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4A

Thursday, April 10, 2003

By Nishat Fatima THE BATTALION

Although Delta Xi Nu is one of many Greek organizations at Texas A&M, it has a unique mission to spread cultural diversity through unity.

Since its formation more than six years ago, Delta Xi Nu has used different programs including AIDS awareness and a Cultural Etiquette workshop to present cultural differences in a comfortable and social manner. Its annual Unity Dinner, which will take place on Friday, promotes cultural awareness through food and entertainment.

Mey Ly, president of Delta Xi Nu and a senior speech communications major, said the mission of the organization is vital because everybody has his own unique culture and traditions to share.

"Culture isn't just what you eat or the clothes you wear," she said. "It includes where you grew up, your religious beliefs, the language that you speak, your socioeconomic background, your likes and dislikes and almost every aspect of the human personality. We want people to realize that there are so many different levels of culture, and despite all of that, the beauty of it is that we are all basically the same.'

Ly said cultural diversity programs are often seen as boring and preachy because of the dry manner in which they are presented.

'We aren't trying to convince or persuade anybody to be accepting of different backgrounds," Ly said. "Through our programs, we aim to educate people in an enjoyable manner. We want people to know that these differences in our backgrounds are here to stay, and we can definitely enjoy them."

Elitza Padilla, a junior psychology major and social cochair of the sorority, said the



JOSHUA HOBSON • THE BATTA

Senior industrial engineering major, Jane Khoury (right) and junior psy chology major, Analinda Garza paint a banner for their sorority, Delta X Nu, in the Zachary Engineering Building Monday night

diversity dinner has more to offer than a fancy bite to eat.

"We have set up a variety of events at the dinner, including a motivational speaker, cultural education programs, and performances from musicians and dancers from a variety of backgrounds," she said.

Learning firsthand about a range of cultures cannot be fully taught in any classroom, Padilla said. Being a member of the organization helped her experience and absorb cultural practices from all around the world, she said.

"We have 29 members in the organization, and all of us come from diverse backgrounds," Padilla said. "We join together despite our differences because we all strongly believe that we can make a difference. Through sisterhood and cultural education, we hope that we can open people's hearts and minds.'

Jane Khoury, a senior industrial engineering major and

treasurer of the group, said being a member of Delta Xi Nu, has opened her eyes to the beauty of diversity.

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"The strongest aspect about being a member is that we area smaller sorority, so it is easy to build stronger relationships with each other," she said. "And sind we all come from diverse backgrounds, we can all appreciate our differences through the relationships we form.'

Khoury said it is important that the A&M community creates an atmosphere of acceptance to keep with the University's goals of Vision 2020.

"The attendees can step out of their comfort zones for a bi and enjoy some new experiences that they probably wouldn't have in everyday life she said. "We will also talk about current world issues, but they will be subjects that everyone can relate to."

See Unity on page 5A

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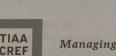
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