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All Work and no Play . . .

By Kathryn Soth

Iowa State students play as well as work. Twenty-eight hundred students left work and studies Friday, Jan. 19, when 1,800 attended firesides, 800 or 900 the Campus Varieties, and about 150 the Artist Concert Series program.

"Social life is an interesting and important part of college life," says Mrs. Iza W. Merchant, director of social life. "Every student on this campus has a recognized place in the social scheme. A far-reaching, varied, inexpensive program has bound the student-body into a happy unit in these days of depression. "Academic, religious and physical activities make up other important factors of a balanced college life," according to Mrs. Merchant. "Students who work as hard as Iowa State students need time for play."

As director of social life, Mrs. Merchant works with Mrs. Madge McGlade, director of housing for women, and Miss Frances Sims, director of personnel, in the Office of Women's Affairs.

"The object of personnel work," Miss Sims says, "is to aid the individual in making adjustments to his environment." In her work she attempts to help the girls in personality development and to give those who are timid and backward an opportunity for becoming well-rounded individuals.

The personnel office co-ordinates the activities of the student in her various fields of work and play, so that she has mental, moral and social growth without the loss of physical health. The office cooperates with the College Hospital in maintaining the health of women students and attempts to regulate their activities by making certain that no student is carrying too heavy a load.

Mrs. Madge McGlade

The personnel office also endeavors to find employment for students by making contacts with townpeople. It is taxed to the limit to find opportunities for Iowa State girls to work, Miss Sims states.

Mrs. McGlade, as director of housing, has charge of the organization of dormitories, the assignment of women to dormitories and houses, the upkeep and equipment of dormitories, and the collection of the fees for dormitory rooms. She also arranges for the placement of girls who wish to work for board and room in private homes. "The object of my work is to find happy places in which the students may live," Mrs. McGlade says. For this reason the housing of women is carefully supervised.

At present there are 100 Iowa State women working for board and room, in contrast to the 60 to 65 average of the past 2 or 3 years. It is essential to arrange efficient work schedules as class schedules for these girls, she said. It is also necessary to see that no girl works over-time or shirks her duty.

Girls in cooperative dormitories, working for board or for board and room earned $15,000 during the fall quarter of 1932, according to a survey made by Mrs. McGlade's office. "The families in Ames have been most generous and cooperative this year in making happy homes for these girls," she remarks.

Usually the number of girls wanting to work and the number of homes available are about equal, so that girls may work if they wish. A freshman is not allowed to work in a home during her first quarter in school, because this prevents her from making contacts with others and learning to live with other girls as she does in the dormitory.

According to a survey made by Miss Sims, Iowa State College women saved $18,000 during the winter quarter of 1932 by working. This included office and other types of work as well as that of board and room.

Mrs. Merchant, as director of social life on the campus, has charge of men's and women's social activities. Before the division of the Office of Women's Affairs in the spring of 1930, social life on the campus was incidental. Five-sixths of the campus social functions were fraternity and sorority affairs. Three groups of students, the men living outside organized houses, the town girls and the graduate students, were not being reached and had no organized social activities.

"It was our problem to organize all groups of students and to make a place for them in social activities, so that residence population into 15 wards and are now able to have social functions as independently as men living in fraternity houses. According to Mrs. Merchant, the ward system is a step in education, the effectiveness of which is recognized and which may be adopted by other colleges in the future.

There are six social groups; the sororities, fraternities, town girls, dormitories, ward men, and the graduate students; each having equal social privileges. Each unit has a social chairman, who is to attend the meetings of his social council and report the information gained to his group. Through the three social councils (women's, fraternity, and ward), Mrs. Merchant is able to determine the type of social program the students want and to plan this with them.

"No longer is there so great a need for natural channels by which men and women can become acquainted on this campus," states Mrs. Merchant. The lack of opportunity for such contacts in classes, because the men and women take very few courses together, has been overcome by the introduction of exchange dances, "Cheerio parties," Homecoming open houses, Campus Variety programs and Cyclone Twister dances. These have brought about a greater social democracy and put a social program within the financial reach of every student.

Mrs. Iza W. Merchant