

Newest vice president ready to step in

By Sandy Johnstone
Of the Emerald

If you see a man wandering around campus looking rather confused — but excited — around Nov. 1, point him toward Johnson Hall. It will probably be Wayne Kurlinski, the new vice president for University relations.

After he finds his office, Kurlinski will begin to get to know the University, the people, programs and community.

"I've got to get acquainted with the University," he says. "I have to learn about its problems and opportunities. I need to learn as much as I can as fast as I can."

Kurlinski will meet with directors from the areas for which he is responsible, including alumni relations, the news bureau, community services, government relations, KWAX and the Museum of Art. He wants to find out what their problems are and what they think should be done about them.

One item at the top of his agenda is examining the image of the University.

In the past, University relations functions have apparently been working on the assumption that the University is well known outside of Oregon, but not appreciated inside the state.

Kurlinski intends to question that premise.

"The first thing to find out is what its reputation is in the state. What do people think and feel about the University?" he asks. "I don't know how well the University is known around the country. That also must be assessed. Is it getting the public attention it deserves?"

To find out what people really believe, both in the state and beyond, Kurlinski says his office will do some public at-

titude research and analysis as quickly as possible.

"If there is a lack of understanding that must be sorted out," Kurlinski says.

Increased communication about higher education will be one way to explain the University.

"The trend is to only talk about funding problems in higher education, not what it is doing to contribute to society, education and research," he says. "The University merits funding for the good of the whole state and society."

A major research university can help attract industry to the area and it needs to inform people about how important it can be, he says.

"Higher education hasn't really done an effective lobbying job," he admits. "It has to get people at the grassroots level to know the values of a university. Parents and alumni are ambassadors who could help the institution if they are armed with information and motivated."

But an inadequately funded university will be less able to serve society.

"It's a mistake to think you can replenish the University — that you can deplete it and always build it up," he says. "A University is a resource in so many ways. It is not just important to young people who want an education, but to all of society."

"The general role of University relations is to get all those messages across — that people benefit from the University," he says. "Now, more than ever, it is important to have this kind of function. It is not central to the mission of the University, but it is important in the sophisticated



Wayne Kurlinski

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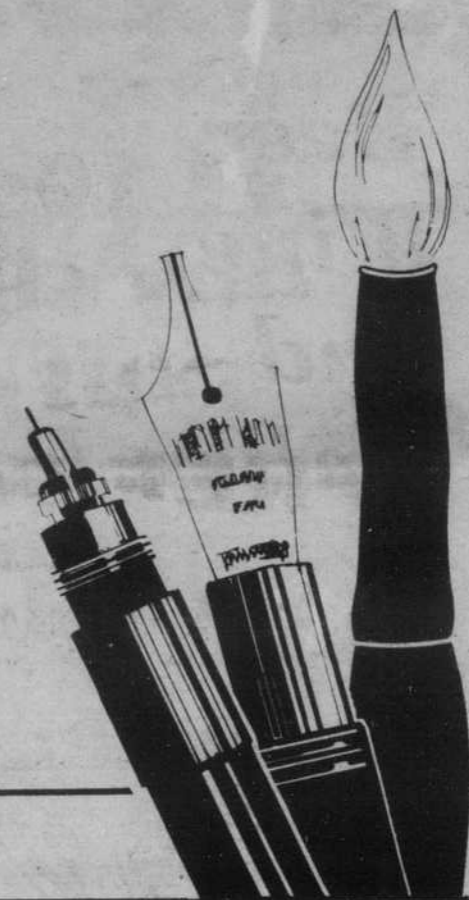
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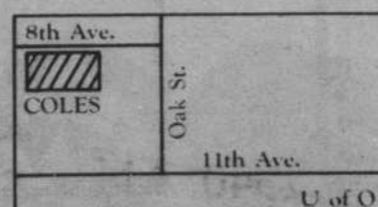
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