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# 'N-word' put to rest at NKU

BY HOWARD MCEWEN | ENQUIRER CONTRIBUTOR

**HIGHLAND HEIGHTS** - There will be a funeral at Northern Kentucky University's Otto Budig Theatre tonight.

The school's collegiate chapter of the NAACP will hold a mock funeral at 6 p.m. for racial slurs and other derogatory words. The burial will be part of a larger program called "Stop ... Using Those Words."

Thaddeus Walls, president of the NAACP chapter, said the burial is "a result of frequent misunderstandings among students, incidents on campus and to answer inquiring minds about the origin and usage of the words."

ADVERTISEMENT Walls listed several incidents on campus that drew concern from his organization.

"During this school year on two separate occasions one student had (the "N-word") written on their door, another student had the same thing written on their door along with negative words pertaining to the student's gender as well," said Walls. "The words are not being used in your environment but they are being used on this campus."

The event is based on a similar mock burial at the NAACP's national convention earlier this year.

"In our society, we as a culture don't understand the hurt we cause by using these words," said Alice Bonner, vice president of the NKU chapter of the NAACP. "Words such as ("N-word"), ho and slut affect the way we live together and the way we treat one another."

Okera Nsombi, NKU professor of history, will speak at the event. His talk is titled "Ignorance is not an excuse anymore."

"The bigger issue here is, why do we use them towards each other?" said Nsombi. "Being a member of the black or African-American community, I have heard this word ("N-word") used in a variety of ways and applied towards a variety of situations - both implying good and bad meanings."

"The real issue here is that the word, expanded from its Spanish origins where it simply meant black, was re-created to define the nature of one group as not human by a dominant group."

Bonner said the goal is not to censor people's language.

"We want people to be mindful of how these words affect us," she said. "We don't want everyone all over the world to stop using them, but simply to be cautious of the words they use."

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