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## The work experience school

### Community Action Program offers student jobs

By Debbie Howlett  
Of the Emerald

Some University students can't wait to go to work. In fact, some would rather work than go to class.

The University Community Action program offers University students the chance to work 32 hours per week and receive 12 hours of credit per term while receiving a \$175 stipend.

"Basically what you're doing is going to school in a work setting," says Laurie Walker, the UCA recruiter. "You actually get to apply what you've learned."

The students are placed in one of several community service outlets around Lane County in an internship-type program. Students pay tuition each term and may take classes as well. The program runs for three quarters during the academic year.

The program places students in positions such as a counselor/advocate at the Chicano Affairs Center or a crisis worker at a shelter home for battered women. Positions at Community Service of Lane County (formerly Harmony House) or at Eugene Emergency Housing are also available. Walker says there are quite a few agencies to choose from.

"We try to offer as much of a variety as possible — from direct counseling to management," Walker says.

Walker also stresses that students don't work as glorified file clerks.

"These students don't just go in and observe, they're actually doing."

Getting accepted into the program is fairly quick and painless, Walker says. A student fills out an application and then goes through an interviewing process. If the student is accepted, several interviews between the student, the prospective employer and UCA are done.

Walker says that while UCA advocates the student's choice, everything must be equitable between the prospective employer, UCA and the student.

"The staff really tries to find your interest and really challenge you," Walker says.

The reason for the nine-month program, Walker explains, is to keep the continuity between the student and the employer going.

The program will also satisfy curricula requirements in most schools and departments, Walker says.

The best thing about the program though, Walker says, is the benefit of finding out if what you are doing is something that you want to continue after receiving a degree.

"I found out I liked working better than school," Walker says.

Both graduate and junior and senior undergraduate students are eligible to participate. The deadline for application is the end of the academic school year. The program runs from September to June. For more information, contact Walker at 686-3813 or Room 109 Hendricks Hall.

## Employers enjoy as many benefits as students

"It's a great program. If I was a student, I would definitely consider getting into it. It really helps you get your feet wet and prepare for later on."

So says Mary Alice Brown, supervisor of Community Services of Lane County Inc., about the intern program she runs through the University Community Action program. Community Services of Lane County is one of several agencies which operates an "intern" program through the University, as does Community Health and Social Services of Lane County, with Janet Chappell supervising interns.

Each year, the University Community Action center, located in Hendricks Hall, supplies these two agencies with at least two students. The students, most of whom are Community Service and Public Affairs majors, work through the academic year, earning \$175/month for a 32-hour work week as well as 12 credits per term towards their major.

Both Chappell at Community Health and Social Services and Brown at Community

Services of Lane County are very pleased with the program and its benefits for students. Chappell has employed Lannom as an administrative assistant, and she feels that "the administrative assistant job is something that will help the student a great deal in getting a job. The work is very project oriented."

Chappell adds, "we've been fairly choosy in that we want students with initiative who do not expect to be over-supervised, and we've been able to get those kind of students so far," Brown says. "We've been involved with UCA for six years, and we're very pleased with the program."

In addition, the program enables the agencies to save money that they can use for other things, while giving the students an opportunity to use the concepts they have learned. Is the program worthwhile?

Brown and Chappell answer with a resounding yes. "Sure — it's a very valuable program," says Brown.

Says Chappell; "as long as we have the money to continue the program, we'll have it."

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