

# Sowards provides professional touch

By Jim Moore  
Of the Emerald

Anyone passing through the EMU is sure to see Susan Sowards, the ASUO executive coordinator — and that suits her fine.

"I feel like I can feel the heartbeat of the campus," she says.

Sowards, who has a bachelor's degree in education from Ohio University, is technically employed by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education and technically responsible to the EMU director, but she is actually supervised by ASUO Pres. Mary Hotchkiss and her responsibilities are to aid the ASUO executive.

Those responsibilities include research in legislative and special projects, analysis of existing and proposed executive policies, involvement in policy formulation and implementation and to serve as a resource person on organizing students and coordinating an outreach program.

This job description is no small task for someone only being paid for a 30 hour week, but Sowards, who is working on a master's degree in education at the University, is committed to her job and says she brings a variety of valuable skills to it.

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— Susan Sowards

She has business skills, political and civic experience and is familiar with the ASUO and the University campus.

Along with going to school and working at the ASUO, Sowards is a partner in a business consulting firm and has assisted many businesses with financial, management and organizational problems. The importance of these factors has been overlooked within the ASUO previously, she says.

Sowards is also the vice-chairer of the Eugene budget committee and worked as a legislative aide to Sen. Margie Hendriksen, D-Eugene. She brings the experience of having researched and analyzed issues to her job.

Her company helped create a packet last spring familiarizing new members of the ASUO executive branch with ASUO programs and issues. That work, plus her role as a student and homeowner on the edge of campus, have familiarized her with the University and given her a feel for the requirements of her job.

When the job descriptions and rhetoric of the executive coordinator's job are pushed aside, Sowards has a simple description for what she does.

"I'm a professional staff person for ASUO," she says. "I will help them implement their existing goals."

Already she has put together a brochure on the Solomon Amendment that ASUO distributed during class registration and has participated in the voter registration drive.

Along with the busy schedule provided for her in her job, Sowards has other goals she

would like to accomplish.

"I think student government should be more visible than it has been," Sowards says. "Making people aware that government is theirs is important."

What are the chances of Sowards, whose job comes up for review in December, staying employed for the length of the job's two-year limit?

"I'm delighted to have such a highly qualified individual in this position," Hotchkiss says. "I can't imagine anyone doing a better job."

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