

## **To intervene or not to intervene**

You are a professor at a large university. You receive a phone call from a colleague in another department asking you to talk to a first year minority graduate student in her department who is having difficulty adjusting. Upon talking to the student, you learn that she is funded by a prestigious private national fellowship and is doing well academically. Her assigned advisor is a well-known respected senior professor. The advisor requires her to be present in the laboratory whenever she does not have a scheduled class and gets upset when she is not. She claims that she is not actively involved in any of the lab work, is only assigned tasks that she sees as manual labor and spends most of her time just sitting. She has not established a meaningful relationship with other students in the lab. She has tried to discuss her situation with her advisor, but he keeps putting her off. She has gone to the Department Chair asking to be assigned another advisor, but nothing has happened. She believes that because of her advisor's reputation, no one wants to "rock the boat". She is becoming depressed and is thinking about dropping out of graduate school. What should you do?

Crafted by James Stith in preparation for the 2004 Sigma Pi Sigma Congress