Project Respect offers diversity presentations

By Nicole Arias
Features Editor

The goal of Project Respect, a program created through the collaboration of 15 Purdue organizations, is to increase awareness of diversity on campus.

“Students, faculty and staff need to be aware of diversity and how important it is,” said Sara Solloway, program director for the Purdue Memorial Union.

This annual series of events is sponsored by organizations such as the Purdue Student Union Board, Purdue Student Government and the Black Cultural Center.

This year, the program will span nearly two weeks and will include more than a dozen events.

One of today’s events results from collaboration between the Israel Council at Purdue and Queer Resource.

“Gay Rights in Israeli Military and Israeli Society” will be presented by Steve Dishler, former paratrooper for the Israel Defense Forces, and Sagit Kaufman, director of an Israel consulate. The presentation will begin at 5:30 tonight in Hillel, located across from Lilly Hall of Life Sciences.

“They are quite advanced in Israel,” said Maria Wainer, director of Hillel. “People will be impressed and surprised at their level of acceptance.”

Another event, the free showing of the film “Divine Intervention,” will be at 7 tonight in Fowler Hall.

The film follows a man living in Jerusalem who has an affair with a Palestinian woman living in another city. Because neither can move to be with the other, the couple continues its affair by meeting at an Israeli army checkpoint.

“The film gives a perspective on the experience of Palestinian citizens,” said Maram Sweis, president of the Organization of Arab Students and senior in the School of Liberal Arts.

“Americans tend to have the “It’s not my problem” attitude, but as human beings we need to be there for each other and be aware of what’s going on with each other.”

Students who would prefer a more active way to learn about diversity can attend the interactive Project Respect event “Archie Bunker’s Neighborhood.”

Sponsored by the diversity resource office, this event allows people to role-play as the “All in the Family” television character Archie Bunker. It will be held at 7:30 tonight in Stewart Center, Room 202.

“It will be a lot of fun, but a good learning experience as well,” said Jacquett Wade, coordinator of the diversity resource office. “This exercise is intended to give people the opportunity to walk in someone else’s shoes.”

For more information on all Project Respect events, visit the Web site at http://www.union.purdue.edu/PSUB.