The Law Review and the affirmative action issue

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Matthew's achievement doesn't solve everything

In her 73-year history, The Law Review has never had a black member on its staff. This year, a number of concerned students, including Black Students Association and students with the current staff of the Review, have taken the first steps to break through the Review's historical color barrier by implementing an affirmative action program.

Affirmative action, in and of itself, has spawned heated debate, and the Law School is no exception. Those members of the Review who vehemently opposed the "special" affirmative action criteria put forth the following arguments:

1. The Review's try-out process is color-blind. If black students have not been selected, it is because there are not enough qualified applicants.

2) Students of black students in general at the Law School is below that of other top-rated law schools. Because of this, the high caliber black law students go to Harvard, Yale and Stanford, rather than accept the requirements imperative to Review membership.

3. Foundation members of black students have not been selected, it is because there are not enough qualified applicants.

4) An affirmative action policy would undermine the standards of Review membership, and consequently lower the quality of "normal" affirmative action policy is nothing more than a new twist to the ancient intellectual inferiority to whites. We unequivocally reject this notion.

Historically, black people have been subject to domination and subjugation. As a result, Blacks have been denied equal access to public facilities (e.g. public libraries, movie theaters, business establishments), equal educational opportunities and economic rights. The legislature and the judiciary have taken affirmative action to rectify these injustices through various pieces of legislation, executive and court orders. We look to the Review to eradicate the apparent inferiority and its systemic impositions on black students at the Law School.

We propose that affirmative action will not hurt the Review, but rather it will help to correct legitimate inequities imposed by the current system. Moreover, the plan will raise the level of integration involved in the Review and expose its members and its readership to more diverse perspectives and cultural experiences. We think that this plan will enrich the Review and will further enhance the educational experience at the Law School.

As you may well know, an affirmative action plan was finally adopted by the Virginia Law Review on Jan. 26 and is scheduled for publication in the March issue. Since the adoption of the plan, the Review has accepted for publication a note by Dayna Matthews, a black third-year law student. Matthew's success in a victory that all black students should be proud of. She is the first black member in the history of the Virginia Law Review. The fact that Matthew was extended an invitation without any affirmative action considerations will hopefully have the effect of eradicating the myth of "black inferiority" while the adoption of an affirmative action plan will simultaneously address the longstanding discriminatory impact of the Review's "old policy" on black stu-

The tryouts were not biased

In the Feb. 11 Metro Section of the Washington Post, an article about a Virginia Law Review youth: "A black" described the try-out process of the law school's. We submit an article titled "The Law Review's Letter Policy"

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Letters Policy

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