

# Students visit senior center

The goal of the program was to introduce the students to a different part of the community

By Ben Romano  
Higher Education Reporter

The chapel at the Good Samaritan Long-Term Care Facility was quiet Saturday afternoon. Fourteen women sat in wheelchairs anticipating the arrival of their guests. They spoke about the dinner menu and the weather.

When nine University students walked into the room, the mood changed almost instantly. The faces on the women lit up with smiles and laughter filled the quiet chapel as the students introduced themselves.

The group of students visited the senior center as part of an international peer assistants' Mother's Day program.

The goal of the program was to introduce international students to a different group within the community. International students rarely get to interact with elderly people, said Sarah Pantalone, a senior linguistics major and an event coordinator. She said she hoped this would help eliminate some of the negative stereotypes that are commonly associated with the elderly.

Pantalone and four other international peer advisors who organized the event said they wanted it to be a positive experience for everyone involved.

International students who could not spend Mother's Day with their mothers for geographical reasons had an opportunity to interact with grandmothers and great-grandmothers.

After everyone was introduced, the students broke into smaller groups with the mothers. The room hummed with the quiet conversation of students and mothers exchanging recipes and stories from their many years of experience and diverse cultures.



NICK MEDLEY/Emerald

Betty Warner of Chicago and Howie Lee of Taiwan chat during a Mother's Day celebration at the Good Samaritan Long-term Care Facility Saturday afternoon.

The students played a selection of popular music from Hong Kong. This spurred a conversation about some of the places the mothers had visited.

"When I was in Hong Kong, I got up early every morning and went down to Victoria Park to watch them do Tai Chi," said Shirley Mayham, who said she had traveled extensively in Asia.

The students brought some personal items such as yearbooks and traditional kites to share with the mothers. The students showed a colorfully painted glass bead hanging from a ribbon. The traditional souvenir had Japanese writing on it that read: "To have fond memories."

The participants gained a great deal from the day's activities, said

Gabriela Macedo, activities assistant for the Good Samaritan facility.

The social activities and sensory stimulation is good for them, Macedo said.

"They like to have somebody who cares about what they did in the past," she said.

Kiness Johnson, a mother of five from Georgia, said she enjoyed having the students visit.

"We're very different," Johnson said. "I bet they learned more than we think."

The Mother's Day event was one of many activities planned by international peer advisors to help international students assimilate into the University and the surrounding community, said Magid Shirzadegan, an international student advisor with the Office of International Education and Exchange.

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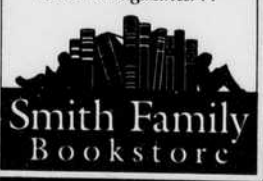


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## AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY

OSPIRG plays a central role in representing the public interest on issues such as the environment, consumer protection, student rights and democracy. We urge students to reconsider their decision and support efforts to re-establish an OSPIRG chapter on the UO campus.

Since students here formed OSPIRG in 1971, the organization has stood for a simple principle: that students are citizens. As citizens, we have both a right and a responsibility to take action on the problems that affect our community, our state and our world.

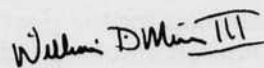
Through OSPIRG, thousands of UO students have done just that. These efforts have had real results: Oregon ranks among the top 10 states in the nation for recycling, thanks in part to OSPIRG's efforts to educate the public and policy-makers. Oregonians with asthma will breathe easier as a result of OSPIRG's efforts in support of new clean air safeguards. Banks and credit card companies have less freedom to take advantage of innocent consumers thanks to OSPIRG's work to blow the whistle on consumer scams and rip-offs.

Oregon is still facing some big problems. The Willamette and the Columbia are two of the most polluted rivers in the country. Students and other consumers are still victimized by unscrupulous practices such as ATM surcharges. Moneyed special interests wield unprecedented power in Salem and in Washington, D.C., diminishing the voice of average citizens and especially those of students.

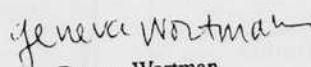
Water pollution, toxic waste, consumer rip-offs, and the corruption of our democracy are not confined to the UO campus, nor can they be solved by UO students alone. OSPIRG is unique in that it gives UO students the ability to work closely with students from other Oregon schools and with citizens from across the state in pursuit of solutions to these problems that affect us all.

OSPIRG is a vehicle for students to fight for the public interest as citizens. We urge you to support our efforts to re-establish OSPIRG on this campus.

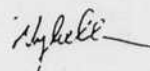
Sincerely,



William Miner  
President, ASUO



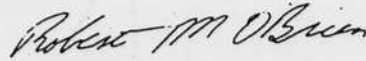
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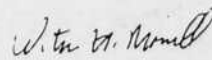
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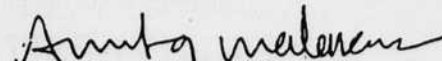
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