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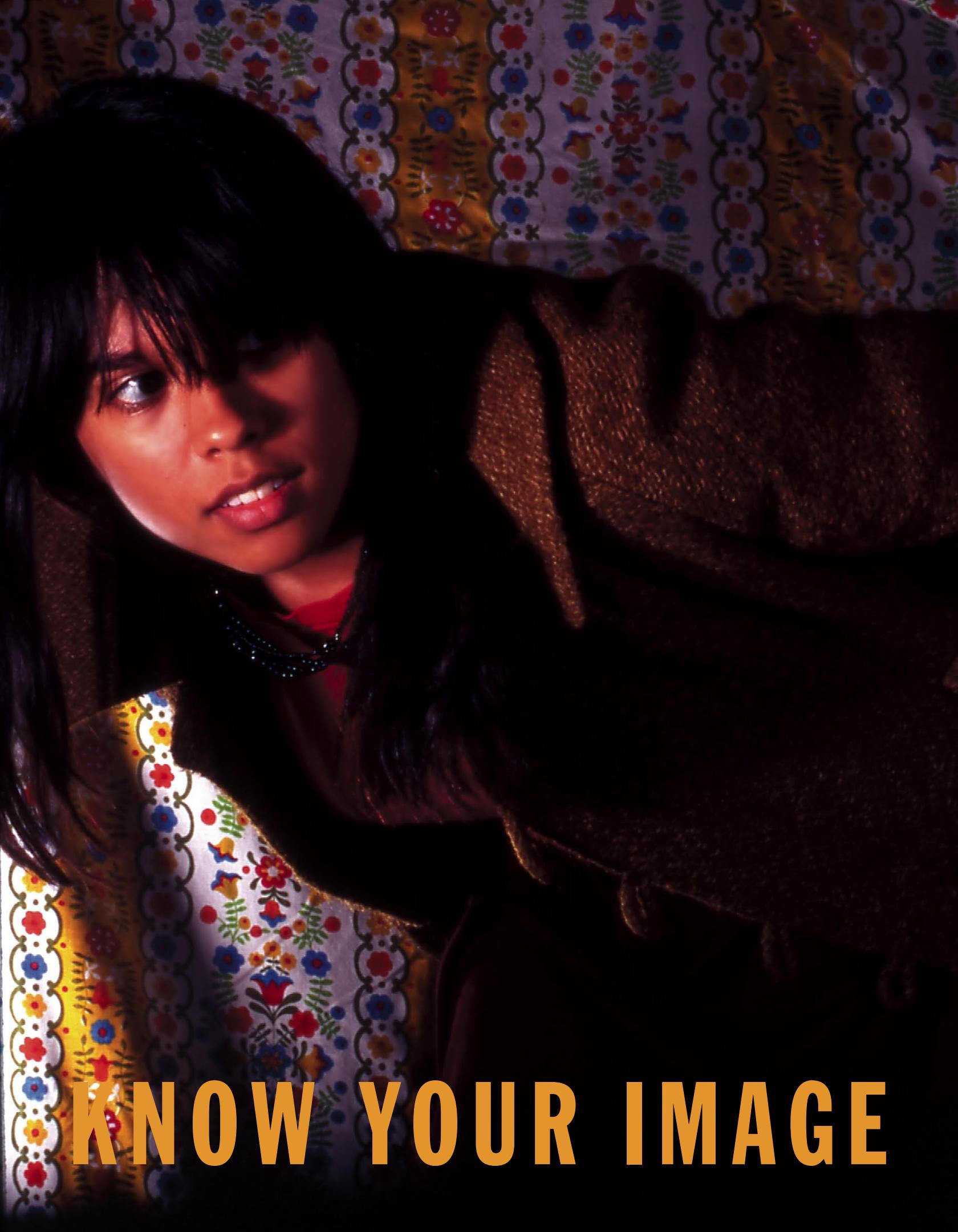
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# Steering Purple

Keith Whitworth aims to ensure kids' futures with bikes

By Aly Fleet

Although his creation aims to help the world at large, sociology Professor Keith Whitworth said he did it all for two people.

Whitworth said he recently launched the TCU Purple Bike Program in hopes of preserving the world for his children, Mary Anne, 12, and William, 8.

"My ultimate goal was somewhat selfish," Whitworth said. "It was to create a program so that my kids will have the same opportunities in the future that I do."

The Purple Bike Program encourages students not to drive to campus, but to ride a bicycle. This, Whitworth said, will lower carbon dioxide emissions and, ultimately, fight off global warming.

The program currently has 15 bikes and rents them out to students, faculty and staff on either a daily or weekly basis at no charge. Once more bikes are purchased, Whitworth said he hopes to be able to rent the bikes on a monthly or even on a semester basis.

"I really would like to see, in a couple years, at least 250 bikes on campus," Whitworth said.

To achieve this, PBP has begun selling "spoke ads." For \$400, a company can advertise on the spokes of a PBP bike. A new TCU-purple bike, which features a bell, basket, helmet and lock, costs the

program \$500, so every ad helps, Whitworth said.

Whitworth also recently started envirofootprint.org, a Web site that calculates a person's yearly carbon dioxide emissions and offers ways to offset those monetarily.

Once emissions are calculated, Whitworth said, a person has the option of offsetting their toxic emissions with donations. The donations go toward the PBP and Plant-It 2020, a program that plants a tree for every dollar donated.

"Trees absorb carbon," Whitworth said. "So by planting trees you absorb carbon and reduce your environmental footprint."

But despite his obvious dedication to the environment, Whitworth said he hasn't always been such a environmentalist — just since his children were born.

Since then, he said, "It's become a life focus."

Whitworth's children will soon be helping him in his work. Thanks to his recently launched Web site, Mary Anne and William will be able to download, print and paste a reminder that declares, "Reduce your environmental footprint, turn off lights" on their bedroom light switches.

Every little bit counts. ■