

# How private is your information?

BY SHARON JACKSON  
CONTRIBUTING NEWS WRITER

So, you think your address, phone number, date of birth and academic major is confidential information? Well, think again.

The truth is, this directory information may be given out by the university to just about anyone who asks.

A *Rebel Yell* reporter confirmed the accessibility of directory information by calling the registrar's office Monday requesting information about

*The Rebel Yell* Editor-In-Chief Teresa Hinds.

After some questioning by a registrar's office employee, Hinds' address, telephone number and major were then disclosed to the reporter.

"It's very disturbing that this information is available to anyone who wants it," Hinds said Tuesday. "I would think, in this day and age, the university would make it a priority to let its students know that this information is available, educate us on how we can ensure our privacy," Hinds added.

A startling fact concerning the disclosure of this type of information is that UNLV officials are not breaking any privacy laws by giving it out. A student's address, telephone number and academic major are not covered by the Buckley Amendment, an enactment that requires consent for the release of private records to outside parties.

In short, information that you may have thought was private is public and theoretically accessible to just about anyone, including that un-

wanted suitor.

Communication senior Sam Matranga was shocked to learn that UNLV officials could release information about her to anyone.

"I question why it's against the law for my employer to disclose my phone number and address but it's legal for UNLV to disclose the information," Matranga said. "What's the logic in that?"

UNLV gives students the option to protect their privacy by presenting a written request to the registrar's office within the first 10 days of each academic term.

"The university should make students more aware of

the option to keep their information private," said communication broadcast major Kerry Krantz.

Dean of Admissions and Records Jeff Halverson said students are allowed to submit their requests for privacy after the 10-day cutoff, but the university will not guarantee confidentiality after that time.

"The university tries to do the best they can but mistakes do happen," Halverson said.

UNLV will maintain the privacy request for as long as a student is enrolled, but encourages students to submit a new written request every semester.

## Freshmen nationwide favor race-based admission policies

NATIONAL STUDENT NEWS SERVICE

A convincing majority of American college freshmen support race-based admissions policies, according to a survey released recently by the University of California-Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute.

The same study, however, indicates that far fewer students support racial admissions criteria when grouped under the polarizing title of "affirmative action."

UCLA's 30th annual survey of freshmen indicates that 70 percent of students believe race should be given at least "some special consideration" in college admissions policies.

But when asked specifically about affirmative action, half of the students agreed that "affirmative action in college admissions should be abolished."

"People are willing to support the consideration of race in admissions, but are less willing to commit themselves to the more politically-loaded phrase, 'affirmative action,'" said Linda J. Sax, associate director of the survey.

Despite widespread attacks on affirmative action, college freshmen—the very people who most recently experienced the admissions process—support the use of diverse criteria in admissions.

The survey showed that college students support a wide

array of factors in the admissions process.

Some 96 percent believe that academic achievement and economic background should affect admissions decisions.

About 85 percent cited athletic ability and citizenship status as important considerations in admissions.

Far fewer students—just 58 percent—think that children of alumni deserve special consideration.

In other findings, the survey revealed that "keeping up to date with political affairs" as an important life goal dropped for the third straight year to an all-time low of 29 percent, compared with the record-high of 58 percent in 1966.

Also, those students who discuss politics frequently dipped to a record low of just 15 percent, compared with the high of 30 percent in 1968.

"This continuing erosion of students' political interest and engagement should be a red flag to all of us who believe in the democratic process," said Alexander W. Astin, survey director and professor of UCLA's Graduate School of Education & Information Studies.

Although student activism rose at the start of the 1990s, concerns about social issues have steadily dropped during the middle years of the decade.

Since 1992, freshmen have become less interested in "influencing social values" (from 43 percent in 1992 to 38 percent in 1995), "cleaning up the environment" (from 33 percent to 23 percent), "influencing the political structure" (from 20 percent to 17 percent), "promoting racial understanding" (from 42 percent to 33 percent) and "participating in a community action program" (from 26 percent to 23 percent).

"Apparently, increasingly political apathy goes hand-in-hand with disengagement from social action and a growing sense of powerlessness," Astin said.

## Learning disabilities high

NATIONAL STUDENT NEWS SERVICE

Learning disabilities are the most common type of disability among college freshmen, according to the American Council on Education HEATH Resource Center.

Data also shows the percentage of U.S. students with disabilities has tripled since 1978.

Between 1988 and 1994, the fastest growing category of reported disability among students was "learning disability." Some 32 percent of 142,000 freshmen reporting disabilities in 1994 had learning disabilities, more than doubling from 14 percent in 1988.

Visual impairments were logged in at 22 percent, down from 31 percent in 1988.

In 1978, only 3 percent of American students reported a physical or learning disability; by 1994, a full 9 percent of students claimed to be learning disabled.

## Debate team wins honors

UNLV's Debate and Forensics team traveled to two tournaments during the first weeks of school, taking top honors at the Cypress College Invitational and the Greater Salt Lake Invitational.

E.J. Gladding, a sophomore, took first place honors in after dinner speaking at the Jan. 12-13 Cypress event, which qualified him for the American Forensic Association, National Individual Events Tournament, set for April at Florida State University.

"E.J.'s early qualification illustrates not only his talent, but his dedication to excel-

lence in forensics," said Rosie Mays, assistant director of forensics.

Also taking honors at the Cypress invitational were sophomores Michelle Matlock, who took a third-place speaker award; and Richard Kimbrough, who placed fourth in NDT speaker points.

The team competed against 22 other colleges and universities from the Western United States, including the University of Southern California, the University of California at Berkeley, Pepperdine University, the University of California at Los Angeles, and Palomar College.

The team also traveled to the University of Utah in Salt Lake City to compete at the

Greater Salt Lake Invitational, Jan. 20-22.

Gladding took fourth-place honors for after dinner speaking, and junior Chris Bradley placed fifth in the same competition.

Junior Steven Hagen placed fourth in junior after dinner speaking, which qualifies him for the National Forensic Association National Tournament, set for April at the University of Western Illinois.

"The continued success of these students indicates the level of hard work they put into the activity," said Barbara Pickering, Ph.D., director of forensics. "We are proud of their continued achievements and pursuit of excellence."

## Senate allocations

The following funds were allocated by the student Senate at their Jan. 29 meeting:

- \$100 per month stipend increase, plus an additional three credits per semester, for Entertainment and Programming Director Brian Saliba.
- \$1,000 for transforming greenery in front of the Flora Dungan Humanities Building to desert landscape.

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