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Human rights seminar to be held

Human rights workers and activists will speak at the three-day event

By James Scripps
Oregon Daily Emerald

Human rights' workers from around the nation will be filling the law school this weekend to participate in a conference titled "A Generation of Justice: International Human Rights in the 21st Century."

The free three-day conference starts today in Grayson Hall at 11 a.m. The first panel will convene at 1 p.m.

The conference, sponsored by the International Law Students Association, will bring together human rights workers and activists to present panels and workshops on issues ranging from farm worker rights to the impact of multinational corporations on human rights.

"Human rights are everyone's rights, so everyone should be concerned about human rights abuses," said law student Cristina Gabrielidis, an event organizer. "It is important for us to realize that people are being persecuted just because of their ethnic origin."

Organizers hope to accommodate as many as a thousand attendees over the duration of the conference. Gabrielidis said they have received about 200 e-mails from people planning to attend. They are especially hopeful about the number of undergraduates that have expressed interest.

"This is a good opportunity for students to learn how they can par-

ticipate," Gabrielidis said. "There are things that can be done locally."

Among the many speakers featured at the conference, two keynote speakers stand out as leaders in international activism for human rights.

Michael Posner, member of the White House task force on sweatshop practices in the garment industry, and Paul Hoffman, chairman of the board of directors for Amnesty International, will be speaking Friday and Saturday, respectively.

One of the education panels, "Cultural Relativism in the Struggle for Human Rights," will feature Nancy Shurtz, a professor from the University School of Law. She will discuss her work with the human rights problems in Pakistan.

"What I will talk about is how Islamic law is oppressive to women," she said. "We realize that we cannot change Islamic religion, but Pakistani women need relief."

Shurtz also is involved with an organization called Pakistan Women and Children Centers, which is planning to open up facilities in Pakistan where women can go to receive education and escape from some of the persecution that is part of their daily lives.

When a woman in Pakistan is raped, there is little recourse for her if she cannot absolutely identify the rapist, Shurtz said.

"If the defendant is found innocent, the woman can be stoned to death for alleging rape," she said.

Another speaker on the panel, Laila Macharia, is a program officer for the Global Fund for Women.

Schedule of events

A Generation of Justice: International Human Rights in the 21st Century

Friday

11 a.m. — Registration starts in Grayson
1 p.m. — Panel: Asylum in the 21st Century: The New Immigration Laws in the U.S.
2:45 p.m. — Workshop: Taking Pro Bono Asylum Cases: Tools You Need
4:30 p.m. — Farm worker rights
6 p.m. — Keynote speaker: Michael Posner, Executive Director of the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights

Saturday

8 a.m. — Registration begins in Grayson
9 a.m. — Panel: Workers Rights as Human Rights: The Impact of Multi-National Corps.
10:45 a.m. — Panel: Cultural Relativism and the Struggle for Human Rights: Issues Women Face in the Context of Human Rights Protection

1 p.m. — Panel: The International Criminal Court and Individual Accountability for International Crimes

2:45 p.m. — Panel and workshop: Amnesty International on International Human Rights Violations in the United States & Using the Alien Tort Claim Act.

4:30 p.m. — Workshop: Amnesty International's Legal Support Network & Doing Human Rights Work Online

6 p.m. — Keynote speaker: Paul Hoffman, Amnesty International

Sunday

1 p.m. — Workshop: International Human Rights 101: High School Students in Action, 129 Grayson Hall

She will speak about female genital mutilation, an abuse that affects as many as half of African women.

"The conference is not just limited to law students," Gabrielidis said. "We would really like to see a lot of undergrads and professionals get involved."

Mascot

Continued from Page 1

mascot suit had to be ordered for him. But no matter how big he is, Craig said he is constantly lifting weights and running because the suit weighs about 40 pounds.

"I didn't realize how in-shape you needed to be," he said. "You need to be able to walk up and down stairs and pump up the crowd."

A mascot's first responsibility is to show spirit and get fans involved, Craig said. The second responsibility is to entertain the children.

"You have a major responsibility with the kids. You have to be really gentle, especially when they're nervous," he said.

Craig said his favorite thing about being a mascot is working with kids.

"Children are incredible," he said. "It's great to be able to interact with them."

But to be able to deal with both children and University students, a mascot must have the ability to adjust to the variety of fans, Craig said.

"My biggest responsibility is to keep the spirit going."

Even though being the mascot is a busy lifestyle, Craig said, Raish is good about working with the Duck mascots' schedules. The mascots are treated just like the teams or cheerleaders and can be excused from classes if they need to cover an event during school.

As far as his favorite sport, Craig said it is hard to single one out.

"We do everything from football to wrestling to track," he said. "Football is awesome, but basketball has more energy."

He has worked at a number of men's basketball games but said the energy for women's basketball is greater.

"I think it has more to do with whether or not the team is winning," he said.

During the games, Craig said, the mascots are permitted to take as many breaks as needed because the Duck suit is stifling.

In fact, one of his most embarrassing moments was getting heat stroke during the 1998 Aloha Bowl in Hawaii and throwing up inside the suit.

Craig said he usually wears shorts and a T-shirt under the suit — but reports one of the Duck mascots wears even less!

As the only Duck mascot who does stunts, Craig attends the cheerleading practices to prepare.

"It's not a mandatory practice, but if you want to be good, you have to go," he said.

On a violent note, Craig said that when he goes to away games, there is an unwritten rule that neither mascot will deface the other. But this rule was broken at the last Civil War football game.

"I had my back turned to the Beaver, and he came running after me and he tackled me from behind," he said. "Of course, then you have to get up and retaliate for the fans."

Craig said that perhaps his least favorite aspect of playing the Duck is when the opposing team's fans are unsportsmanlike. At this season's football game vs. UCLA, Craig had to be escorted into the locker rooms before halftime because the fans were throwing

things at him.

"It's amazing how heartless people can be, but that's part of it," he said.

But no matter how much he is attacked, Craig said, it is important not to talk. That's part of the audition, he said. Ducks have to be animated without talking.

Craig said he has never felt the urge to talk, except when absolutely necessary to speak to a security guard or a coach.

Outside the athletics scene, the Duck is often booked for appearances in the community. Craig said going to schools and other children's activities is a bonus because it gives him a chance to interact with children.

Above all, Raish said, the children love the Duck more than any other fans. She tries to make the mascots available to the children, especially at basketball games when the Duck can go out and interact with the kids in the hallways.

Although she also coaches the cheerleaders, Raish said, the mascot and cheerleading team are separate but together.

The two groups don't usually practice together unless they want to do stunts, but they always travel together.

"When the cheerleaders travel, the Duck travels," she said.

"There are numerous on- and off-campus events. The Ducks must be very committed."

Some call him Puddles. To others, he's just Ducky.

But no matter what you call him, he is — and always will be — the Oregon Duck.

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Oregon Daily Emerald

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