

Foster children to profit from Ani DiFranco show

■ The singer will perform in Corvallis to benefit In Harmony, which works to find permanent homes for children in foster care

By Joe Walsh
Oregon Daily Emerald

Soft-spoken and warm-hearted, University graduate student Brook MacNamara leads only by example.

She has sunk her time, energy and life savings into In Harmony, an organization that helps foster kids. Hers is an infectious dedication that, without much prodding, has lured countless individuals into helping the cause.

And now, MacNamara has managed to get Grammy-nominated folk singer, songwriter and guitarist Ani DiFranco to perform at a benefit concert in Corvallis this weekend, to benefit In Harmony.

MacNamara is the executive director of In Harmony, an organization that is creating an inter-generational family

neighborhood that moves children who are lingering in foster care into permanent homes. There, they will be prepared for adoption by professionally trained parents. The neighborhood also includes senior citizens who add extended support to the children. MacNamara, who received her bachelor's degree in elementary education in 1980 from the Oregon College of Education — now Western Oregon University — conceived In Harmony years ago while teaching. It was then when she recognized the need for such a program, as she saw how children who remain in foster care homes become vulnerable to many challenges, including mental illness and criminal behavior.

"We only get one childhood," said MacNamara, who is currently completing her doctorate at

the University's College of Education, "and many of these children waiting for adoptive homes have lost their childhood before they even began."

In 1993, her concept came to fruition with the founding of In Harmony. Since then, MacNamara and her vision have moved hundreds of people.

Bud Fredericks, who now sits on In Harmony's board of directors, was one of these people.

"The fact that she has sunk her own personal money into this program ... that's a real testament to her dedication," he said.

Greg Brown, another Grammy-nominated folk artist, was equally impressed by MacNamara's work. Brown happened upon In Harmony when a mutual friend of MacNamara and Brown presented the idea of a benefit concert, and both agreed.

"I was very taken by it," Brown said. "It really touched my heart."

As Brown became more aware of the program, he became more dedicated to it. He was impressed by the community approach of the program, its practicality and MacNamara, who he said he believes is "in it for all the right reasons." Since Brown got involved with In Harmony, he has performed in five benefit concerts, recorded the benefit album "Solid Heart" and pledged to raise \$100,000. His next benefit concert will be with DiFranco, whom he asked to help with the cause last summer.

DiFranco is currently touring the West Coast, promoting her latest album, "To The Teeth." Sunday's benefit concert in Corvallis will be her only Oregon appearance. Both DiFranco and Brown are giving all of their artist's fees from the concert to In Harmony as they try to raise the \$800,000 that the organization needs to begin building the In Harmony neighborhood.

Sunday's concert is just one of many small steps in the right direction.

"How wonderful to have two Grammy-nominated folk artists come together for these children who have no one," MacNamara said. "I think it's really touching."

MacNamara does not know how much the concert will raise, but she said she will be satisfied no matter what the outcome.

"Really the goal of this concert isn't the money," she said. "It's really about getting the word out, and it's a wonderful way to do it."

Benefit concert intended to 'WOW' young audience

■ The WOW Hall will sponsor a charity event for the Children's Miracle Network, featuring Big Hottie, Courtesy Clerks and more

By Joe Walsh
Oregon Daily Emerald

Friday night, three local bands will entertain some of the rowdiest rock and punk fans in town, but it will be the infants and children of Eugene who will get the most out of the show.

Big Hottie, Courtesy Clerks and Gabriel Blue play Friday night at the WOW Hall in a benefit for the Children's Miracle Network at Sacred Heart Hospital.

The proceeds from the concert will help offset the costs of a variety of needs from neo-natal intensive care units to emergency housing for people who have newborns that end up in incubators.

"The performers decided they wanted to do a benefit and donate their share," WOW Hall spokesman Bob Fennessy said, "and they are donating their entire share, so they're basically playing for free in the hopes of raising some money for the kids."

When the WOW Hall puts on a show, it takes 30 percent of the net revenue, and the remaining 70 percent goes to the performer.

Tickets are \$5, so assuming tomorrow night's show draws a couple hundred people, the benefit should raise several hundred dollars, Fennessy said.

"We're a community center, and our job is to do good things for the community," he said. "And when young people like this want to do something good for the community, it's our job to encourage them."

Fennessy added that the show presents an opportunity for the band to show what kind of a draw they have, while at the same time, doing a good deed.

Big Hottie, tomorrow's headlining act, formed about three years ago, when the band's four members met at Elmira High School, about 15 miles west of Eugene.

That's where keyboardist and vocalist Farmer Greif first got involved with the Children's Mir-

acle Network through the Kids Helping Kids program.

"This is my way of contributing," Greif said. "It's also a good excuse to get into the WOW Hall."

Big Hottie, which describes itself as "the red-headed stepchild of funk," plays original hard funk with influences that include James Brown, Red Hot Chili Peppers and Primus.

In Greif's words, "If Dave Brubeck and Dave Matthews were having a picnic and the Chili Peppers came and started a food fight, that's what we would sound like."

Eugene's Courtesy Clerks, a trio of hard-rocking University students, is no stranger to benefit concerts. The band has been involved in several, including benefits for the Dineh Indians and Oregon Farm Workers.

So when Greif asked them to do the benefit, they willfully agreed.

The Courtesy Clerks play a form of punk that sophomore music major and bassist Mike B. describes as "hypersmactive."

"We're just a rock 'n' roll-influenced band," he said.

Gabriel Blue, Friday night's opening act, also formed in Eugene.

The four singer/songwriters formed the band two years ago while attending the University. They, too, have played several benefit concerts before, including a Native American rights benefit and a Gardenburger boycott concert.

Their music is best described as rock 'n' roll with a twist of guitar experimentation, senior music major and drummer Brian Gardiner said.

"Take Built to Spill and Pavement and mix that with a lot of ambient guitar noise, and that would be Gabriel Blue," Gardiner said.

Tickets for Friday night's all-ages show are \$5 at the door.

Doors open at 9 p.m., and showtime is at 9:30 p.m.

For more information, call the WOW Hall at 687-2746.

WOW Hall

Who: Big Hottie, Courtesy Clerks and Gabriel Blue

What: Benefit concert for Children's Miracle Network

When: Friday, April 7 at 9:30 p.m.

Where: WOW Hall, located at 291 W. 8th St.

Tickets: \$5 at the door, all-ages show

For more information call the WOW Hall at 687-2746



Ani DiFranco

Who: Ani DiFranco with Greg Brown

What: Benefit concert for foster care program In Harmony

When: Sunday, April 9, 7 p.m.

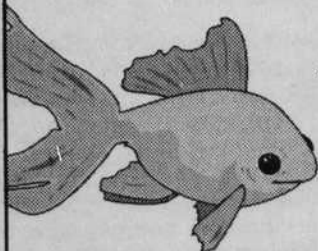
Where: Gill Coliseum in Corvallis

Tickets: \$25 in advance, \$27 at door; available at the EMU, CD World and Ticketmaster outlets

For more information call In Harmony at (541) 753-3960 or visit www.inharmony.org

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