

Diverse ministry shares vision

By **Summi Gambhir**
For *The State News*

It was an evening that brought believers closer to the Almighty.

And by the time the Vision Christian Campus Ministry's Winter Worship program ended Friday evening, people said they felt the presence of Jesus Christ among them. With their eyes welling with tears, they all sang praises for the Holy Father.

"We help people see Jesus in their own lives through such worships. This is what all our programs are about," said Stratton Lee, president of Vision Christian Campus Ministry and a counseling graduate student. "We want to give everyone in Michigan State an opportunity to learn about Christ as a savior and a friend."

The three-hour worship was in the form of discussions, singing and dancing at the Business College Complex.

A nondenominational and multicultural group, Vision's purpose is to bring people from different parts of the world under one umbrella — of being one with Jesus Christ.

"Its members are African American, Caucasian, Latino and Asian American," Lee said. "And we are always reaching out for more."

How does Vision cross the ethnicity barrier? "We make people understand by getting them a snapshot from other religions and tell them the connection with Christianity," Pastor Sean Holland of Apostolic Word Church in Lansing said.

His church, 227 N. Capitol Ave., grew out of the Vision ministry.

"We used to call Pastor Sean Holland from Flint for our Bible study. As the idea came up of starting a church, he started a separate organization, and that's where the name 'Apostolic Word' came from," Lee said. There is no paucity of multicultural groups on campus, Vision members said.

Holland said the ministry's focus is on the Holy Cross and the love showed by Jesus' death.

"This love pulls people from all ethnicities and holds them together," he said. "And that is what is needed both on the campus and the world — love." Vision was created after a former MSU student had a dream.

"In my dream, I saw a bunch of students and community members hungry and thirsty for God, searching for a deeper understanding of the Almighty," said Bridgette Murphy, who majored in social work and sociology.

"I saw people coming from different directions to one house." Before that day, Murphy never thought she'd be involved in a group like Vision.

"Like everybody else, I also was looking forward to enjoying my college days," she said. "But it turned out that God had different plans for me."

Vision has grown both in membership and stature in its three-year existence. What began as just a Bible study today hosts programs such as fashion shows, music performances and discussions to educate the youth.

"We work to be innovative with our services by doing these kinds of different programs and trying to reach out to people of all ethnicities," Lee said.

Location: <http://www.stateneews.com/article.phtml?pk=39849>



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Nearly 70 people attended Vision Christian Campus Ministry Winter Worship, Turning Point 2007, a praise and prayer service Friday night at the Business College Complex. Participants from left are family and child ecology senior Michael Sanford, English and education freshman Claricha Evans, no-preference freshman Tyrone Foster and alumnus James Roye.