

Interest in culture gives groups focus on Latin America

By Kelvin Wee
Of the Emerald

Nicaragua. Chile. El Salvador. Guatemala. How much do University students know about these and other Latin American nations?

The Council for Human Rights in Latin America (CHRLA) has been active in sponsoring Latin American-oriented events for the last 10 years to help educate members about these countries.

The student-outgrowth of CHRLA is the Latin American Support Committee (LASC). With a current membership of about 30 students, LASC co-sponsors events ranging from art exhibitions to educational workshops from Latin America.

"LASC is not a political organization," said Robert Guitteau Jr., one of this year's co-directors. "We feel the importance of the Latin American culture and would like to share it with others too."

Guitteau, a senior at the University, attended his first CHRLA meeting in 1978 because of his desire to obtain information on Latin America. Since then, with the sponsorship of CHRLA, Guitteau has visited Nicaragua twice, where he assisted in setting up bi-partisan tours for both business and community leaders.

Donna Lawrence, a recent graduate in political science, said it is the feeling of belonging, and family unity in the group that keeps bringing her back. A former member of the Student Senate, Lawrence first became interested in the work of LASC when she attended the weekly Hard Times Lunches, over two years ago.

"We are always trying to educate," Lawrence said. "I would like to have people become more aware and be more than just an oasis for Latin Americans who come here, and not alienate them."

Lawrence's involvement with LASC is not limited to cultural issues. As with most of the other members, politics means a lot to her.

"Everything I do is political; however, it is also important that we have other members who are dedicated to those specific, detailed events that can educate," Lawrence said.

In the last year, LASC has sponsored several educational and cultural events on campus. David Bowman, a senior in international studies, recalls one of the group's most successful events in 1986.

"When I was co-director last year, we sponsored a letter-writing seminar at the EMU where over a hundred students wrote letters to their congresspersons in opposition to Contra aid," Bowman said.

"There were also more than a thousand others who signed a petition, and when that passed, it made Oregon one of the first in the nation to oppose Contra aid on a state-wide level," he said.

Bowman was in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala in 1985. He picked coffee in the mountains of Nicaragua for two months, after which he did research for three months on social groups there.

CHRLA's director, Nellie Macon Link, was one of the original members 10 years ago when it was known as the Committee for Free Chile.

"We were just a group of people who were concerned about human rights in Chile," Link said.

Link grew up in Argentina and moved to Oregon with her American husband over 11 years ago. Link's interest in Latin America is not political. "I believe that everyone should be able to enjoy the basic human rights just as we in America do," she said.

"Just last December, we brought in the dance group Mancotal from Nicaragua," Link said. "It was very inspirational, and in the spring we will feature an art exhibition with works from Nicaragua and Chile."

CHRLA and LASC moved into the Latin American Cultural Center, 1236 Kincaid St., six years ago. Since then, they have organized benefits to raise funds for organizations in Latin America working towards social change.

In early 1986, CHRLA sent \$75,000 worth of medical supplies to Nicaragua, and LASC held a benefit dance to raise funds to purchase office supply materials for AMLAE, a Nicaraguan women's organization Bowman researched when he was in the country, he said.

Student Senate seeks to change mandatory drug-testing policy

By Sarah Kitchen
Of the Emerald

The Student Senate Monday night passed a motion that will be presented to the University Senate regarding the Athletic Department's drug-testing policy.

The Student Senate motion calls for the Athletic Department to revoke its mandatory random drug-testing policy while retaining the right to test athletes for drug use on probable cause.

The senate also proposes the Athletic Department work with student athletes to evaluate the current drug educational and counseling program, and strengthen it or replace it with a comprehensive and effective program by Oct. 15, 1987.

A sub-committee consisting of five student senators came up with the motion after studying the issue of drug testing of athletes at the University, senate member John Thoma said.

"One of the stated goals of the drug-testing program is to deter drug use, and we don't think it is doing it as well as an educational program could," he explained.

While the athletic department does have a drug education program it is considered by some, including a few student athletes, to be ineffective, Thoma added.

Several student athletes may testify in front of the University Senate on March 11 to confirm the belief that the existing program is not effective.

Last term the student senate passed a motion saying it did

not approve of the drug-testing policy that was established by the Athletic Department at the beginning of this school year.

"We basically feel drug testing is an invasion of the student athlete's rights," Thoma said.

One of the objectives behind the motion is to have people understand drugs, and the effects those drugs can have on a person's genetic makeup, Senate member Tim Chase said.

In other business, the senate received a report from senate member Melissa Bryan about student evaluations.

As it stands, there is no formal rule on what is to be done with the evaluations done by students on their professors at the end of each term.

Because there is no formal rule, it is possible the University

is breaking an Oregon Vice Statute law which says professors are not supposed to read signed course evaluations, Bryan said.

"Now professors are reading signed evaluations, which puts the student who wrote it in jeopardy if he writes something the professor is against and comes across the professor later in his career," Bryan said.

Also, according to the Oregon State Law, un-signed evaluations are not to become a part of a teacher's file; instead they are supposed to be disregarded.

"Students are not aware of the process and what it means when they do or do not sign evaluations," Bryan said.

Bryan is talking to University officials about the matter and will report back to the Senate at a later date with her findings.

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