

THE DAILY COCOLLEGIAN



Martin Luther King Jr.'s message survives through film. Movies about King's life were shown in HUB Heritage Hall on Monday.

USG's Day of Service poorly attended

By Natalie Hrubos

COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER | nfh108@psu.edu

While video clips and artwork honoring Martin Luther King Jr. in the HUB-Robeson Center attracted only a handful of students yesterday, a small discussion group tackled the issues once addressed by the civil rights advocate.

The discussion, sponsored by the Race Relations Project — a program designed to facilitate dialogue about race relations — and the Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity, jump started the Undergraduate Student Government's (USG) Day of Service.

This event was better attended

than others, with a steady flow of 10 to 13 students at a time throughout the day. The artwork and videos had an attendance of about three to four students at a time.

USG President Ian Rosenberger said "a lot" of students participated in community service projects. At press time, co-directors Jessica Moore and J.D. Krohn could not be reached for official participation totals.

Students who attended the discussion explored a wide range of topics, including dating people from other cultural backgrounds and how society deals with racial tension.

"I feel bad sometimes because I'm the white, middle-class male who is

supposedly the source of all the problems," Mark Levin (junior-meteorology) told the group. "What can I do differently? Should I wear a sign on my back that says 'I like everybody?'"

Others focused on discrimination against religious groups.

Karen Berman (freshman-psychology) said she often felt like a minority in high school for practicing Judaism.

"If I would walk around with a huge Star of David, that wouldn't be accepted," Berman said. "That's something I can't do."

Berman also talked about the problem of marrying someone from a different religious background.

"We would never understand each other," she said.

Yuan Tang (junior-psychology), one of the group's facilitators, said the purpose of the discussion was to get people to take action on some of the issues being explored.

"There is really a lot more that can be done," Tang said. "I got involved because I wanted to bring people together."

Brad Hoagland (sophomore-information sciences and technology) said these types of discussions

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Service

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should be held more often.

"Just because it's Martin Luther King Jr. Day doesn't mean today and only today we have to honor his ideas," Hoagland said.

While some students chose to honor King's ideas of social reform, others chose to follow in his footsteps by working to give something back to the community.

"Martin Luther King was someone who talked about people working together for the greater good," Moore

said. "You can't just sit by and let society happen."

Various student clubs and organizations visited local schools to talk about diversity and teach students about the civil rights movement. Some volunteered to put together bags for the food bank.

Other activities included take home service projects for students who did not have time to volunteer and an informal dialogue hosted by the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) community on interracial dating among gay and lesbian students.

Jamie Ziegenfuss (junior-psychology), USG's director of LGBT affairs and

political director for Allies, said the forum was successful but not as highly attended as he would have liked.

"Your target audience is naturally smaller, as well as the campus being usually less interested on those topics of diversity," Ziegenfuss said.

USG spokeswoman Julie Vastyan said the Ten Ways to Fight Hate on Campus program was canceled because of time constraints, but members of the Southern Poverty Law Center; the group sponsoring the event, met with administrators and attended other events throughout the day. It is unknown if the event will be rescheduled.