

strong community support for ethnic studies

by Gail Miyasaki

In an unprecedented appearance last Wednesday representatives from various communities throughout Oahu spoke to the Manoa campus faculty senate in support of the Ethnic Studies program at the University of Hawaii.

Representatives from C.T. (Census Tract) 57, Ota Camp, Waimanalo Village, Salt Lake, Coconut Grove, Old Vineyard, and Chinatown gave "eloquent

and stirring" testimony, according to faculty member, Dr. Beatrice Yamasaki, requesting the continued funding of the Ethnic Studies program, one of the innovative programs in danger of being discontinued due to the University's budget cuts for 1973-75.

Said Ms. Paige Kawelo Barber, representative of the Congress of Hawaiian Peoples and resident of Coconut Grove, Kailua, "Student research by Ethnic Studies students in Coco-

nut Grove last fall set a precedence for the community-university relationship represented by the various groups here today. The skills, techniques, and research the students gave to our effort enabled us to get a good improvement ordinance for our community."

Old Vineyard representative Ms. Ether Lewis reiterated the theme by telling how students from Ethnic Studies "gave endless hours for us ordinary people."

"I don't see why Ethnic Studies is being cut," said Ms. Lewis, "when funds for programs that are of no use for the people of Hawaii are available. We need Ethnic Studies."

Dennis Dela Sierra of Waimanalo noted that "Hawaii people are different; we have a different local culture where people have a feeling for each other." He said that Ethnic Studies is helping to teach local history and culture in addition to helping communities in Hawaii today.

"Ten years ago, I believed the University of Hawaii was only for intellectual," said Charles Miner, Chinatown representative, "but these wonderful students from Ethnic Studies with their laughter, smiles, and spirit who came to help us in our redevelopment issue in Chinatown have changed my mind!

"Ethnic Studies is not a luxury; it is a sound, academic subject that is especially important because of the many different peoples we have in the State of Hawaii," he added.

"The basic philosophy behind Ethnic Studies," explained Pete Thompson, lab instructor with the Hawaiian-Americans course of Ethnic Studies, "is that the University has to be an agent to facilitate change in the communities." (Ethnic Studies also offers classes in Japanese-Americans, Chinese-Americans, Filipino-Americans, Black Americans, Caucasian Americans, land tenure in Hawaii, Ethnic Identity, and Social Movements).

Comparing the UH to a scien-

tist only interested in looking through a microscope, Thompson stated that in contrast, the Ethnic Studies program is "trying to be of service to those who need the research skills and knowledge we are learning at the University. We are sending those skills out to the communities and by doing so we add to the education of our students as well.

"This main operating principle of Ethnic Studies ought to be extended throughout the University of Hawaii," he said.

Thompson noted that Ethnic Studies had an allocated budget of \$102,000 this past year and one of the lowest per capita spending of \$23 per student. The program maintains a staff of 57 and last year had an enrollment of 730 students.

In an effort to "protect the innovative programs at Manoa," (Ethnic Studies, Freshman Seminar, Survival Plus, and New College), a resolution was introduced requesting that these programs should not get greater budget cuts beyond that which are made for other departments.

Joe O'Reilly, director of Survival Plus, one of the programs, noted that his department has had a 87 per cent cut in staff.

Assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences Dr. James Linn, however, said that "there was simply no surplus to be allocated (to these programs); the other departments are bleeding too badly already" from the cuts in the UH budget.

A motion to table the resolution was voided due to a lack of a quorum.

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