

Posters help boost middle school girls' self-confidence

Samantha Martin
Oregon Daily Emerald

Don Reid, a recent University graduate, is attempting to boost the self-confidence of middle school students in Lane County.

"Young Girls' ABCs of Life" is the first in a series of "Live to Learn" posters created by Reid, who graduated with a degree in English last spring.

For each letter of the alphabet, the poster lists words of encouragement for middle school age

girls to not be intimidated by subjects like mathematics and the sciences, areas traditionally dominated by males, according to Reid.

Reid said he received the inspiration to create the poster from his best friend.

"I always thought she was the smartest person in class," Reid said of his best friend. "I was inspired by her and wanted to create the poster to honor her and all women."

Reid wrote the text for the "Young Girls' ABCs of Life"

three years ago and put it to paper along with the graphics last November.

He said he noticed that even at the university level, "it seems men get called on more than women do."

Reid also said he believes the lack of equal attention in the classroom stems from the different ways boys and girls are socialized and raised from birth. According to Reid, reforming the school curriculum at the elementary and middle school level would help to amend prob-

lems of inequality in the classroom.

"Students need to learn more about the important figures in American history like the "Rosie the Riveter" women during World War II and women explorers," said Reid.

Springfield Middle School science teacher Carrie Patterson will soon display the poster in her classroom.

Although Patterson admits that she doesn't give equal attention to girls in her classroom, she said, "It is something I am

working on."

Patterson said she didn't know what kind of effect the poster would have on her female students, but was certain that the students would notice it.

"Any little thing that can be done to plant a seed in the minds of young girls that it's okay to pursue careers in science and math is very important," said Patterson.

"Young Girls' ABCs of Life" is also on display at Eugene Planned Parenthood and the Human Rights Commission.

Ken Gordon, Engineering major with a minor in Individualism

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