

Coalition wants to highlight environmental injustice

■ Students voice concerns about the placement of environmental hazards

By Simone Ripke
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Coalition Against Environmental Racism is giving students the opportunity to fight the uneven distribution of environmental hazards and burdens on minority, low-income and under-represented groups in society.

CAER unites students from the Multicultural Center, ethnic student unions and other campus organizations in an effort to have a collective voice against unfairness in the placement of environmental hazards.

"This movement involves every organization on campus," said Joy Dilday, a senior majoring in environmental studies and general science who is one of the three co-coordinators for the coalition.

Dilday said she and the other co-coordinators for the coalition attend meetings of various student unions regularly to spread awareness of common issues that can

only be resolved with joint efforts. The goal of the coalition is to raise awareness at the University and in the community about links between environmental issues and social inequalities.

Dilday and co-coordinator Matthew Peckham, a junior majoring in environmental studies, are two of 21 University students who had the chance to learn more about environmental justice issues at the EConference 2000 last weekend in Philadelphia, Pa.

"The energy was absolutely incredible," Peckham said.

The two coordinators came back to Eugene with numerous ideas for their own annual conference on campus, which is scheduled for Jan. 21 and 22, 2000.

The coordinators said the conference in January is one of the main reasons for the coalition's existence. It will provide a vehicle for students to speak up, get educated and make themselves heard.

Co-coordinator Sarah Harpole, an environmental studies major, said she hopes to bring some insight about issues of environmental injustice and racism to this cam-

pus and the community.

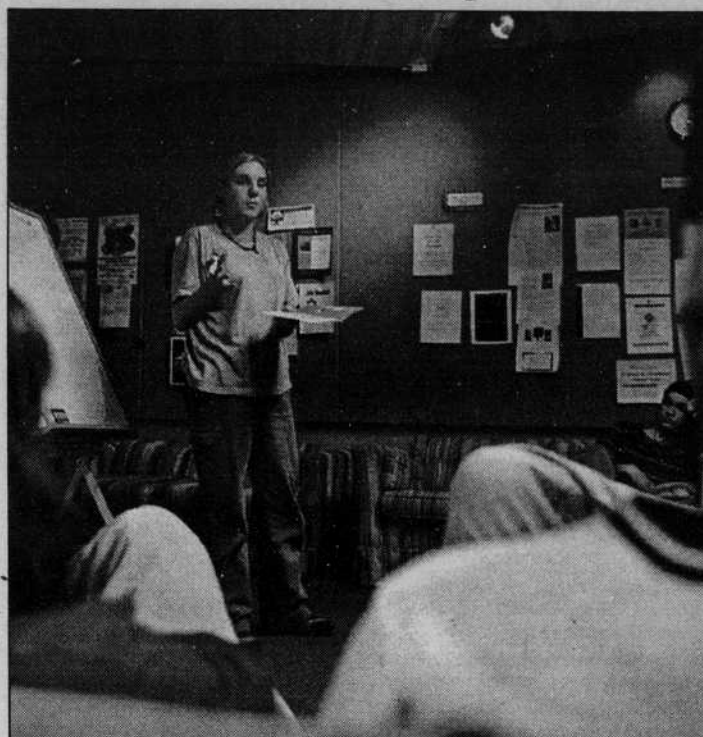
Harpole said that nationwide 75 percent of hazardous waste is disposed of in predominantly African American neighborhoods.

Bringing different groups together to help solve these problems is imperative to Harpole and the other coordinators for the coalition.

"We are all facing the same battles in a lot of ways," said co-coordinator Peckham. For Peckham, coalition-building is a major aspect of the movement.

Last Monday, the main topic of the coalition's weekly meeting, which is open to the public and takes place in the Multicultural Center, was brainstorming for ideas ranging from how to accommodate visitors and deciding which speakers to invite to the conference.

The coordinators said their ideas for the conference are in a rudimentary stage at this point but will develop and clarify during the next few weeks. They hope to attract more permanent, self-motivated members who are willing to pursue their ideas and make them a reality.



General science and environmental studies major Joy Dilday discusses plans for a CAER-sponsored environmental conference to be held January 21 and 22 at the University.

Dr. Hughes

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any person that has a lump growing some place should," Hughes said, went to the doctor and had it checked out.

"I knew as I walked in the office that it was cancer," he said. "I'll never forget the look on the face of the doctor."

The causes for male breast cancer are unknown. It is thought that genes and certain DNA changes could be a reason, but this is only a theory. Heavy alcohol use, obesity, irregular exercise, estrogen

treatment and environmental exposure to pesticides are also considered risk factors, according to the American Cancer Society.

Men should look for any unusual "swelling, skin dimpling or puckering" of the breast as possible signs of the cancer. If these are evident, they should consult their doctors to see if a mammography, or X-ray of the breast, is necessary. Men, as well as women, should also explore their family history for relatives who had breast cancer. Men are about 20 percent more likely to have the cancer if male or female relatives had the disease.

Hughes thought he was one of the lucky ones that conquered the cancer after undergoing surgery.

Unfortunately, Hughes started having back pains in 1996. He then returned to the doctor to find that the cancer had spread to his spinal cord and his lungs. Cancer is "ranged" from 0 to 4 on a scale of severity; Hughes' cancer is a 4.

Now, the Princeton University grad lives in a dichotomous world of receiving medical care and administering it. Every Monday he receives his chemotherapy, coupled with a shot of Cortisone to enable him to work at the health center on

Tuesdays. He said the nausea, a side effect of the chemotherapy, does not affect him much at work on Tuesdays because of the Cortisone, but by Wednesdays, his already weak frame is feeling the strain of the radiation and the chemicals.

"But by the weekend, I am ready to go again," he said.

When he's strong enough, Hughes enjoys playing golf as much as he can, but his real love is traveling.

"My wife is a travel freak," he said.

The cancer, however, has weakened his body and cramped some of his traveling.

"I was in New Zealand and my back was hurting so much that I had to lay reclined in the car as my wife drove around," he said.

Hughes said he looks ahead to traveling in the spring, but he does not plan much more in advance than that.

"Every once and a while, when we start talking about doing something next year, you think, 'I hope I will be doing this next year.'"

For now, Hughes is enjoying spending time with his wife and working at the health center.

"Not everyone enjoys working with students, but I do.

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