

Honor societies enjoying increase in interest

By Mary Lichtenwalner
Of the Emerald

The many honor societies at the University reflect a new generation of student, concerned with achievement and academics — a contrast to the protest groups of the 1960s, says Dave Thurman, president of the University chapter of Mortar Board, a senior honor society.

"It's activism of a different sort," Thurman says. "I think, all in all, it's just a change on campuses. Students are more willing to work with the administration than fight against them."

"I think now that students realize they have to do some stuff in college to get a

job," Thurman says.

Currently, 25 honor societies and service organizations with high academic requirements for membership thrive at the University. Most groups require a consistent 3.2 grade point average during their college career.

Monday marks the first day of National Mortar Board Week, an honors week held to increase the awareness of honor societies on campuses.

Organized by Mortar Board, the week will feature information tables in the EMU lobby from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. with representatives from such societies as Druids, Asklepiads, Mortar Board and

Phi Eta Sigma.

University honor student will receive 82 junior scholar awards in a ceremony Wednesday, at 7 p.m., in Gerlinger Hall.

Organ donor awareness is the theme of honors week, Thurman says. The honor society took on the national service project to stimulate awareness of the program.

"It's important because there are people who are blind or maybe on kidney dialysis machines... people donate to them and help them out," Thurman says.

In addition to vital organs, skin can be donated for burn victims, Thurman says.

Anita Johnson, honor societies advisor in the Office of Student Development, says that despite fluctuations in popularity, honor societies have kept the same goals of leadership, scholarship and service. But the groups are less formal now. Members no longer wear uniforms and initiations are now held as informal receptions, Johnson says.

Honor society members are given opportunities to succeed outside of the classroom, Johnson says. "Membership in an honor society makes a good impression on prospective employers," she says.



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