

# YSU Task Force to be under way soon

■ Diversity Task Force sets out to sensitize faculty and staff to gender and racial issues.

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In light of the changing make up of the community and an effort to make the university a more diverse, efficient and effective institution, YSU President Leslie Cochran is in the final stages of developing a Diversity Task Force. The task force should be fully functional in four to six weeks.

According to Cochran, the task force is needed at YSU to address areas of diversity in hiring, student make-up and gender and racial sensitivity campus wide. Cochran said over the last five years he has wanted to make sure the university made a special effort toward diversity.

"I guess I would say, in all candor, in my judgment I don't think the institution has done that as well as we might have done," he said.

Cochran said making a move toward better achieving that goal had been set aside due to other major concerns of the university, but several events last spring brought the issue to the forefront and, he said, now is the time to do this.

The catalyst, Cochran said, came in a constructive way, dealing with several accreditation visits, each of which have specific criteria regarding gender and minority hiring.

Cochran said YSU has made strides in hiring female and minor-

ity employees in the last 10 years. He said YSU's minority hiring is compatible with the entire tri-county area served by YSU, but because the university is located in Youngstown, a special commitment must be made.

The first objective of the task force will be to sensitize faculty and staff to gender and racial issues Cochran said.

"I am not aware of blatant issues or people who are intentionally doing these things, what I think is in many cases people are just not sensitive," he said.

Two speakers are scheduled in October and November to address sensitivity issues.

Cochran said the task force will be comprised equally by members of the community and of the YSU community. He said he is currently waiting on names from all the vice presidents, asking for the names of four or five students to choose from, sending letters to ministers in Youngstown and receiving names from the mayor of Youngstown. He said goals for the task force will be defined once the group members have been decided.

Cochran said the task force is another tool that will help YSU prepare students for leadership roles in the future. He said the first few years will be primarily laying the ground work and direction for what will be a long term commitment.