

## UNIVERSITY

# Students elected to board posts

By Tammy Batey  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Two University students were elected to the United States Student Association Board of Directors at the student lobbying organization's annual conference in Washington, D.C., during spring break.

Ebon Brady and Erika Armsbury were among 16 University students to attend the conference. The University's delegation was the largest at the conference, which was attended by 500 students from 70 colleges.

Brady and Armsbury were named to the positions of Students of African Descent Caucus co-chairman and regional chairwoman, respectively. Armsbury's post covers USSA colleges in Oregon, Alaska, Washington and Idaho. Brady will oversee colleges across the nation.

The Students of African Descent Caucus is part of USSA's National People of Color Student Coalition. Brady's position ends in July. He said he will make a directory of phone numbers of black student unions and similar college organizations and produce a membership list.

"I was really surprised no one (in the people of color student coalition) really knew each other, especially on the East Coast," he said. "I want to facilitate people getting to know each other and having access to other schools for events or just for information."

While at the nation's capital, ASUO President Bobby Lee was one of only seven students to speak at a hearing on the National Student Trust Fund, which would allow students to repay loans through community service.

University students met with senators and Congress members to discuss nine federal issues ASUO members chose to focus on.

These issues included the Military Freedom Act, which would lift the ban on gays and lesbians in the military; the Violence Against Women Act, which would increase sentences for repeat sex offenders; and the National Service Trust Fund.

"We were so organized in our lobbying that other students tagged along with us," Lee said. "In fact, a *Newsweek* reporter tagged along with us."

**'I want to facilitate people getting to know each other and having access to other schools.'**

— Ebon Brady,  
USSA board member

Some meetings with legislators were encouraging. Troy Shields, Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Alliance co-director, and several other students met with Sen. Sam Nunn to voice support for the Military Freedom Act.

"We didn't change his mind, but he heard what we had to say," Shields said. "There was a dialogue. We weren't yelling at each other."

Other legislators were less communicative. Oregon Sen. Bob Packwood didn't show up for his meeting with ASUO Safety Coordinator Caitilin Twain, Lee and other students.

The students hand-delivered about 950 letters to Oregon Sen. Mark Hatfield, Congressman Peter DeFazio and Packwood's aide, voicing support for VAWA.

"At this point I'm very frustrated," Twain said. "We hand-delivered 670 really heartfelt letters to Packwood's aide, and he hasn't made one noise about it."

But Lee said students weren't in Washington, D.C., to meet with legislators who shared their views on the issues.

"We weren't going there to lobby our friends," he said. "We were going there to butt heads with the strongest members opposing these acts."

Pronita Gupta, USSA legislative director, said the University delegation was one of the most prepared groups attending the conference.

"They came ready to lobby," she said. "They had the information down. They were prepared to work."

University students met for two hours every Friday for two months to prepare for the conference.

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## Muslim Student Association

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