

## IN TOUCH with the EMU



Photo by Dylan Coulter

Vendor Cesar Cachiguango is one of many people who sell their wares to students in the EMU.

### EMU

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People can express their views to a student senator, buy a wool sweater made in Ecuador, mail a letter at the post office, make a stained glass window in the craft center and apply for a credit card all under one roof.

The wide variety of events that are constantly occurring throughout the day make it an intriguing place to be for many students.

"It's really a nice place to be because there's always so much going on — and a lot of activity," University senior Dion Glisan said. "And it's a good place to meet friends."

"The main reason the EMU attracts so many people is its location," said Frank Geltner, associate director of the EMU. The building, which was built in 1950, provides a convenient atmosphere for students to congregate.

"The EMU was architecturally designed to accommodate the flow of students between residence halls, the center of campus and the academic activity," Geltner said. "It allows students to stop off and buy food, study or whatever."

Marcia Hudspeth, manager of the building's Main Desk Store, said a large number of students are attracted to the building — particularly when it rains.

"There's a lot of traffic walking through — whether they're in the building for that long of a time, or just walking through from class," Hudspeth said.

"When it rains, people go in one door and straight out the other side as a little reprieve from the weather."

Because of the many passers-by in the lobby, vendors set up shop there to sell their wares. One such entrepreneur is Cesar Cachiguango of Ecuador. With stacks of sweaters on a table set up next to the skylight ramp, Cachiguango sells wool sweaters made in his native country for only \$35.

Cachiguango, who speaks little English and consequently had students Catherine Moran and Jenn Alba translate for him, comes to the EMU because he likes to work with the University's students, and because he makes a living by selling the sweaters. Alba bought one of them.

"I like the colors — this is a good buy for your money," she said. "The sweater is beautiful, it's warm, and it's a lot better made than other sweaters for the same price," Hudspeth said.

Cachiguango also sells gloves, hats and handmade bread dough Christmas ornaments.

Christmas time poses a high demand for people wishing to sell at the EMU, Hudspeth said.

"The vendors hope to woo Christmas shoppers and students who are there studying for finals," Hudspeth said.

The profits don't just benefit the sellers, but the University student body as well, Hudspeth said. The vendors must pay a minimum of \$10 per day for the right to sell there, and must donate 10 percent of their gross to the EMU. Last year, the EMU

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Frank Geltner  
associate director of the EMU

received \$10,000 alone from this practice, and the proceeds were used to offset labor costs and expenses of student services.

EMU officials are sometimes forced to prevent vendors from selling things in the lobby that are deemed inappropriate.

"Once, someone was selling some martial arts knife-type things that you throw, and we didn't even know that they had them," she said. "Somebody from public safety saw those things and came running into my office with complaints, so we do have to be careful and watch for this."

Many students like the study environment at the EMU better than the silence of the library.

"I study (in the EMU) because the library is too quiet," said Jennifer Broadbent, a junior majoring in planning, public policy and management. "I can't handle having it so quiet that I can hear another person breathe when I'm trying to concentrate."

—Julie Swensen

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