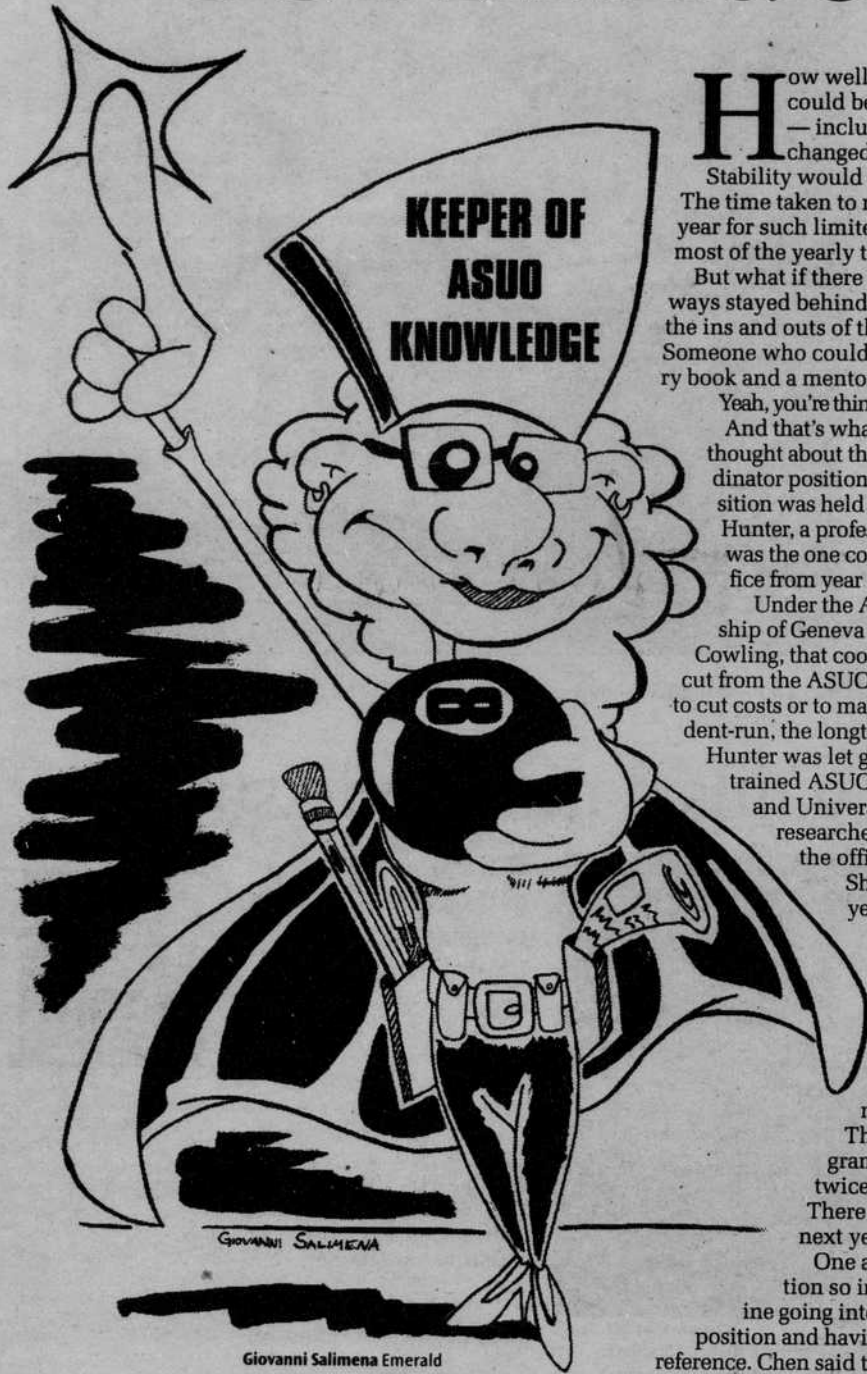


ASUO SUPERVISION not so SUPERFLUOUS



Giovanni Salimena Emerald

How well do you think a business could be run if most of the staff — including the leadership — changed from year to year?

Stability would be lost. Efficiency, too. The time taken to retrain people every year for such limited roles would eat up most of the yearly tenure anyway.

But what if there was someone who always stayed behind? Someone who knew the ins and outs of the entire organization. Someone who could be a reference, a history book and a mentor?

Yeah, you're thinking, that would be great.

And that's what student government thought about the ASUO Executive coordinator position until a year ago. The position was held by a non-student, Cheryl Hunter, a professional coordinator who was the one constant in the ASUO office from year to year.

Under the ASUO Executive leadership of Geneva Wortman and Morgan Cowling, that coordinator position was cut from the ASUO budget. Whether it was to cut costs or to make the ASUO more student-run, the longtime ASUO constant Hunter was let go. She had advised and trained ASUO staff, linked the ASUO and University administration and researched and helped organize the office since 1989.

She was let go after 10 years with the ASUO.

And things haven't been easy ever since. ASUO President Wylie Chen and Vice President Mitra Anoushiravani have tried to get the coordinator position back.

They appealed to the Programs Finance Committee twice, but the efforts failed. There will be no coordinator next year.

One asks why is this position so important? Well, imagine going into the ASUO Executive position and having no guide or frame of reference. Chen said the position would have

added some consistency to the ASUO Executive by having a person who knew the history of the office as well as being familiar with legal issues, Oregon Administrative Rules and the Green Tape Notebook.

"It's for the betterment for the entire ASUO. There are a lot of things that come across our desk, and we've been bombarded with administrative work," he said. "We've been stuck at our desks, just taking care of red tape, bureaucracy."

He said he feels bad for the upcoming exec because they too will have to be buried in paperwork, and the ASUO will have no institutional memory.

It's true that when one door closes, another always opens. The elimination of the coordinator from the ASUO has left the executive with much more work.

Money may have been the motivating factor behind the cut, but at \$18,500 a year, the coordinator costs students about 42¢ per term. That's 42¢ we'll gladly pay to make the ASUO run more smoothly.

And it's money that is being spent now and in the future for similar positions. The big uproar this year in the Programs Finance Committee budget hearings was that the Multicultural Center received a \$38,743 budget increase to finance a new MCC coordinator position, the very thing the ASUO has begged for with perhaps more of a need. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Alliance also has a non-student, paid coordinator. She is the one people go to when they need information; she is stability. And the MCC obviously wants that same thing. What student has the time to run the MCC and still take care of his or her life?

While the ASUO Executive still runs the ASUO, there's no doubt that having a coordinator around — who is not a student and, therefore, doesn't have the same pressures, biases and time commitments — is invaluable. And yet the PFC chose not to fund it.

Impassioned speeches from both Chen and Anoushiravani coupled with the sadness last year as Hunter was ousted from a picture in our minds of someone who is very much needed. And that need was recognized a year ago when the position was cut.

"The position that Cheryl holds is more than just a position; it's a person," former ASUO Multicultural Advocate Joseph Roley said in the March 31, 1999 Emerald. "It's one of those things where you don't know the value of it until it is gone."

Upon the decision by the PFC to fund the MCC's new coordinator position, Coordinating Diversity Intern Jay Breslow said the position was "a historic thing. It's going to change the entire way [the MCC] is run."

Until they get rid of it.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.

QUOTED

"It's a thrill because the movie was made for love. We did it because we thought it could be very special... It's absolutely a thrill to be a part of something that has meant so much to so many people. We're all just thrilled that people like it."
— Annette Bening, star of the film "American Beauty," on the film's eight Academy Awards nominations, announced Tuesday. CNN.com, Feb. 15.

"There is an investigative lead in the district of Oregon. I do have information, but I can't impart it."
— Michael

Brown, chief of the criminal division of the U.S. attorney office in Portland, confirming that some computers in Portland may be linked to the major hacking crimes of last week, which downed such Web sites as eBay, Yahoo and Amazon. The Oregonian, Feb. 15.

"I had some noisy neighbors, but there's nothing like a 6-foot-thick chunk of ice bashing against the wall of your room to wake you up at 4 in the morning."

— Oregon 4th District Rep. Peter DeFazio on his recent trip to Antarctica (official business for the U.S. Congress). The Register-Guard, Feb. 15.

Letters to the editor

Book swap participation encouraged

In most situations, a consumer must "hunt" for the bargains — not so with the non-profit ASUO Book Swap. The book swap gives students the opportunity to set their own prices for their books and the ability to sell older editions that the University Bookstore will not accept. This bargain is not one you have to scrounge for; the ASUO Book Swap will be conveniently located in the EMU during finals week of winter term and the first week of spring term.

Book swaps have the potential to be highly successful, but only if students participate. The more students we have stop by, the more books we have, the more money you can save. I encourage students to

participate in the ASUO Book Swap — it will be worth your time and money.

Christa Shively
undergraduate, Spanish

Grievances take away our choices

The atmosphere surrounding this year's ASUO elections is a textbook example of misplaced priorities. As with every year, the candidates appear at various events describing the issues that they have chosen as a platform. As with every year, many colorful posters, fliers and handouts in many forms appear around campus promoting their respective candidates. And, as with every year, every little misstep that a candidate may make is followed by endless shouts of "Bloody Murder!"

The uproar regarding the "C.J.-Peter" ticket is a prime indicator of where the priorities rest for certain groups on this cam-

pus. For example: Nearly all sets of candidates for various offices (ASUO Executive, Student Senate, etc.) have experience in serving the student body, so why invest so much energy into removing candidates and taking the choice away from the students themselves? It detracts greatly from the integrity of the student government on this campus when qualified candidates are burned at the stake on technicalities.

Where are the priorities? Do we want an effective ASUO? Or do we want headlines and scandals? Do we want the freedom to choose our own candidates? Or do we want to attack the other side simply because they're "the other side."

Drop the grievances; don't insult the students' ability to make their own choices.

Devon Streed
political science

Austin ignorant with diversity comment

I can see what Scott Austin was trying to say about the University not being diverse (ODE, Feb. 14), but his reference to the University being "about as diverse as the state of Mississippi" shows his regional ignorance clearly. According to 1990 census data, Mississippi is about 64 percent Caucasian and 35 percent African and African-American — a far cry from the University's dismal 1.5 percent of African-Americans it boasted fall term.

I applaud his call for more diversity, but perhaps he will check his facts next time before he blurts out tired Hollywood stereotypes.

Jason George
sophomore, journalism