

LatinoAmerica backs students

By Beth Hege
Emerald Contributor

The Hispanic community organization Centro LatinoAmericano announced Thursday it supports the demands of a University student group to increase support for minority students on campus.

The center is the first community organization to endorse Students of Color Building Bridges since it presented a long list of grievances to University officials.

Antonio Sardinia, executive director, called first for more bilingual education and services, alumni support systems and increased participation in affirmative action hiring.

Sardinia made his comments

at a bilingual press conference at the center.

"We are in favor of a multi-cultural center that has credibility in our community," he said.

Credibility became the operative word as the press conference went on.

"We believe absolutely across the board in a stronger commitment to affirmative action," Sardinia said. "What the Students of Color advocate is precisely the step we need to take."

University Spanish instructor Armando Morales, speaking as a member of the community, said Hispanics are the largest minority group in Oregon.

"But we are not represented at different levels of University,

local or state government," he said.

"(University Vice Provost Gerard Mosely) said he knows what kind of director we need to have," Morales said. "I do not agree with him. Let us decide."

Students of Color Building Bridges representative Diana Collins Puente said it was important for the University and community to come together on an issue that "won't go away."

"Measure 5 is just a scapegoat," she said. "The University has not made diversity a priority. This is a hostile environment for students of color."

"Recruitment is one thing, retention is another," she said. "Racism is a reality."

HARASSMENT

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In the proposed rule changes, it would take only two informal complaints, but the complainants would be required to name themselves and be willing to participate in an investigation.

- The proposed rule specifies a complainant has up to 180 days to file a formal complaint. The current rule doesn't specify a time limit, although the University's Office of Affirmative Action has used this deadline in past discrimination cases.

- Cases of discrimination, in the proposed rule, are channeled to the Office of Affirmative Action. Currently, there is no productive way to steer all complaints into a single channel.

Alison Baker, University executive assistant to the president, said the rule is no longer merely a sexual harassment rule, but is a rule attempting to put together all forms of illegal discrimination and treat them similarly.

The purpose for this, Baker said, is for simplicity and so students don't have to go through differ-

ent channels for sexual harassment, disability or racial matters when filing a complaint.

ASUO President Bobby Lee said although he is happy the University is finally making some changes in the grievance procedure, there are still things that need some work in the proposed rule.

Lee said he is dissatisfied with the 180-day limit. If students decide to switch to a different grievance procedure, Lee said, the deadline should be extended.

Marlene Drescher, director of student advocacy, said she is concerned students may not file informal complaints because, under the proposed rule, they need to be willing participants in investigations if two or more informal complaints are filed.

Drescher and Lee said although they will submit amendments to the proposed rule, they are pleased the University is finally changing the sexual harassment rule. The rule has failed to comply with state and federal law for at least three years.

"This is exactly what we've been fighting for: a simplified grievance process, and this is one positive step," Lee said.

STUDENTS

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only targeting Marshall Saucedo's job but other positions at the University."

Although the University agrees with many of Students of Color Building Bridges' goals, some of its methods would be wasteful, especially during the present budget crunch, Moseley said.

Moseley said Saucedo had proved he could do the job during his two years as acting director, and the university would not consider reopening the position

to other applicants.

"This is not the first time anybody in the University was promoted from within," Moseley said. "There's nothing good about conducting a national search if you don't get a better person than you already have."

Moseley said spending \$10,000 on a national search when the Oregon Legislature is planning to cut 17 percent from the University's budget doesn't make sense.

Moseley also said most students don't have time to sit on University budget committees, and many minority students already

feel worn out from representing their ethnic groups on other committees.

Students do influence University hiring policies by expressing their opinions to administrators and faculty, Moseley said.

University President Myles Brand and other administrators plan to meet with Students of Color Building Bridges today to discuss the group's demands.

"We're all interested in accomplishing the same goals," Moseley said. "We just need to get the facts straight and move on from there."

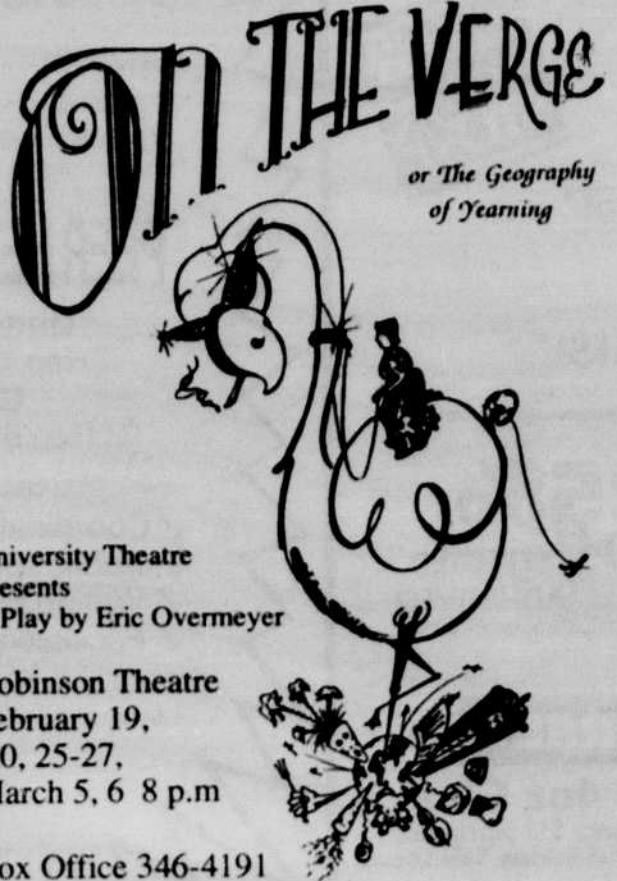
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