

Federal aid cutbacks risk refugees' health

The health of hundreds of East Asian refugees living in the Eugene-Springfield area could be in jeopardy if Congress cuts them off from social assistance programs, says Steve Schneider, an aide to Rep. Jim Weaver, D-Ore.

Putting an end to the welfare, food stamp and medical care programs for approximately 900 refugees locally could result in a health hazard, Schneider says.

"Refugees have tendencies to bring in intestinal parasites," Schneider says. "If medical aid is stopped, there is a possibility that an epidemic will break out."

In Lane County, more cases of tuberculosis are being detected among refugees, says Sharon Landsiedel, a registered nurse for the county health department who screens refugees for communicable diseases.

"We've been re-screening for tuberculosis since mid-August," Landsiedel says. "And now almost all of the tests are turning out positive." A positive test confirms

the presence of tuberculosis.

"We're in a situation now where we will have the funds to test for TB, but the refugees will not have the money for treatment," Landsiedel says.

"Now the major concern is to provide the refugees with food and jobs, Landsiedel says. "A lot of these people have had to live with TB in their homelands, but how long can they live without food?"

Refugees receive assistance through the Aid to Dependent Children program, says Fred Zwick, an Adult and Family Services Center counselor.

"Right now refugees can get funding through ADC solely because they have refugee status," he says. "There doesn't have to be a dependent living in the household, like other cases."

Refugees also depend on sponsorship programs to provide them with food and shelter, but there won't be enough sponsors if funds are cut, Zwick says.



Photo by Chris Courtier

Student dorm board budgets big bucks

By VANESSA KOKESH
Of the Emerald

The University Residence Hall Governance Committee has come a long way in its 10-year existence, says office manager Sharon Duff.

Now in control of a \$23,000 budget, this "top governing body" of dormitory residents has evolved from an obscure advisory committee to an important budgeting and policy-making body, Duff says.

Formed to let students help make housing decisions, the committee has worked to liberalize the alcohol policy, provide refrigerator rentals to residents and set up the current standard boards system.

Before 1980, the interest funds accrued from \$50 deposits made by each resident were put into a general fund supervised by the Incidental Fee Committee, and the residence hall committee remained an advisory group.

But last year, the committee's responsibilities were expanded to include the budgeting of the \$23,000 in interest from the deposit money.

The Oregon State Board of Higher Education stipulated that the deposit money be returned for use by the students who made the deposits and not put into a general operating budget, says Dick Romm, the housing department's representative on the committee.

The committee consists of student representatives chosen by the president's council from each of five residence hall complexes, an ASUO executive member, a residence hall area director, a resident assistant and a housing department representative.

The committee divides half of the interest money among the residence hall president's councils on a per capita basis.

Students can decide how they

want to spend the money "as long as 50 percent goes to building and life improvements. The other 50 percent can go to social events," Duff says.

The committee allocates the money for student requests for extra funds or for the entire residence hall system.

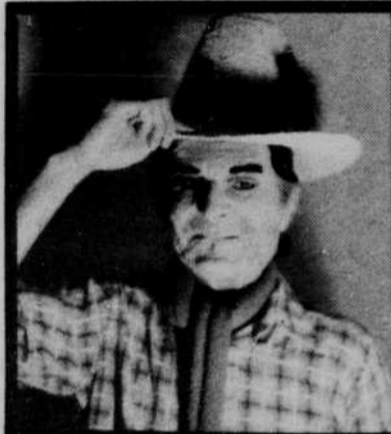
Last year, the committee bought a \$10,000 van.

"The van is working out great. It goes out every weekend and sometimes during the week," Duff says.

The committee also set up a resource center of project files that residents can refer to when planning a retreat or activity. The center also is used to check out the equipment available to residents, such as the van, video cassette recorders, sound system and sports equipment.

A newsletter called "The RHGC Commons," which tells residents about the various halls' activities and about committee actions, also has been started.

"You never know what they're going to do from year to year because they change all their rules and procedures and decide what they want to focus on," says Duff.



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