

First black grad returns to UOP

By SUE ANDERSON

It took Milton Harvey 10 years after graduation to get his college diploma. Today, UOP's first black graduate says patience has paid off for him.

Harvey graduated in 1940 with a B.A. in music, special secondary education. After being admitted to UOP with probationary standing.

"I was the first full-time black student to be registered at UOP," he stated. "I don't know why I was only accepted on probation, but I don't think being black necessarily had anything to do with it."

During graduation ceremonies, Harvey marched in first as "an honor to the first black student," but met with quite a bit of difficulty in receiving his actual diploma.

"When Dr. Knoles (UOP president in 1940) handed me, my diploma, it said inside "we'll give you your diploma when it comes from the engraver. It took me 10 years to get." Harvey said, "and I had to pay another \$10 graduation fee, too!"

Later, when applying for a job in Arizona, he requested his transcripts from UOP and it took a full year before he received them. He said UOP gave no explanation for either of the delays.

HARVEY holds no grudges despite the fact that he was sometimes treated differently from the other students.

As a singer in the A Capella Choir, Harvey was not allowed to go on overnight trips because he was black. He was invited to play bass drum for school band but could not wear the traditional band uniform. He worked out with the track team, but did not compete in actual meets.

"One time I competed in just a practice meet," he reminisced, "and I beat UOP's top man in hurdles." That top man went on to win the national title.

Harvey was told not to go out for football. However, he was allowed to play on the baseball team: he organized it as an intramural activity.

He remembers once modeling for an art class and being paid 35 cents per hour—he earned a total of \$1.05.

Harvey also recalls several encounters with individual students.

Just prior to a basketball game played on roller skates, a football player publicized that he was going to "get Harvey," but Harvey was ready for him.

"When he tried to clip me, I



helped him right into the wall with a light tap on the fanny. I haven't seen that kid to this day."

During an A Capella Choir rehearsal a student, now a professor at the University of Reslands, began to heckle Harvey with "y'all's" in a Southern accent. Harvey asked the director if UOP offered any English classes, to which he received an affirmative answer. Harvey then said, "Good! Then you'd better tell Erwin to take one because I can't understand a thing he's saying! "

OVERALL, though, he says the students were friendly. "They didn't really disturb me that much. It hurt sometimes, but I learned to overlook it and consider the source."

Harvey commuted to UOP from his home in Modesto in his Model A Ford.

Harvey says he appreciates having been a student here and believes that his conduct may have led to other blacks being admitted to UOP. He enjoyed all of his instructors, even the one "who flunked me in psychology."

Knoles once complimented him because of the fact that he "was black and didn't upset the system."

Now an elementary school teacher in Oakland with a wife and three children, Harvey returns to UOP

The Pacifian, March 7, 1975

once a week to teach a black studies course. "Cultural Evolution of Black Music." He enjoys the chal-

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lenge of teaching on the college level and hopes to teach again next semester.

Harvey is currently his church's choir director, a member of the Diablo Symphony Orchestra, state vice president of the California Choral Director's Guild, director of two children's choirs, director of the Children's Choir Festival and has been a soloist in numerous church choirs.

He stresses that he holds absolutely no grudges and that he tries to see the good in everything.

"I'm the kind of guy who thinks good guys really come out on top in the end."