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Oregon popular choice for exchange students

By HAL McCUNE
Of the Emerald

It's just as important to meet people and see the country as it is to graduate, according to one student taking advantage of the National Student Exchange program.

"I've always wanted to get out of state and maybe see the East Coast," says Melanie Rose, a journalism major at the University, who will attend the University of Delaware in the fall.

The program offers students up to one year at another major American university. Rose, like other exchange students, is responsible for travel costs, but will pay in-state tuition.

"Students can get valuable academic and social experiences with no additional expense other than travel," says Joe Wade, associate director of the University's NSE program. "It's a real advantage for students to be able to sample other academic programs and be exposed to other theories and curriculums."

Rose plans to get her money's worth on her trip east and admits Delaware was a strategic choice.

"It was my first choice. Delaware is near New York, Washington D.C., and Philadelphia," she says. "I'm planning a lot of excursions."

And Wade says Oregon and the University are attractive lures to students at eastern universities. The University has the third largest program among the 54 universities in the NSE network.

"This fall we will have about 150 students coming in and 140 exchanging to other campuses," Wade says.

Orchestrating those exchanges can be complicated, Wade says. Students have already been placed for the coming school year, but the process will begin again fall term.

To be eligible for the program, a student must be an Oregon resident with an accumulated grade point average of at least 2.5. Wade says students should plan to exchange during their sophomore or junior year.

The University exchanges with 35 of the program's 54 schools. Students who want to exchange must complete an application by early February, listing three schools in order of preference.

The NSE directors from each school meet toward the end of March each year to decide who will go where.

"It's a matter of negotiation," Wade says. "It's like a big brokers' convention. There are three rounds for placing students, and it takes three days."

According to Wade, there is a lot of wheeling and dealing at the placement convention. However, he is quite adept at negotiating, and of the 131 names he took to the NSE convention last March, 116 received their first choices.

Wade's job is easy because of the attractions of the University, Eugene and the Northwest in general.

Jina Fusco, an exchange student from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, found Oregon so appealing she considered transferring to the University for her senior year.

"Oregon was my first choice," she says of her NSE application. "Back east, the West Coast has a kind of mystical aura about it. I wanted to see it for myself, and I think Eugene is great."

Fusco plans to stay in Eugene for summer term and hopes to return to Oregon in the future.

"It's been a great exchange," she says. "It's good to get out on your own and meet new people and see new places."

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Jailbreak investigation ordered

PORTLAND (AP) — An investigation has been ordered to find out why seven prisoners, including a convicted murderer, managed to escape from Multnomah County's Rocky Butte Jail here Friday even though officials found their escape route in advance.

Five of the escapees, all considered dangerous, remained at large Sunday. Two other escapees were captured Saturday night, within several miles of the jail, authorities said.

County Corrections Administrator Robert Hatrak asked investigators to find out why the inmates' escape route was left unguarded Friday night after a cut window was found on the jail's second story.

The seven prisoners, all from the Portland area, escaped from the after cutting a 9-by-12-inch hole in the window's steel bars.

Sgt. Gary Walker, spokesman for the Corrections Division, said jail officials got an anonymous tip about 8:30 p.m. Friday about a planned escape. He said guards then found the cut window, but no guards were posted to watch it.

Walker said the escape was discovered during a 10-p.m. bed check, but other inmates in the cell said the check wasn't made until 11 p.m. They said the inmates escaped at about 9:30 p.m.

Investigator Richard Haug has been asked to find out why a guard was not posted outside the cut window.

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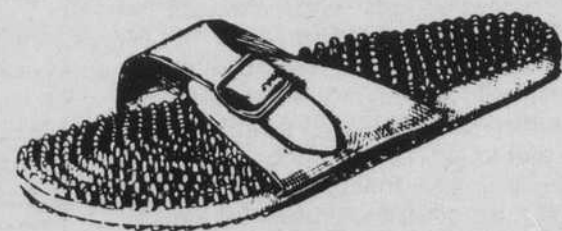
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