

# Homeless crisis focus of workshop

By Aaron Knox  
Of the Emerald

The changing face of the homeless and measures being taken to address the growing crisis will be the focus of a Department of Human Services workshop tomorrow in Room 151 of the Chiles Center from 8 a.m. to 4:40 p.m.

A variety of speakers who have worked actively on both addressing the issue and dealing with its consequences will conduct individual presentations and participate in a panel discussion at the end of the program.

Workshop coordinator Betsy Lane said the focus of the workshop will be on local response to the problem at the city, county and state level. Instructor Kenneth Viegas, associate professor in the Department of Human Services, will open the workshop with a broad overview of the problem and moderate the panel discussion, according to Lane.

The workshop may be taken for academic credit by University students or may be attended without credit for a \$20 registration fee. Lane said that students and community members attending without credit may register at the Chiles Center just prior to the workshop.

Those who wish to take the workshop, titled "The Homeless, A National Crisis" (HS 408M, TLN 1611, 1 credit), for credit must be admitted to the University for the current term and pay the tuition and add fee. No additional costs will be incurred, however.

Lane said that 40 students and six community members had registered for the workshop as of Wednesday, and that room still existed for

30 to 40 more participants. She added that a typical summer workshop draws only about 25 attendees.

"We are excited about the response. This issue may be drawing so much attention right now because it is starting to happen to more and more people and becoming a more personal experience," Lane said.

More than 10,000 Oregonians lack adequate shelter. While the total homeless population has grown rapidly in recent years, statistics indicate the vast majority of the increase is from displaced families, women and children.

There are more than 9,000 homeless people in Portland alone, according to a study conducted by Portland's Emergency Basic Needs Committee. More than half of this total, the study indicates, come from homeless families, and there were an additional 960 individual women and 500 minors who actively sought emergency shelter.

The report sights a population ratio of 1 to 300-500 as a benchmark measurement for metropolitan area homelessness. Using this benchmark, Eugene would have a homeless population of between 200 and 350 persons. However, that same ratio places the Portland population at about 2600, much lower than the report's actual measurement indicated.

Included among the featured speakers is Michael Stoops, chairman of the Burnside Community Council of Portland. Stoops recently spent 135 consecutive days lobbying Congress during the day and living on the streets of Washington, D.C. at night. Stoops ultimately helped gain passage of a \$50 million ap-

propriation for homeless aid, and a measure calling for an additional \$350 million is pending in Congress.

Stoops also gained notoriety earlier this year when he joined former State Representative Rick Bauman on a 25-day hunger strike to protest a 1986 \$36 million cut in human resources funding and to advocate increased future expenditures, resulting in an additional \$50 million in appropriations for the next fiscal year.

Joining Stoops to discuss efforts by the city of Portland to alleviate the crisis from a personal perspective will be Beverly Curtis, recovering alcoholic, street person and popularly elected "Queen of the Hobos."

Governor Neil Goldschmidt is also promoting resolution of the crisis as a major theme in his "Oregon Comeback." The homeless can "not be a part of the comeback unless we make it happen, unless we carefully and thoughtfully target limited human and physical resources," he said.

Discussing the local response to the problem will be representatives from Eugene Emergency Housing, the Eugene Police Department and the Springfield Adult and Family Services Division. "We have people from both sides of the fence, and some of them have extreme views, which should make the panel discussion particularly interesting," Lane said.

The panel discussion will begin at approximately 2:30 and continue until around 4:30, according to Lane. It will be open to the public without charge and without attending the rest of the workshop.

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