

Voters

Continued from Page 1

ed, and we, as students, need to send them a message."

The Oregon Student Association, a lobbying group for student interests, found that tuition at Oregon's public universities has increased 80 percent since 1990.

Oregon universities have lost Congressional support and funding. In 1990 higher education received 12 percent of the general fund, and now funding consists of 6.25 percent.

"It makes me angry," Swanson said. "But at one point it makes me get out there and make our voice heard."

Wortman said students don't even have to go to the polls but can sign up for an absentee ballot.

"I don't feel as though students are apathetic, just uninformed. They haven't made a connection with issues that are real to them."

Geneva Wortman
ASUO President

"They'll have a longer time to sit in their dorm room or classroom and look it over to make an educated decision," she said.

Swanson wants to engage more student activism at the University. The kind of energy the University has been known for in the past. The activist reputation

speaks for itself.

The University was ranked first in the nation in percentage of registered students in 1992 and 1994. In the last three presidential elections, Oregon has had the highest youth turnout in the nation.

"The majority of people have their heads in the clouds," said student Brandon Gouner, who registered to vote in front of Johnson Hall yesterday. "To make a difference in a capitalist society is to vote."

Wortman wants to debunk the myth that students don't care about politics.

"I don't feel as though students are apathetic, just uninformed," she said. "They haven't made a connection with issues that are real to them."

Student Issues

The ASUO wants students to register for the Nov. 3 election by the Oct. 13 deadline. Some important student issues that will be addressed in the next legislative session are:

ITEM 1: The Oregon Need Grant: The grant started in 1977 to help the neediest students go to college. It was used to pay for the students' tuition and an extra stipend for books. The grant hasn't kept up with the rising cost of tuition and today only covers about 11 percent of the total educational costs.

ITEM 2: The Child Care Block Grant:

Students want the governor and legislature to include state funding for a block grant in their budget. Currently the ASUO-subsidized child-care centers have 900 families on the waiting list. Since 1989 the state has not directly allocated any money to assisting student parents.

ITEM 3: Access to Quality campaign: A movement to lobby for higher faculty compensation. University salaries rank 39th in the nation. Some Oregon salaries are \$16,000 below the national average.

ITEM 4: Other concerns students have is a tuition freeze, more financial aid and continued control over the student controlled and allocated incidental fee.

Campaigns

Continued from Page 1

pus safety and lobbying for a tuition freeze and more faculty compensation.

"It is so important to actually get something done on the real level," ASUO President Geneva Wortman said. "There are some fights that just need to be fought."

Students may not be aware of the battles previous ASUO president won to improve higher education and student life.

"They take it for granted," said City Council Member Bobby Lee and 1992 ASUO President. "It's the student's job to take care of the legacy of previous leaders."

He said the loss of OSPIRG funding is an example of the lack of student understanding of previous ASUO leaders' goals.

Lee remembers the energy and inspiration of his term when the campaign goal was beating Oregon State University and University of Washington at voter registration.

Lee and the ASUO registered 9,000 students that year, the largest number of students registered anywhere in the nation. He brought in celebrities and politicians such as Jesse Jackson and Bill Clinton, to rally students to register.

He said a local state representative threatened to cut funding to the UO Law School, and the students voted the representative out of office.

During Lee's office, funding for the Multicultural Center was secured, KWVA got its FCC report and started running, and the direct loan system that allows students to get their financial aid and loans through the University at Oregon Hall was established.

"We wanted to inspire students that they can make a difference in the world," Lee said. "That inspirational element has been lost for a long time."

He says the ASUO should think big but keep in mind the larger picture.

Lee said all branches of the student government — the Student Senate, Constitutional Court, Programs Finance Committee and the Executive-worked together to achieve its goals.

"Don't get into politics too much," Lee said. "Internal bickering alienates you from the rest of the students and wastes student money."

Last year's ASUO President Bill Miner and Vice President Ben Unger fought to reauthorize the Higher Education Act,

change scheduling's add and drop deadlines, keep printing fees down and educate students about renter's rights, voter registration and the new conduct code changes.

"With campaigns you need to pick a cause that is deeply and widely felt," said Miner, who works as a Congressional aide for Elizabeth Furse. "The biggest thing is not necessarily to achieve the goal but to recruit people into the organization — to bring people into the ASUO and train them to be grassroots."

But Miner admits his office spread itself too thin when it only had one year to finish its agenda.

"It takes four months to figure out what way's up and what way's down," Miner said. "You really have to narrow your goals."

Unger thought his office needed to strike a clear balance between fighting for higher education or students.

"You need to fall on your sword for the students," Unger said. "Students sometimes get left off the list of people to stand up for. Everyone's a lot smarter about how to deal with students. They don't try and squash us anymore."

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