

Stop at the center, entertain your faith

By Sarah E. Harris
Features Staff Writer

Put Catholics, Protestants and Jews together in one place and what do you get? A center where students can meet new people and relax in an entertaining environment. Doesn't sound like the typical day at the union, does it? If only the union was this inviting.

The Interfaith Student Center, which is located on the south side of campus on Brussels Avenue, houses three main religions represented on campus, and the staff is always willing to invite students of other religions into their center.

The center houses the Catholic Newman Club, Hillel for Jewish Campus Life and the Protestant Campus Ministry. The center is a very nice building. It also has amenities, suited for the pickiest of college students. They included couches, a television, food, an air hockey table, a ping-pong table and even exercise equipment. Soon, the center is planning on opening their own computer lab as well.

The center's members also participate in numerous activities.

"We feed the homeless every morning at 5:30 a.m.. We have movie nights every Thursday. We have Matthew, Mark, Luke and Lunch on Tuesday. We have mass every Sunday at 8 p.m., and we have retreats. We

go to the mountains, or we spend the day in the building," said senior Ricardo Atie, co-vice president of the Catholic Newman Club.

The center also has a monthly Shabbat ShaBang and sponsors community service, holiday celebrations, worship services and outreach opportunities.

The center is about more than just religion. It's also about meeting new people and having fun.

"We meet lots of new people. There's a lot of diversity," said junior Valerie Sliva, treasurer of the Catholic Newman Club.

"It's not just about religion. We have a lot of fun here and it's a great atmosphere. It's a good environment for students to come together, because we all have a common background. It's really a home away from home," said junior Luanna Durden, co-vice president of the Catholic Newman Club.

The Catholic mass on Sunday is very well attended, and the students enjoy coming.

"We have about 90 students at mass. It's incredible how many residence hall people come over. We have a different priest every week. So, every week we get a different mass. It's neat and I think the students really like that," said senior Bud Benneman, president of

the Catholic Newman Club.

On Wednesday, April 29, the center held an awards ceremony for their most outstanding students and

tributed to the center and who gave an extraordinary amount of their time to the center. This year, it was awarded to Dr. Vern

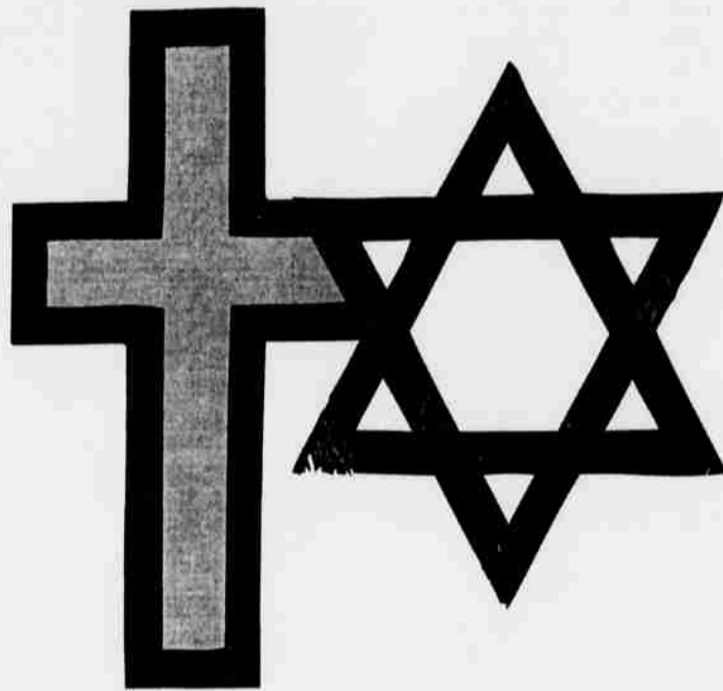
Three student of the year awards were also presented. They went to Elaine Kringle, from Hillel, and Valerie Sliva and Bud Benneman from the Catholic Newman Club.

All of the awardees were presented with a framed certificate, and some had their name put on a plaque which hangs in the center with the names of previous winners.

The center really is a place for students to go for relaxation and to distinguish themselves.

"I attend the Matthew, Mark, Luke and Lunch program. It's a pretty interesting discussion. We talk about the gospels and try to relate them to everyday life. I try to get to the movie night on Thursday after class," said Tom Smith, graduate student. "It's a nice place to come and relax and get to know some of the students. It's been a nice place to meet people on campus. The atmosphere is so casual, and it's a good experience to meet people from the three different religions in an informal atmosphere."

The center is open for anyone on campus and religious affiliation is not required. To find out more information, call 736-0887 or stop by the center at 4765 Brussels Avenue. It is open Mondays through Thursdays from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. They close early at 2 p.m. on Fridays.



members.

The Student Hall of Fame Award was given to the student with the most outstanding service and faith. This award has been a tradition since 1983. These students must "think big." In other words, they work hard for the whole center, not just their particular religious sect. This was awarded to Bud Benneman and Jennifer Bloomberg.

The Father Francis McKay Distinguished Service Award went toward someone who con-

Mattson, Interfaith Center Board Member.

The Oliver Deckert Award went to the member who does the most hands-on volunteering throughout the year. This was awarded to Dave Eastman, who is the center's accountant. He spent endless hours working on the accounting books and making sure the center paid all their bills on time. The award was also given to Frank Miraglia, who, among other things, provides music for the services and donated a television to the center.

PRIMAL SQUAT

By Jerry Thompson

