

NEWS

UNIVERSITY OF
SCRANTON
A JESUIT UNIVERSITY

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FOR RELEASE SUNDAY, NOV. 16

U OF S OPENS MULTICULTURAL CENTER

SCRANTON--The University of Scranton has established a Multicultural Center to promote understanding of African, Latino, Asian and Native American cultures and other cultures of the world.

Rev. Thomas Asante, a graduate student in theology and secondary education at the University who is a native of Ghana in West Africa, will serve as director of the center, which is located on the first floor of Driscoll Hall. "The center will be a place where students can learn about their own culture and other cultures so that they will have a better understanding of themselves and others," said Asante.

Asante points out that the center will strive towards a number of objectives:

cultural excellence: to empower and enhance the University's commitment to academic excellence;

community development: achieving a high level of involvement in the local community;

spiritual development: to achieve a high level of spiritual reflection;

excellence in the work place
and physical fitness and health.

Sherman Wooden, director of student activities at the University, was a driving force behind the creation of the center. "Since the world and the United States do not consist of one culture, one race, and one perspective alone, it is important that all students learn to appreciate their rich inheritance which comes from living in a pluralistic society,"

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said Wooden. "There is no conflict between unity and diversity unless we choose to perceive conflict."

Wooden pointed out that the center is the latest in a series of efforts to create more multicultural awareness on campus. "The Multicultural Center, our Women's Center, the International Student Club, the United Colors organization and other groups on campus have a common goal: to create greater awareness and understanding about diverse cultures."

Asante notes that the center will offer newsletters and programs aimed at building understanding among all groups and different peoples on campus. "The focus of this component will be information dissemination and dialogue," he said. "The center, which will be staffed by student volunteers, will offer our students a place where they can go to receive daily support in their attempt to be successful at the University."

Asante was ordained to the priesthood five years ago. Before being released by his local bishop for graduate studies at the University, he taught in a Catholic high school and worked as a pastor in a parish. He is residing at St. Mary's Rectory in Avoca and assisting at the parish's eucharistic celebrations. "As the center develops, it will offer training for peer educators and other individuals on campus so that these leaders can develop skills in both understanding and communicating with multiethnic students," Asante said. "I'm looking forward to working at the center and I share the optimistic view that it will become a liaison between multiethnic students both on and off campus."

11/11/97