

Outdoor Program allows students to initiate, organize trips

■ **PROGRAM:** Variety of excursions are only limited by the creativity of the individuals who sign up

By Amy Columbo
Student Activities Editor

The morning is cool, crisp and fresh. The trees have begun to change colors, and our hiking boots press the fallen leaves into the trail. We're prepared for rain, but we see none. The farther we walk up the trail the more layers of clothing that come off, stuffed in backpacks and tied around waists. We stop to see the view before us — patches of green trees and rolling hills sometimes masked by fog.

When we get to the top, about a brisk hour or so later, the fog remains. We have nearly a 360-degree view of the world around us and a bird's-eye view of the valley below.

"It kind of gives a false representation that we're somewhere above the clouds," said Darshan Schmitz, an international studies major who initiated the hike.

We sat perched on some rocks as we ate lunch, four strangers joined by nothing other than a common interest to explore rather than study on a Sunday afternoon. And as we talked, ate and swatted away the bugs that circled our heads, we noticed the clouds beginning to crawl away.

This Sunday hike at Mount Pisgah is one of the more than 225 initiated through the University's Outdoor Program each year. The Outdoor Program is the

oldest one of its kind in the country. It began at the University in 1966.

"It's a wilderness ride board," said associate coordinator Dan Geiger. "It's a place for students and Outdoor Program members to go and post an idea for a trip and see if they can find other people interested in attending."

He said the philosophy behind the program is to see trip ideas posted by a trip initiator and planned by participants who sign up. These common adventure trips rely on the group to plan, make decisions and split the costs.

The Outdoor Program does not function like a commercial business or like outdoor programs at other universities, Geiger said, because it doesn't merely plan and offer a certain number of trips each term.

In the past, people have planned a mountain bike trip from Tibet to Nepal and raft trips down the Colorado River. The variety of trips vary depending on the creativity of the individuals.

Geiger, for example, has initiated an upcoming sea kayaking trip in Baja, California, during winter break. It will be a one-month round trip from Eugene, with 18 days on the water paddling down the Sea of Cortez.

"It's so nice to get out of the gray and cold of Eugene. It just makes getting through the winter so much easier," Geiger said.

The trip will be for up to eight people experienced at kayaking, who are ready to brave the



Karin Bryson (left), Darshan Schmitz and Jane Kuramoto take a break from school to hike Mt. Pisgah, an activity organized by the University's Outdoor Program, which has been a part of the University since 1966.

rugged, mean desert country. He estimates the cost will be about \$500 per person, including transportation, insurance, supplies, group dinners and a kayak.

Trips through the Outdoor Program are based on a first come-first served basis. They are available to students and community members. All students pay a \$6.00 incidental fee per year to help fund the program, and community members can join for a \$5.00 annual fee.

The program also offers an equipment lending library with lots of river rafting, camping and backpacking gear that members can rent cheap, for a per-day charge.

As we begin the trek back to the van from the top of Mount Pisgah, Schmitz notices the power lines that cut through the beauty of the environment around us.

"That's what happens when

you only drive 15 minutes away from the city," said Karin Bryson, a psychology major.

As we return to the Outdoor Program van, there's talk of papers that need to be written and upcoming tests. The hike today was only a temporary escape from the reality of homework.

"I think exercising and being in a clean environment clears your mind. I really like it," Schmitz said.

Local coalition files ballot initiative to raise Oregon minimum wage limit

■ **MONEY:** Proposed measure could boost pay limit from \$4.75 to \$6.50 by the year 1999

By Samantha Martin
Community Reporter

A local coalition filed a ballot initiative Nov. 6 that would raise the Oregon minimum wage to \$6.50 an hour by the year 1999.

The Minimum Wage Coalition and Oregonians to Maintain

Community Standards filed the measure. The proposed wage increase would occur in stages: \$5.50 an hour beginning Jan. 1, 1997, \$6 an hour Jan. 1, 1998, and \$6.50 on Jan. 1, 1999. Oregon's current minimum wage is \$4.75 an hour.

"Increases in the minimum wage in the past 30 years have failed to keep up with inflation," said Sam Dominy, president of the Lane County AFL-CIO. "The buying power of the minimum wage is now almost 20 percent less than in 1976."

Employers would have to shoulder the increase in wages. Dominy explained the reasoning for the staggered increase, rather than a straight jump to \$6.50.

"Going straight to the increase in minimum wage would be hard on employers," Dominy said. "We want a minimum wage that is comparable to 1968, the last time wages met the cost of living."

The Lane County AFL-CIO labor council and local unions such as the Oregon Public

Employees Union and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters support the initiative.

However, the Oregon Restaurant Association does not think raising the minimum wage would benefit the economy. Bob Barr, executive vice-president of the ORA, said the ORA has two major qualms about the raise.

"The increase will have an impact on the creation of the number of entry level positions," Barr said. "Entry level positions are important for

young people's chances to enter the work force." Barr cited statistics where he claims that only 18 percent of restaurant workers work for minimum wage, of which only 5 percent are older than 21.

"This increase will cause a ripple effect," Barr said. "This will ultimately result in higher prices for consumers."

Barr said the ORA will take measures to counteract the proposed measure by educating the community.

SKI FREE!



ULLR
Ski Shop

GO DUCKS

In the month of December
Buy a complete Ski Package,
(Skis, Boot, and Bindings) and we
will pay for your first lift ticket at
Willamette Pass.

Package prices starting at \$299.00
ULLR Ski Shop
7th & Chambers
683-1977

THE DEPARTMENT OF
SPECIAL EDUCATION AND
COMMUNITY RESOURCES
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Offers a master's degree,
certification program, and a
professional development sequence
in Secondary Education and Transition.

- Focuses on Supported Ed at the Secondary level, the transition process, and post school services for students with disabilities.
- Tuition and support is available.

Apply by 12/15/95 for Spring '96 admission.

For more information contact:

**SECONDARY EDUCATION
AND TRANSITION PROGRAM**

1235 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97405

Telephone (541) 346-2488 (Myrna Zitek)
TDD (541) 346-2466, Fax (541) 346-5517