



Photo by Sean Poston

The crowd responded enthusiastically to the speakers, who encouraged continued commitment to the freedom of South Africa.

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when others would not. "It was a monumental task during the dry times when no one wanted to remember or think about these issues. Especially no one wanted to talk about South Africa and Nelson Mandela," Oliver said.

"Many of us weren't sure we would ever see Nelson Mandela leave those gates alive," Oliver said. "But we've made it here. It's significant. For many of you a lot of this (political activism) is new. But, this event shows you that there are successes. It's not just all work, work, work. Sometimes we win."

A need to find the right mix of international and local activism was expressed by Chuck Dalton, president of the Eugene/Springfield chapter of the NAACP.

"I just don't want you to think that after this celebration tonight we're done. We still have to free those other 26 million folks down there in South Africa," Dalton said. "And truth be known, there are a few other folks that aren't free yet either. They're all over the world, including right here in



Photo by Sean Poston

Jan Oliver, director of Multicultural Affairs, reminded the crowd that all the work for social change does pay off.

River City."

"We're going to celebrate tonight," Dalton said. "But, tomorrow morning I want you all to realize that you got another job to work on."

The final speaker at the celebration, Nithi Muthukrishna, a South African studying at the University, related her personal feelings about Mandela's release. She said for 27 years the government of South Africa

had portrayed Mandela as a terrorist. Muthukrishna said she was felt that in his speeches, Mandela has come across as a person of tremendous humility and dignity.

When the speakers had finished, More Time, a local reggae band, closed the celebration while members of the audience took the opportunity to push back the rows of chairs and dance.



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The evening of celebration began with music from the University Gospel Choir.

Doonesbury



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