

Spring Pow Wow to honor Native American graduates

The celebration will feature dancing and drumming groups

By Victor Runyan
Oregon Daily Emerald

Drums will resonate through McArthur Court, and dancers will exhibit their skills this weekend.

The Native American Student Union is having its 31st annual Spring Pow Wow during Mother's Day weekend on Saturday and Sunday. The pow wow is held to honor the year's Native American University graduates and all mothers, said Tana Atchley, NASU co-director and member of the Ya-hooskin and Modoc tribes.

It will feature 10 drumming groups, several dance competitions, many non-competitive dances and vendors selling various crafts in the hallway around the court. The event is free and open to the public.

The pow wow begins with the formal procession of the event participants. This Grand Entry will be

at 1 p.m. on Saturday and again at 7 p.m.; on Sunday it will start at 1 p.m.

Graduates and mothers will be honored on Sunday. The graduates will be given Pendleton Blankets. It is traditional to give gifts to people who are being honored, and a blanket is a gift showing special honor, Atchley said.

The event will include up to 47 graduates this year, which is one of the largest numbers to attend the annual event, said Academic Advisor James Florendo of the Office of Multicultural Affairs and member of the Wasco tribe.

NASU and its events are an opportunity for social support within the Native American community on campus. It can be lonely for Native Americans who are away from their home because they are only 3/4 of one percent of the United States population, Florendo said.

"(It is) recognizing the graduates in a native way instead of in a non-native way," said NASU Treasurer David Lewis, a graduate student in anthropology and member of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. He said people from many different tribes will participate in the event.

"It's basically an international event," he said.

For those wanting to go to the pow wow, there is an etiquette to be followed. Visitors should sit in the bleachers; the benches are re-

served for dancers in the event. Visitors also shouldn't sit in the seats directly behind a bench being used by dancers because that is where their families normally sit. Ask permission of dancers before taking pictures of them. Stand and remove hats during all honors and other special songs, which are announced by the master of ceremonies.

It is appropriate to donate money to the drumming groups during "Blanket Dances." Donations for this event will be split up among the various drumming groups who have traveled from all over the country to perform here, Atchley said. She said visitors

will be invited and encouraged to come on the floor specifically for inter-tribal or social dances. She also noted that visitors are free to come and go and are encouraged to have a good time.

The pow wow costs almost \$11,000 to be held, and most of that comes from NASU's budget, Atchley said. Other funds come from Native American and University organization donations and through fundraising. Part of that fundraising will happen at the event including a raffle of various items including a Pendleton Blanket, gift certificates, hand-made jewelry and other items. NASU will also sell fry bread instead of the standard concessions.

For more information contact NASU at 346-3723.

"It's basically an international event."

David Lewis
NASU Treasurer



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Oregon Daily Emerald

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