

SUITE 5

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the offices of Chi Alpha and Students for Choice. The desks face opposing walls, so when directors of these groups work, they sit back-to-back. Slogans from each organization practically scream at each other, from "Freedom Means Choice" to "Free Bibles."

Suite 5 is the smallest and most eclectic of the student suites located in the wide basement of the EMU. In addition to Chi Alpha, Students for Choice and the Jewish Student Union, it houses the EMU Board of Directors, the Panhellenic and Interfraternity councils, the Rental Information Office and the Chinese Student Association.

The purpose of each office is unique: Go to one corner for cultural exchange, another for a new apartment, another for a bumper sticker. On the walls are maps of Eugene, community service plaques, newspaper clippings about Billy Graham crusades and a Pensacola abortion clinic. Despite the multiple personalities of the suite, its patrons describe a harmonious co-existence.

"There is always a ton of stuff to look at," said Brenda Wood of the Rental Information Office. From the vantage point of her desk, one can see the divergent posters, "How to Be a Fabulous Feminist" and "Open Mindedness or Empty-Headedness?"

"We have some pretty interesting conversations," said Matt Tallman, director of Chi Alpha. He indicated the Students for Choice desk.

"They have their beliefs, and we have ours," he said. "That's what diversity is about. We get along fine."

In Suite 5, voices carry over partitions, and smells of magic markers, fish and citrus-scented air freshener compete with each other. Everything in Suite 5 is permeable. Sometimes people leave the suite to conduct business because the space doesn't allow privacy.

"The frats and us have overheard each other's conversations for a decade," said Jonah Bookstein of the Jewish Student Union. The JSU is tucked in the back corner, partitioned between the Chinese and greek associations. The walls are decked with

posters of Israel, and the bookcases and literature racks are loaded with books and papers.

Bookstein described the union as a cultural support network where Jewish students can come in, relax on the couch, pick up literature and make connections.

"To make a community out of an ethnic group, when everyone has different religious, cultural and class backgrounds, we have to create a place where people feel they have a part," Bookstein said.

The open structure of Suite 5 doesn't always allow students to speak freely when they come to the JSU, Bookstein said, especially when it comes to issues of anti-Semitism.

Tallman, although his organization is not of the same genre of a student union, also said he took students out of Suite 5 to other areas of the EMU because "some counseling requires more privacy." Both Chi Alpha and Students for Choice have one auxiliary chair, stowed next to their desks, and no internal walls.

Speaking freely isn't a concern for students in the Chinese Student Association, whose fluid Mandarin can be heard almost any time of day. Adjacent to JSU, the association's blank walls and wooden benches stand in stark contrast. But the Taiwanese flag, suspended from the corner ceiling, hangs analogously to the blue-on-white Star of David.

Like the JSU, the Chinese Student Association is a group that shares culture and ethnicity. Unlike the JSU, the organization doesn't lack privacy.

"The main purpose for us is to keep good relations between Chinese and American students," said Ming Fang Li, association's vice president. "Whenever we design activities, we hope American people can join in. This is not a private place."

The association also helps students from Taiwan with the transition to life at the University, particularly with the English language. The busiest time of day for the Chinese Student Association is noon, when many students come to use the microwave and visit during lunch.

"When I'm hungry it smells good, but sometimes the fish smell bothers me and I get out my citrus spray. Sometimes I open the doors, but then the posters



Photo by Anthony Forney

Suite 5 acts as a genuine melting pot of cultures and ideas.

blow down," said Wood, whose file cabinets stand flush against the association's walls.

With all of the organizations in Suite 5, there is no shortage of posters. Group representatives gave differing views on how window space is used, some calling competition for space on the floor-to-ceiling glass panes "window wars" and others denying any conflict.

"People don't come here to discuss issues of their religion or race," said Hugh Jensen, greek tribunal chairman. "Our office has a different atmosphere (than the student unions). They have couches and microwaves. Our work is more administrative. People don't come here to lounge."

Dodge said working in Suite 5 has given her a chance to meet people she otherwise may never have come into contact with. "We all know each other's names," she said. "I like sharing office space."

Traffic is constant through Suite 5, and students navigate the narrow paths between desks deftly. At any time, the sounds of Mandarin, Yiddish and English could collide, and someone's phone is always ringing.

Whether it is competing noises or competing agendas that meet in Suite 5, Wood may have the best advice. "You just have to listen closer," she said.

COALITION

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rights and we need to explain that to people."

Ron Schlittler, a University student and member of Citizens United Against Discrimination, agreed that the language change means little.

"It's still a direct attempt to keep gays and lesbians from having direct access to legal recourse," he said. "And adolescents deserve access to information that's relevant to their lives. This is an attempt at social engineering."

Weigel said the issue of teaching children about homosexuality is a moot point at the moment, because there is no such curriculum in state primary and secondary schools.

Weigel added that gays and lesbians aren't looking for the minority status that would give them access to, for example, affirmative action opportunities.

"What we want is to have the same kind of consideration under the law as anyone else does, so that we know we can't be discriminated against unfairly and we have some recourse for things like hate crimes," she said.

Schlittler said C-PAC, as Citizens United Against Discrimination is known, will use similar strategies that were effective in defeating Measure 9.

"We need to identify our supporters and be sure those people are registered to vote," he said. "And we really need to educate people about the broader, conservative, fundamentalist agenda."

Weigel said the group will also focus attention on the nearby towns of Veneta, Oakridge, Junction City, Creswell and Cottage Grove, where the OCA is trying to put local anti-gay rights measures on ballots prior to the potential statewide vote next year.

Political action groups have formed in each of those communities, Weigel said, and C-PAC will assist them.

Weigel and Schlittler said they believe the issue will ultimately be settled in the courts.

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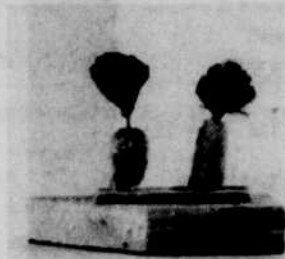
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So, you just finished rollerblading or playing frisbee or doing step aerobics or whatever.

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So you grab some kiwi-raspberry-lemonlime stuff from the fridge.

Now you're not thirsty, but you've got a problem.

The kiwi-raspberry-lemonlime stuff came with a free bottle.

Sure, you paid good money for the stuff inside, but the bottle was no extra charge.

That's the whole problem—no deposit means no return.

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That's where this recycling idea comes in. Just put your free glass bottle in the correct recycling bin and—

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