

Commentary

Proposed ASUO shuttle could present alternative to women

As ASUO state affairs coordinator and a member of the proposed Shuttle Van Committee, I would like to clarify some of the issues that have been raised concerning this project. We at the ASUO feel that this project is worthy of consideration by students. It addresses a problem that is pervasive on our campus as well as in our society, and that problem is rape.

There are many facets and aspects of this problem. Women are raped by people they know, as well as by the proverbial stranger lurking in the bushes. The ASUO is concerned with all aspects of rape and will work actively to educate students on this issue.

Our motivation in providing the shuttle service is to present an alternative for women walking alone on campus. The committee is considering a women-only policy for users of the van as well as drivers.

The project goals are to provide a specific service (shuttle van) to a specific population (women who are the targets of rape), and to do this in a way that is empowering for women. We feel the best way to do this is have women as the providers of this service.

We are considering this policy for two reasons: one is

that historically, even with a strict screening process, other providers of rape prevention programs have had problems with male participants abusing the systems and perpetrating crimes against women. We want women to be assured of safety.

Second, we feel that it is important for women not to depend upon the protection of men in rape prevention programs. We want women to be responsible for taking care of one another in order to feel self-confidence and self-respect, the

to the goals of providing this service in an empowering way for women. We also see their role as providing education to others, particularly men, on the myths of rape.

In conclusion, what needs to be stressed is that we are at the beginning stages of this project. Nothing is set in stone. The van is not ready to touch pavement yet. We are looking at the legality of all the issues before us. What we want to do is provide a service for women that is safe and empowering. That is our

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Women and men each have their appropriate roles in dealing with this issue. There are men involved in this project who care very much about the problem of rape. We see their role as helping to provide the funding necessary for the shuttle service. They are dedicated

bottom line. We welcome the ideas and input of students on this process. I am available in Suite four of the EMU.

By Debra Kester

Debra Kester is the ASUO state affairs coordinator and is a member of the Shuttle Van Committee.

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