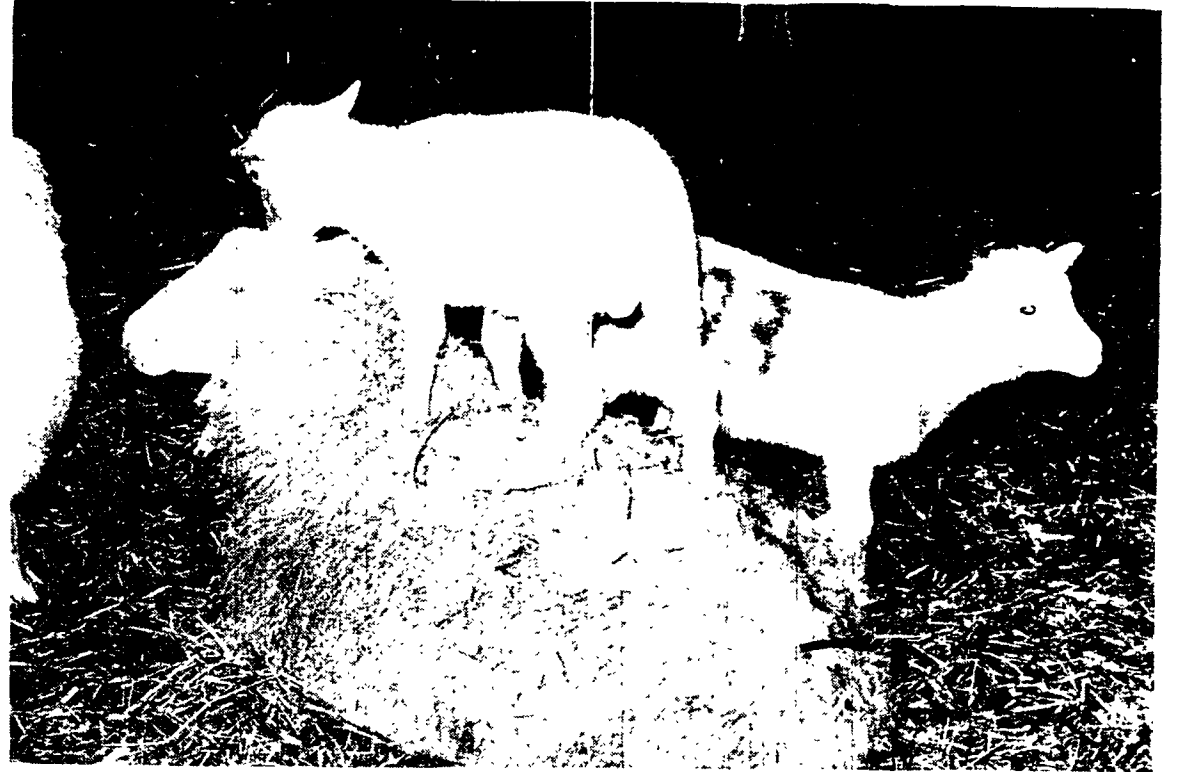
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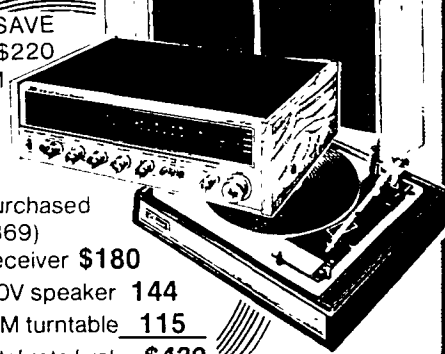
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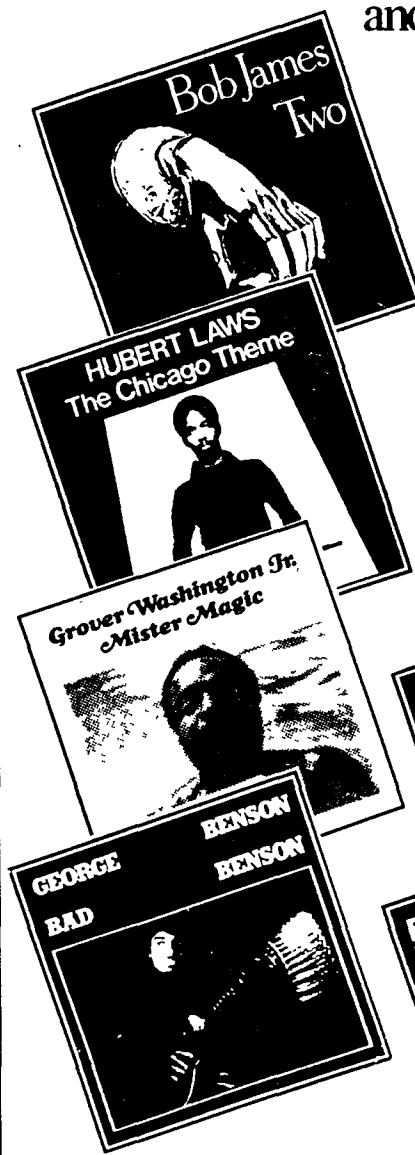
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