

Boyd outlines higher ed dilemma

By MIKE HOPKINS
of the Emerald

Relative funding for higher education in Oregon has slipped during the past decade, while expenses have increased sharply, University Pres. William Boyd told the Rubicon Society of Lane County Thursday.

Boyd addressed the group, described by one Rubicon member as a "liberal Republican yet non-partisan organization," at a luncheon meeting.

Boyd says he has been "singing in harmony" for support of higher education with the presidents of Portland State and Oregon State Universities during the past six months.

Although Oregon's major state universities still enjoy national, and in some phases of learning, international reputations, the "sad part" is that financial support for those institutions has dropped as a percentage of the state budget and of personal income, Boyd said.

"Increase in workload proceeding simultaneously with a decrease in relative funding has meant that we have been getting a kind of double whammy."

The growth of government expenditures has created California's Proposition 13 and Oregon's Ballot Measures 6 and 11, Boyd told the group. That and the increasing general fund expenditures and workload makes higher educa-



Pres. William Boyd

Photo by F.H.A.T. Axmacher

tion the victim, not the culprit, of the tax revolt.

Boyd cited a recent study in Kansas compared its support for higher education with that of Oregon and other states.

"I can tell you that in every area the University ranked low in support," Boyd said.

The University ranked fifth out of six colleges in nearly all categories and fifth overall, Boyd said.

Boyd said he was encouraged by Gov. Vic Atiyeh's campaign promises of increased financial support for higher education. Since his election, Atiyeh has reiterated his pledges of support, Boyd said.

Boyd described today's society as derived from an "old wealth" based primarily on non-renewable resources. Future generations must rely on fewer material resources; therefore, the importance of knowledge must increase.

"Knowledge production, the generation of new knowledge through discovery, is the special contribution that universities make to society. For that reason I believe that there is no more important institution than the university."

An audience member asked Boyd to comment on the use of tax dollars to finance study grants on seemingly ridiculous subjects.

It's easy to criticize research projects with funny titles, Boyd replied. Although some projects may be ill-advised, the "sum total" of knowledge gained from all of them contributes to human survival, he said.

Lobbyist

(Continued from Page 1)

course evaluations as a "priority" issue of their own. Faculty representatives in the lobby group say they will probably consider it also, but hesitate to give it top billing.

SOSC Prof. Betty Harbert says it is "not much of an issue now" on her campus. "I think it's kind of a bit over-rated," Tattersall says. "But, then, if the student lobby is going to make it a priority, I suppose we will have to consider it."

Faculty supporters maintain

that they hope for good relations with both the student lobby and state system administrators. Malueg says the three groups should complement one another.

University Prof. Stoddard Malarkey is currently on leave from his teaching duties and is acting as a lobbyist for the state system.

Malarkey says that, at times, the faculty and administrative points-of-view may differ. "But, by and large, we're all in the same camp," he says.

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