

EXECS

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to the principal's office, because we were pretty much slandering the teachers and principals who were doing a lousy job ... I've always been this way. It's not some new thing that developed when I came to the University of Oregon.

I think I've just sort of changed the focus. When I was in high school, I had an anti-apartheid day — and this is in Coos Bay, Oregon, which has a population of people of color of about 2 percent — and most people didn't even know what (apartheid) was.

When I came to the University of Oregon I was involved with (the Gay and Lesbian Alliance) and working on issues in feminism and women's rights. And then I became the director of GALA, and that was a great experience for me. I did everything wrong that year.

Anything that you could possibly do to screw up an organization, I did. But that was a really great learning experience for me. And then I became chair of the National Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Student Caucus and I'm the chair again this year. That was great because I started to network with lots of people in other areas of the nation who were doing the same sort of work that I was doing, that I was frustrated with doing, and they were showing me ways of success.

I ran for the IFC primarily because I was a program director and I thought it would be great to have someone who's a program director back on the IFC. And I also firmly believe that you should have people of color, lesbians, women in positions of power. Plus, I thought I could do a better job than everyone else that was doing it, which is why I ran for president as well. I mean, I've always been committed to grass roots activism.

It's really strange sometimes to realize that I'm now in a position that I always used to go up against. Now I'm the one who's trying to quiet people down who are rallying and screaming, and that's where I used to be. But it gives me perspective. I know where they're coming from.

JoSonja Watson: Andy Clark (the 1989-90 ASUO president) sucked me into all this. The year before last he talked me

into running for the IFC, and I went ahead and did it, but I didn't know what I was getting into. And I was like, "Well, Andy, I won, now what do I do?" And anyway, I got in there and did the best I could and then Jen sucked me into this one. Really, I like to go places where I'm needed and I think my presence is needed and, I don't mean to be cocky, but I think people appreciate me for the little things I do.

ODE: What are the main issues and problems that the ASUO will deal with this year?



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— Jennifer Bills

JB: One of the biggest ones is the fact that our tuition skyrocketed and will probably continue to skyrocket and that students who really haven't been paying attention throughout the entire Ballot Measure 5 process are going to come back and are paying close to \$900 in tuition and they're going to go into shellshock over that. I think we'll be dealing with that, trying to figure out ways to lessen the burden. That's one issue.

ODE: What kinds of ways will you deal with it?

JB: Well, working on trying to get people more aware of the financial aid that's available for them. There's a bill that's in Congress right now. It's a bill that would publicize the availability of financial aid. Instead of "Be all you can be, be in the Army." It's "Be all you can be, get a Pell grant or get a Stafford loan." It's to let people know that they can do that. Lobbying on the federal level is another thing we're planning on doing.

JW: Everything that's going to be a biggie, it all revolves around our theme during our campaign, which was access to higher education. We're going to follow through on our promises and make sure that accessibility is a little bit easier.

ODE: What are your goals for the ASUO?

JB: One of my goals is to definitely get the student-parent organization set up on this campus, because of the changing demographics on this campus ... so when people who have been pioneering this group graduate, that the organization will not die with them leaving.

The other thing is the issue of domestic partnerships and fam-

ily housing. I want gays and lesbians who have domestic partnership agreements, and also heterosexuals who have domestic partnership agreements, to be allowed into housing. That's a clear issue of discrimination and I think the ASUO is going to fight that one.

My other goal is that ... you know, when I look around at other universities, U of O really has a lot. We bitch about never having enough, but we have a lot of wonderful programs that other universities don't have. What I want to do is set up a

program where people with common agendas, such as higher education and access to education, can come together, and that's the Programs Coalition.

Bring that together and making it

strong, it would be a incredible lobbying force on this campus. We're trying to get it there, to get it autonomous, to make sure that it will outlast any president and be a strong force at the University of Oregon.

My goal is also to remain sane and graduate at the end of the year.

ODE: What will be different or unique about the ASUO this year?

JB: I think we'll be action-oriented.

JW: We want to be pro-active rather than reactive.

JB: I think a lot of us in the ASUO are committed to setting stuff up that will last for awhile.

ODE: Such as?

JB: Such as the Student-Parent Association and also our Student Coalition, which is the defunct Programs Council that's being revamped.

JW: Closer networking with programs, just overall better organization.

JB: The ASUO is always having to put out small fires that

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