

# Alliances endorse tolerance

**New acceptance group, Anti-Defamation League decry hate speech use**

**Sara Miller**  
for the Index

As the water begins to recede from the areas devastated by Hurricane Katrina, racial tensions remain, flooding into communities as far away as Kirksville.

Karen Aroesty, regional director of the Anti-Defamation League for Missouri and Southern Illinois, visited Kirksville on Sept. 14 to talk about the various hate groups in Missouri. The Diversity Institute at Truman invited Aroesty to speak in response to white supremacy activity in the area.



**Karen Aroesty**

"It almost appears to me that the hand of God is reaching down to smite the Southern Babylon," Aroesty said, quoting a Web site. "Let us pray hard and pray that nature's ethnic cleansing takes place."

Senior Ben Kort, president of the Truman Jewish organization Hillel, said the hate groups' comments were disheartening.

"It's easy to fall into the habit of using a scapegoat to blame," Kort said. "Whether Jews are that stereotype, or African-Americans or any group, it's saddening."

Kort said that although hate speech is potentially harmful, he still values First Amendment rights.

"I think it's important for anyone to be able to say their beliefs regardless of whether or not I agree with them and regardless of whether they're negative towards me," Kort said. "People certainly have the right to believe what they believe. It's when that belief turns into negative action that I think you have the problem."

Aroesty said she thinks Missouri has more than its fair share of hate activity, possibly due to an abundance of rural areas and lack of diversity. She said although many hate groups reached their peak decades ago, they still are a threat today.

"The threat of violence hasn't lessened over the years, it's changed and become more sophisticated," Aroesty said.

Aroesty said hate groups' ideologies focus around racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia and anti-government feelings but also include other types of discrimination. The groups might use hate crimes and bias incidents to intimidate those who do not support their ideologies, she said.

A hate crime is a criminal act where the perpetrator chooses a

victim based on one of the protected characteristics of race, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, Aroesty said.

Sixty-five hate crimes took place in Missouri in 2003, according to an FBI Hate Crime Statistics report.

Before visiting Kirksville, Aroesty said she received a call from an orthodox Jew in New York interested in studying at A.T. Still University of Health Sciences. She said he'd used the Internet to research the school, and the third Web site to come up was a white supremacy site.

"He was very concerned," Aroesty said. "His feeling was, 'I'm an orthodox Jew, am I going to be safe going to school in Kirksville?'"

Kort said hate groups haven't threatened Truman students yet.

"There are always going to be people who disagree with you," Kort said. "However, it doesn't really become a hate group until they band together and act on it. At the moment, we've had no actions against us."

Junior Be-Asia McKerracher is a minority student who said she feels safe in Kirksville.

"I could see the possibility for animosity," McKerracher said. "The people of Kirksville seem genuinely nice to me, but the potential is there."

She said she attributes the racial tension to inaccurate stereotypes.

"There are a lot of people with stereotypes about races or people they just don't come in contact with," McKerracher said. "Even I came with stereotypes of Kirksville people, and I'd never met one."

McKerracher said she's been warned by others to not go into certain areas of the community.

"I've had people say you shouldn't go past the little square that surrounds the University because it's not very safe for you," McKerracher said.

McKerracher said there should be more diversity, but it's getting better.

"I think the school does a good job, and I could be ignorant, but I don't think so," McKerracher said. "I think they do a really good job of acceptance."

Some Kirksville residents are trying to improve acceptance in the community. Daniel Mandell, associate professor of history at Truman, is a founding member of Citizens United Against Hate.

He said he helped create the organization in response to concerns about a local white supremacist. The organization's goal is to prevent problems before they occur, Mandell said.

"We're trying to think of ways that our community can be stronger, recognize the diversity that exists here and more importantly, cherish that and make people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds feel welcome," he said.

Students can e-mail Citizens\_United\_Against\_Hate@yahoo.com for more information.



**Shirt Talk**  
photo by Nick Corich

Shirts hang Monday on the Quad as part of The Clothesline Project. The Women's Resource Center collected a series of shirts and designed them to give a voice to victims of sexual assault as part of Rape Awareness Week activities Sept. 19 through 23.

# Meal block donation drive nourishes hurricane relief efforts, food service

**Sodexo offers to donate a portion of dining hall meal blocks to assist those in need**

**Carl Walz**  
for the Index

The Kirksville community offered many opportunities for donations and relief efforts to combat the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina.

The Hurricane Relief meal donation program, run by Sodexo and Residence Life, was one of the avenues through which students could help.

The program, which ran from Sept. 7 to 9 in all campus food facilities, including the dining halls, the C-Store near Ryle Hall and Mainstreet Market, raised some students' eyebrows when they realized that only \$1.65 of a \$3 meal donation actually went to the relief effort.

Director of Dining Services Dennis Markeson said that the reason behind this difference in value.

"We actually donate the food cost portion of that \$3 because you're still going to have the labor there, you're still going to have the overhead and everything else," Markeson said.

After donating the food portion of a meal, which amounts to \$1.65, Sodexo will use the remaining \$1.35 to pay set expenses that will be incurred whether or not that meal is actually served, Markeson said.

He said labor accounts for about 40 percent of those expenses.

In total, students donated 2,000 meals, and faculty and staff donated \$500 in bonus bucks and dining dollars, totalling about

\$3,800.

Sophomore Katie Monaghan said she did not donate a meal because no explanation was provided for the difference between the meal cost of \$3 and the donated amount of \$1.65.

"I wanted to donate to the Hurricane Katrina effort," Monaghan said. "But the fact that it wasn't the same amount of money as the meals [made it seem] like it wasn't as good of a deal as if I had just given them the \$3."

Charles Boughton, instructor of business, said Sodexo followed the standards for an ethical fundraiser.

"The key to whether it's ethical or not is if they are saying how much is being donated," Boughton said. "In this case, what level of disclosure has been provided? Do you as the giver know precisely what portion of your gift is going to the intended recipient and what part, if any, is being retained by the collecting agency?"

The campus dining hall informational fliers state, "The food service will in turn donate \$1.65 per meal to the Adair County Red Cross."

Director of Residence Life Andrea O'Brien said students working the donation tables outside of dining halls did not receive special instructions to inform students about the amount difference.

This fact caused problems for some students.

Junior Tyler Phillippi said he thinks an explicit explanation should have been given to the donor before the meal block donation.

"With something like this, I think that you have to be absolutely certain to tell someone - to make sure they know - exactly how much is really going to be donated," Phillippi said.

Anne Barlow, 11-year executive director of Adair County Red Cross, said that

although Sodexo used a portion of the money to cover expenses, she thinks the Hurricane Relief meal donation program remains beneficial.

"It's a good project for all because it allows students to be part of the effort," Barlow said. "It allows students to donate without feeling an out-of-pocket loss."

Markeson said Sodexo runs all their donation programs in this way.

Barlow said that after she receives money from Sodexo, she deposits it in the Adair County bank account. She said she then writes a check to the national office, and they will tell her where the money should go.

"In this instance, since the money was specifically donated for Katrina, it can only be spent on that," Barlow said.

If students donate directly to the Red Cross, 100 percent of their contribution goes directly to the disaster relief, Barlow said.

She said the Red Cross can afford to donate the full amount because fundraisers and health and safety classes taught at the office pay their operating cost of \$644 per month.

Students have more than one option to make donations.

They can either make a check out to the Adair County Red Cross and mail it to PO Box 257, Kirksville, 63501, or take the check to their office located at 315 S. Franklin St.

Barlow said donors should make the check for disaster relief and not specifically Hurricane Katrina relief.

If the donors make checks out for disaster relief, she said that the law requires that the donated money must be spent solely on the original intention, which is directly assisting those who need it in the affected areas.

"If the donor designates that check for Hurricane Katrina, we can only use it for Hurricane Katrina," Barlow said. "This causes a problem when we have an excess of donation money for a particular cause because we can't, by law, use that money for anything else, even another disaster."

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