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Student delegation attends conference on harassment

By Jeff Morgan
Emerald Reporter

Seven University students attended the five-state Northwest Coalition Against Malicious Harassment, Inc., last weekend in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

This was the coalition's first conference, which focused on racial and religious harassment.

The delegation included students from the Native American Student Union, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance and the Black Student Union. The delegation was led by Harry Hintsala, ASUO Minority Affairs Coordinator and co-director of NASU.

The northern Idaho-based coalition formed to address the problem and threat of religious and racial harassment and violence in the Northwest and to form an informational network to combat religious and racial hate groups throughout the United States.

The member states of the

coalition are Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming, which are the five states in which the Aryan Nations group, which is based near Coeur d'Alene, wants to form a "racially pure" nation.

Hintsala said he hoped the conference would help address the "institutional racism" at the University, noting the low number of minority faculty and students, and what he called inadequate minority retention programs. "Even here they (minority students) are disenfranchised," Hintsala said.

Although pleased with the conference, Hintsala expressed concern over the representation of the group, saying there was little racial diversity among the board of directors. This he found surprising because of the large Native American population in northern Idaho.

His concern was echoed by GALA co-director Tim Hughes, who said he presumed the conference would be a "coming

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Lucky Ducks

Grand Prix winner of the University Bookstore's Lucky Duck Giveaway, Chao-Yen Chen(left), stands next to her new Honda Spree, as Patricia Lon Kim Hung, who won a UO sweatshirt, and Judy Grenatstein, who received a Sony Walkman, display their prizes

Photo by Chris Chabaudie

Literacy programs become a 'plus' for adults

By John Henrikson
Emerald Contributor

Robert Gilliam was like many other American adults. He completed high school, supported a family and held several good jobs.

And like about 25 million other American adults, including 21,000 in Lane County, he never learned to read beyond a grade school level.

But Gilliam, 41, is changing that now. Last February he

enrolled in Lane Community College's Adult Basic Education program to pick up where he left off as a child.

Now he is reading at a high school level and is improving his spelling. Enthused about his progress, Gilliam began encouraging other adults like himself to improve their literacy as well.

Earlier this year he was chosen to represent Oregon at the National Student Literacy Congress, held in Philadelphia, Pa. last August.

"They're just now beginning to realize what shape the nation is in as far as adult literacy," said Gilliam, who discussed the problem with fellow adult students at the Literacy Conference.

The Literacy Congress is one of many efforts to improve adult literacy across the country in conjunction with Project Literacy U.S., or PLUS.

Sponsored by the ABC and PBS television networks, PLUS is a two-year plan designed to increase awareness about the

problem of adult literacy while providing resources for a national network of local literacy programs.

The Lane County Literacy Coalition is one such program, coordinating the efforts of local business, education and social groups to promote literacy. The Coalition also functions as a referral service for adults seeking help in learning reading skills.

According to Marjorie Smith, coalition coordinator, basic reading skills are more impor-

tant now than ever before because of a trend away from labor-oriented jobs toward ones that require more reading and writing.

"It's not a problem of the younger generation," Smith said. "The older the population is, the larger the percentage that have poor basic skills."

Lucielle Lamoreux, who has taught adult basic education at LCC for 18 years, thinks literacy is more important now because

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Worst drought of century keeps loggers on hold

By Christopher Blair
Emerald Contributor

Oregon, famous for its rainy reputation, is now experiencing

its worst drought in almost 100 years.

The culprit appears to be a recurrence of the warm ocean current El Nino, which occasionally makes an appearance

off the West Coast, according to KEZI TV meteorologist John Fisher.

"It seems that two-thirds of the time, and that's actually quite an exact figure, if El Nino

appears it means a very wet winter," Fisher said. "But right now, it seems that the opposite is true. We did have one of the wettest July's on record this year, but what followed was a very dry August, September and October."

"In 1983, when we last saw El Nino, we had a very wet summer, so it can go both ways," he said.

Signs of the resulting dry spell are apparent in many facets of Oregon life and the state's economy.

The local wood products industry, prohibited from sending logging crews into tinder-dry forests, either are running out of logs to process or have stopped production altogether.

Larger companies, such as Weyerhaeuser, are down to a one-week log supply. Weyerhaeuser's Springfield sawmill, which employs 400 workers, will be forced to lay off

"over a hundred," operations manager Rich Hanson said.

"Usually by October we have a four- to six-week inventory so that we have logs to work with when the snow falls. We're hoping that the rain will start so that we can get out and put some logs in front of the plant," he said.

Times have been harder on smaller lumber operations, which have been closed out of logging areas due to extreme fire dangers. Many, such as the Starfire Lumber Company in Cottage Grove, have been forced to shut down all but mill operations.

"We're only running one shift of the three that we operate normally, and that's even only been for the past five days. The week before we didn't operate at all," Starfire's vice president Robbie Robinson said.

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Inversion adds to smog level

While the unusual dry weather is causing problems for farmers, loggers and firefighters across the state, it is also contributing to a moderate but growing air pollution problem in the Willamette Valley.

Colder October temperatures traditionally mean more smoke from woodstoves, and according to KEZI TV meteorologist John Fisher, some unseasonable weather conditions are ac-

cumulating the smoke and keeping it in the area.

"What we have right now in the valley is called an inversion. Warmer air is rising to about three to four thousand feet, while the colder nighttime air sinks to the ground," he said.

The inversion, as well as the hills surrounding Eugene on three sides, are keeping the smoke and other normal pollutants "bottled up,"

Fisher said.

Air pollution readings on recent days have been at or above a high moderate figure of 75, said Ralph Johnston of the Lane Regional Air Pollution Authority (LRAPA).

The daily air pollution index is used by LRAPA to inform the general public, via the media, the quality of the air outside. A reading of zero to 49 is considered satisfactory, 50 to 99 moderate, and 100 and above unhealthy.