

Multicultural center for teens gains support, funds

By Stephanie Sisson
Oregon Daily Emerald

Plans for a multicultural drug and alcohol-free teen center run by Lane County youth is steadily gaining support from the Eugene community and turning into reality.

The YMCA sponsor agreed in October to sign a lease at 190 and 194 W. Broadway Ave., across from the old Bon Marche building, for the center.

YMCA Youth Program Director Debbie Hammond said that although organizers hope to open the center by spring, the center's Youth-Adult Operations Board hasn't set a date.

"We'll open when we're ready to open," Hammond said. "We're just working on the center as our funds allow. We don't want to open before we're ready."

One of the unique characteristics of the teen center is its Youth-Adult Operations

Board, which will develop programs for the center, supervise staff and provide a vision for the future.

Hammond said half of the board positions will eventually be filled by teenagers — at least one representative from each Eugene high school. The other positions represent a wide variety of community groups.

"We have a diverse group of adults from the black community, the hispanic community, the Jewish community," Hammond said. "If there's anything we want to emphasize, it's multiculturalism."

A University study finished a few years ago found that 99.6 percent of Eugene teenagers wanted a place to go where they could have access to services and have a good time. Hammond said the teen center will do both.

The center, which will be for youths

from ages 13 to 19, will have games like pingpong and foosball, television and a dance floor.

Organizers plan to include space for classroom and for counseling to be used by Looking Glass Youth and Family Services and other youth service agencies.

While the creation of the center is largely due to the efforts of Eugene-Springfield Community Partnership, a grass-roots organization that deals with youth substance abuse, a number of other local agencies have also become involved. These groups include Willamalane Parks and Recreation, Lane Education Service District and Looking Glass.

"It's not just the YMCA," said Hammond. "It has taken a large group of different agencies to make it happen and a lot of dedication to make it real."

In April, 1993, the YMCA voted to become the central sponsor for the center

and bring it under the umbrella of the tax-exempt organization. YMCA support has allowed the center lease a building, Hammond said, but the center still needs funds for renovation and equipment.

In addition, Hammond said the center also needs building materials, the services of licensed electricians and plumbers, furniture, a sound system and even a kitchen sink.

Local donations so far include a \$25,000 grant from the Louise Minty Fund of Oregon Community Foundation, a \$22,775 grant from the Youth Development Commission; and funds from several local banks, the Rotary Club, Eugene-Springfield Community Partnership and YMCA donors.

For more information about how to get involved with the teen center, or to donate money or equipment, call Hammond at 686-9622.



Just Add Rice

It's simple to cook up a pot of rice - whether you cook one or combine a couple varieties for a multicolored dish. Measure 2 parts water to one part rice; bring the water & rice to a boil, then turn the heat down to low and simmer for 35 - 40 minutes. Keep covered.

For variety, sauté a bit of onion and curry, or saffron and cinnamon in olive oil in the bottom of your saucepan; add the rice and coat, then add the water and cook as above.

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Activities will celebrate King's birthday this week

By Meg Dedolph
Oregon Daily Emerald

A week's worth of activities, from films to speakers and music, is planned to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday on campus and in the community.

On Thursday, the Gospel Ensemble, directed by John Gainer, will perform a free 1 p.m. concert at Beall Hall at the University's School of Music.

At 5 p.m. in Allen Hall, a panel of students, journalists and journalism professors will discuss the challenges and problems with the media's coverage of race-related issues.

The Western Regional Ecumenical Christian Conference begins Friday, Jan. 14, and continues through Jan. 17. The conference, which has more than 100 participants from the western states, includes speakers, music and guest preachers.

Janet Cromwell, campus pastor for the Wesley Foundation and an event organizer, said the speakers include Birgil Kill Straight, who will speak on Native American territorial issues and Peggy Nagae Lum,

who will speak on Asian American civil rights issues.

"This is the first time this event has been held in Eugene. I'm kind of excited all these folks are coming to our home. We've been planning it since May," Cromwell said.

For more information and to register for the conference, call 346-4694.

On Jan. 15, the Black Student Union is sponsoring a candlelight vigil in King's honor. The vigil will begin in front of Johnson Hall at 6 p.m. and will be followed by a reception and cake-cutting ceremony in Gerlinger Hall.

Nichole Muhammad, director of the BSU, said the vigil will include speakers from "historically black fraternities and sororities," Black Women of Achievement and the African-American Male Support Group.

Members of the community are also welcome to speak, she said.

"Ideally, we want to celebrate this vision of Dr. King by taking time to reflect on the progress

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If you can't make the meeting, but are interested in the job, please pick up a job description and application at the ODE.

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