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Letter campaign causes reversal of UYA funding

By MARY FORAN
Of the Emerald

A student-initiated letter campaign has persuaded University officials to reverse their decision and fund the University Year for Action (UYA) student volunteer program. UYA has now been assured funding for the next two years.

Letters, petitions and phone calls from community agencies, students and others flooded into the offices of University Pres. William Boyd, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Paul Olum, and Vice Provost Robert Albrecht, after the University decided to withhold funding for the federally supported program.

UYA provides social service agencies with low-cost, part-time staff while providing students with credit for their work-learning experience.

The grass-roots letter-writing campaign was started by concerned UYA students after the University announced its decision in August.

Maureen Slevin, a spokesperson for UYA, says that all agencies and students in UYA were sent copies of a letter requesting that they write to Boyd, with copies to Albrecht, Olum and Rep. Jim Weaver, asking the University to reconsider its decision.

"Albrecht was supportive of the program," says Slevin of a meeting with the vice provost. "He was very nice. His office answered every letter."

Albrecht says that the UYA students said "they were getting training they couldn't get elsewhere."

The students described UYA as a "unique program," Albrecht says. "Each one told me about his or her experience."

Albrecht says that the results of the program for both students and agencies are beneficial.

"The University has committed \$15,000 in federally matched funds to UYA this year, \$25,000 for 1979-80 and \$30,000 for 1980-81," he says.

Olum's letter to the agencies explains the University's earlier decision and stresses its support of the UYA program.

"In spite of the very serious budget difficulties in the University, I am reversing our earlier decision."

"I have made this decision with considerable hesitancy, since it creates further budgetary problems for us in a situation that is already serious. However, I do so with the confidence that the University, its students and the agencies are well served by the program," Olum says in the letter.

The letters received "have made clear again and again the importance of this program both to the students themselves and to the agencies in which they serve," says Olum. "I'm glad that UYA is still going, but I'm still concerned about the money."

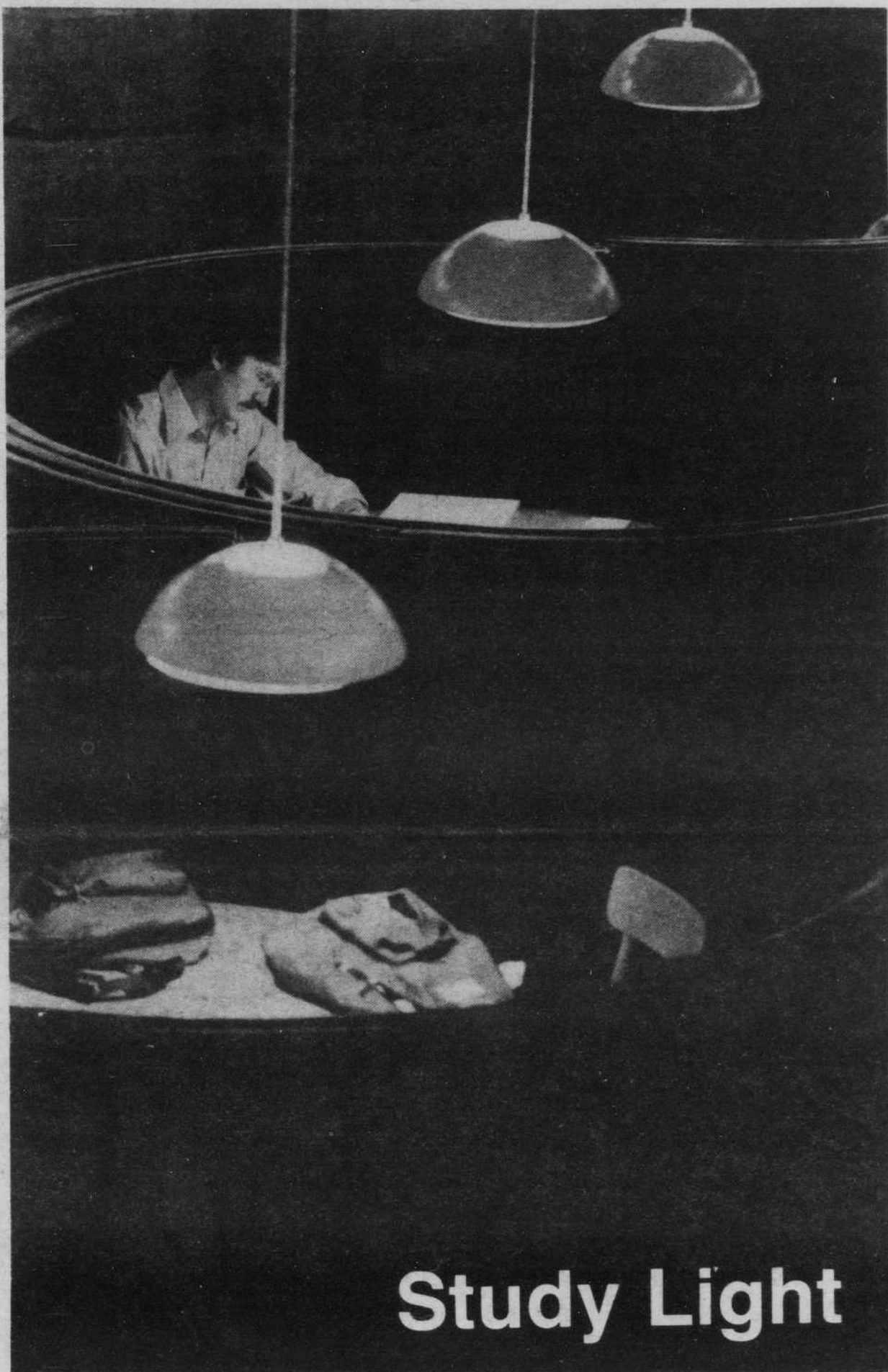
"Olum explains that the basic problem is that the University has no new source of funds, so the budget is 'very tight.'"

"The trouble is that you can't make a decision in isolation," says Olum. "In good times it would have been easy," he adds. "Now we must weigh our decisions between many alternatives."

A letter signed by 17 UYA students to Boyd read in part, "It is with great distress and disappointment that we write this letter... It is our understanding that a major factor of a college education is to orient students towards practical application of knowledge outside of the University environment. We feel the elimination of the UYA program is taking away, thus far the most practical, beneficial application of our present skills and knowledge throughout our college curriculum."

Theresa Raymer, assistant education coordinator at Lane County Headstart and co-author of the letter says, "It seemed like an unwise decision not to allocate funds for the program... so much good comes out of it."

Bill Ulhorn, director of Eugene Emergency Housing, which runs the Family Shelter House, says, he is very excited that the University decided to go ahead with it. "It was the right decision."



Study Light

Photo by Patrick Sullivan

The filling of the study booths in the EMU's Skylight signals that fall term is truly underway. But students still have until Friday to register for classes and pay tuition.

Boyd to make offer at GTFF session

University Pres. William Boyd announced Monday night that the University will make a "substantial offer" to the Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation representatives when negotiations resume today at 3 p.m.

Boyd declined to announce any specifics about the offer, including whether it would be in the form of benefits or money.

The announcement came at a

meeting of the Lane County Labor Council's executive board.

The board had met at the request of the GTFF to consider placing the University on the council's "unfair list," an action that would solicit a boycott by unions that do business with the University.

Due to lack of a quorum, the board postponed consideration of the GTFF request until Wednesday.

today

For students with more than academics on their minds, the EMU Craft Center is offering all sorts of workshops this fall. For more details, see Page 3.

The University's confidentiality policy may present a problem in alerting minority students to special programs offered by other schools, says a University adviser. Another University staffer is working to help minority students find jobs through the University's minority placement office, but she says the word isn't getting around. Both stories on Page 10.

The National Organization of Women has task forces on gays, minority women and elderly women, but two Eugene women think it needs one more—one dealing with the needs of disabled women. The two present their case on Page 12.

