

# Africana Studies Program Promotes Awareness

Indeed, reflection on such scholarship by UT faculty members was the focus of February's discussions, which honored the historical experiences of African Americans in celebration of Black History Month. Topics included "Francis: The Legacy of a Black Woman's Contribution to the English Revolution," "Tatum Town: Jazz in Toledo," "African-American Children in Colonial America," and "From Down South to Up South: The Great Migration of African Americans."

"Brown bag luncheons are an opportunity for an abbreviated presentation where faculty and students are on a level playing field," Alkalimat said. "We hope to have a much greater and freer exchange of ideas than what might take place in either the big lecture format or the regular classroom."

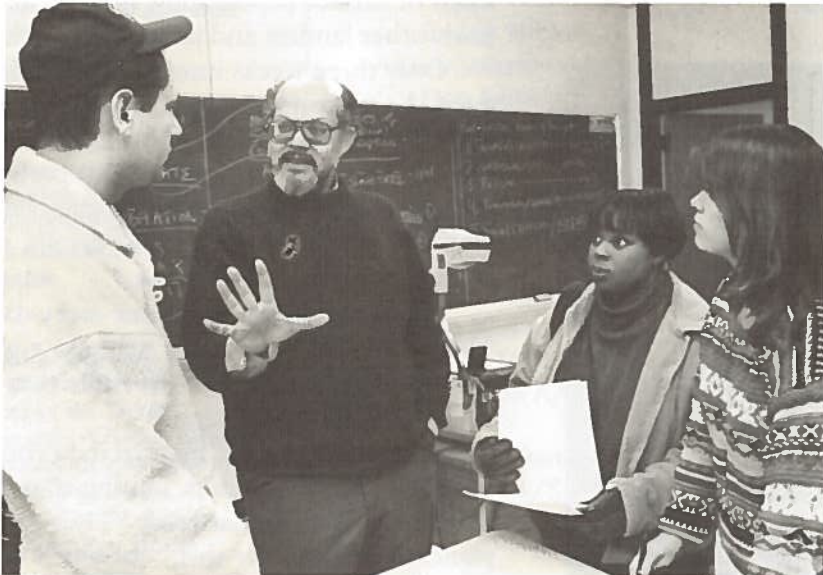


Photo by Bill Hartough

*Culture of Debate: Dr. Abdul Alkalimat talks to students, from left, Tom Liettaert, Deborah Proc and Theresa Briceno.*

The brown bag series is just one of two major activities hosted by Africana studies. The second event, a forum entitled "The University and the Black Community: A Symposium on Research and Policy for the 21st Century," established the program's research agenda for the city of Toledo.

"Our significance as a program will revolve around the research we conduct on public policy," Alkalimat explained. "Our ability to become a resource for the region — and beyond — is vital. It is significant research that establishes the legitimacy of a program."

The February symposium, slated to become an annual event, featured panelists from local and state government, universities and community organizations who answered questions about the adequacy of research and public policy in solving social problems. Those answers will be used to determine the knowledge needed by the greater community to move forward on matters of race.

"The relationship between the University and the black community should improve dramatically from our efforts," Alkalimat said.

— Lori Golaszewski