

Education conference aims to increase diversity on campus

The event will address affirmative action and other minority issues

By Victor Runyan
Oregon Daily Emerald

Noted controversial speaker and writer bell hooks will speak tonight as part of the Education 2000 Conference, intended to examine diversity at the University.

The Multicultural Center is spearheading several student groups helping to organize the conference, which starts today and ends Saturday evening.

The conference begins with a rally in the EMU Amphitheater from 11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The conference features two keynote speakers and workshops on a wide range of topics aimed at increasing diversity on campus. The event is free and attendees can register on-site.

The conference's first keynote speaker is hooks — who uses all lowercase letters in her name to draw attention away from the author and to the content of her works — who will speak in the EMU Ballroom tonight at 7 p.m. She is a nationally recognized speaker and writer on subjects including race, gender and academia.

She is "one of those amazing speakers that is able to reach a diverse group of people," said Jessica Billingslea, fund-raising organ-

nizer for the conference. Billingslea said hooks is a noted critic of academia, which hooks feels excludes many walks of life from its dialogues.

The last event of the conference will be the keynote address by Tim Wise at 7 p.m. Saturday in the Willamette Atrium. Wise is a social critic and has been an antiracism activist since he was 14. He has defended affirmative action and been involved in issues relating to the poor and persons of color.

Wise is what Billingslea calls an "ally for people of color." She said he is an example of a member of the majority who feels that minority issues are important to everybody.

Both keynote speakers will speak on aspects of diversity at universities, including the need to increase the number of minority viewpoints presented on college campuses.

The conference centers around four sessions of four workshops, two on each day Friday and Saturday. The workshops are organized according to themes, said Javier Hernandez, education organizer for the conference. Issues include affirmative action, crosscultural education and building diversity in the community as a whole. An ad hoc collection of workshops the conference organizers felt were important but could not fill

an entire session will also be held.

Most of the workshops will take the form panel discussions, but some will involve direct participation by the audience. Faculty and staff members from the University will compose the panels. Some panels will also feature faculty from other universities and members of community organizations. The affirmative action panel Saturday morning will include keynote speaker Tim Wise, Hernandez said.

Breakfast and lunch speakers will appear on Saturday. Breakfast speakers include former ASUO Vice President Glen Banfield and ASUO President-elect Wylie Chen. Chen will speak about increasing involvement of people of color to increase diversity at the University.

"I think it's an amazing conference and well needed," Chen said. Johnny Lake, a student activist at Oregon State University, will speak at a brown bag lunch.

The conference is "a call to action for the administration," said Sylvia Gil, publicity coordinator for the conference. She said she hopes members of the administration will attend. She also hopes people with differing opinions will attend the conference and stimulate a reasoned debate about the issues.

The conference, which will cost

Education 2000

WHO: University student groups
WHAT: Education 2000 Conference
WHEN: 11:45 p.m. Thursday to Saturday evening
WHERE: EMU Amphitheater, EMU Ballroom, Willamette Atrium
Calendar of events:
Today:
Kick-off rally, 11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m., EMU Amphitheater
Opening keynote speaker: bell hooks, 7 p.m.
Friday, May 14:
Workshops in various locations around the EMU and Gerlinger hall.
Session I: 11 a.m. to 12:20 p.m.
Session II: 2 to 3:30 p.m.
Saturday, May 15:
Breakfast speakers: 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Workshop Session III: 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Brown bag lunch with speaker: 1 to 2 p.m.
Workshop Session IV: 2:30 to 4 p.m.
Closing keynote speaker: Tim Wise, 7 p.m., Willamette Atrium
For a complete schedule, contact the Multicultural Center at 346-4207 or visit the conference's welcome table in the EMU lobby.

\$14,000, is funded by donations from a number of groups on and off campus in addition to fund-raising, Hernandez said.

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'Momentum' debuts this week



Tracy Vacura and Caitlin McKenney will dance in the UO Dancers presentation of 'Momentum' on May 13-15.

Catharine Kendall/Emerald

The dance event will showcase the work of student choreographers

By Serena Markstrom
for the Emerald

It's 1945. World War II just ended and Americans are ready to party. Swing dancing is hot and so is The Red Door nightclub. That is what senior choreographer Emily Russell told her dancers to get them into character.

"The Red Door" is a swing number with 20 dancers and will debut today at the department of dance's annual spring student dance concert, called "Momentum."

For one of the 11 choreographers, momentum has been building for a year. Dance major Cari Cunningham has been working on her piece "The Body She Inhabits" since last spring when she pitched it for her Honor's College thesis.

Cunningham's senior project and thesis was inspired by author Toni Morrison. Morrison's prose — dealing with identity and absences — will be quoted throughout the piece

with voice-over narration.

Other seniors took a less dramatic approach.

"Last year I did a really heavy piece," said Sara Jarrett, a dance major. "I wanted this year's to be different and fun."

Jarrett choreographed her new piece "Casio's Colors," to music composed by her friend on a toy Casio PT 80 keyboard.

"He is really excited to have an audience hear his music," Jarrett said.

Though the tone of the piece is whimsical, it was a challenge for Jarrett to create it from the music. Normally she choreographs the movements first and adds music later.

The six dancers represent pinballs, each with distinctive personalities. Some will dance as mellow pinballs, while some will dance as hyperactive pinballs.

"We are a community of pinballs, all trying to win," said dance major Aimee McNally, one of the dancers.

In contrast to Jarrett's high-energy, colorful dance, dance major Pei-Yi Cheng's piece "Descendent"

portrays a common story of Chinese girls. Cheng is an international student from Taoyuan, Taiwan.

She said she started out translating a Chinese story into English, but it eventually became her own story about the inequality between boys and girls in Chinese culture.

"A son is a gift from heaven," the narration for the piece said. "A daughter is a curse."

Cheng said that is still a common belief in China. Her dancers wear brown V-neck tunics with dark brown sashes, much like a Chinese peasant.

"I wanted to see how American dancers would interpret my movements," Cheng said.

The show is entirely student produced, with the choreography created by upperclassmen and graduate students.

"Momentum" runs Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m. in Gerlinger Annex's Dougherty Dance Theatre. Tickets are \$3 and available at 7 p.m. Show organizers said seating will be limited because of renovations. For more information call 346-3386.