

# Support service director hired

■ The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Alliance forms an instant bond with the Florida State grad

By Jack Clifford  
Oregon Daily Emerald

The South may not immediately conjure up visions of tolerance, but that's exactly where the University found a new leader to guide its work on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues.

A search committee has hired Chicora Martin to take over the position of director for LGBT Education and Support Services, replacing Brooke Lather, the group's interim director. Martin's resumé includes a stint at Florida State University in Tallahassee as advisor and group facilitator for the LGBT Student Union.

She also received her master's of higher education from FSU and has work experience with the Dean of Students office at Georgia Institute of Technology, in addition to involvement with

Bisexuals, Gay, Lesbian and Allies for Diversity at East Carolina University.

"She's very passionate about this work [and] she's very clear that this is the work that she's about, that she wants to be doing," co-chair of the search committee Annie Bentz said. "She's got a ton of energy. Everybody who came in contact with her felt like they connected with her and that she would serve the University well in her role."

Martin could not be reached for comment. Her job, which starts Aug. 21, falls under the supervision of the Office of Student Life.

"We are just really excited with her being a part of [our] team," OSU Associate Director Cheryl Eyster said. "Her talents, experience and skills are really phe-

nominal."

Martin's other experience and background includes work with the Tallahassee Safe Zone Program, which is an outreach resource for students, faculty and staff at FSU. She also worked with the GLBT Resource Center at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

Most of the issues Martin will encounter at the University are universal to all campuses, but Bentz said the new director will also have to jump in right away on an Oregon cause — the Student Protection Act, a measure on November's ballot that would ban any discussion of homosexuality in the state's public schools.

"I think the biggest challenge in the immediate future [for Martin] is working with the community around the [Oregon Citizen's Alliance] measure and providing some leadership around that issue," Bentz said.

## Democrats

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to get there."

Delegates who have attended past conventions are also looking forward to meeting people and sharing their opinions.

"I expect to have a stimulating, exciting time meeting good Democrats and talking to people who agree with my beliefs and really care about our government," said Barbara Rose, a Lane County delegate and a 1996 convention attendee. "I know I will rub elbows with personal heroes. Last time I sat by Bella Abzug and I walked by Geraldine Ferraro."

Much of the delegates' excitement stems from how this year's convention will be set up, which is described as more of a working atmosphere.

"There will be panel discussions, with real experts, talking about real solutions to problems," Edmunson said. "I didn't like the pageantry of the Republican Convention. It seemed like it was more of a halftime show at the Super Bowl."

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Barbara Rose  
Lane County delegate

Other delegates agree that this year the Democratic Convention is geared toward focusing on what the party stands for.

"It's not going to be just famous people there speaking, but experts," said Mary Ann Holser, a third time convention attendee and Lane County delegate.

As well as differing from the Republican Convention in the way it is set up, many delegates also say that the Democratic attendees differ in terms of diversity.

"The Oregon delegation has a phenomenal range of backgrounds being represented," Edmunson said. "Asian-Americans, African-Americans and several Native Americans are represented. We are also gender-balanced and age-balanced; we have a 20-year-old going as well as a 90-year-old."

Edmunson says diversity is something he sees as lacking in the Republican Party.

"The Republican Party is mostly made up of white, rich guys."

The delegates also looked to the Republican gathering in Philadelphia to check on protester activity,

"I think the protesters [in Los Angeles] should be mellow than [in Philadelphia]," Williams said. "After all, we share most values with most of the protesters; we only disagree on how those values should be implemented."

Other delegates say that being from the Eugene area reduces many of the fears of being around protesters.

"I know delegates from other states are really worried about protesters," Edmunson said. "But being from Lane County we are blessed with familiarity with pro-

testers and anarchists. I don't feel threatened at all."

Rose agreed.

"I respect their right to be there and I hope they respect mine," she said.

Edmunson did admit that the Oregon delegates might object to at least one aspect of the Los Angeles party.

"I think the Oregon delegates will protest if there is a Lakers banner hanging in the Staples Center," Edmunson said, in a joking manner. "Because we all know the Blazers deserved to win."



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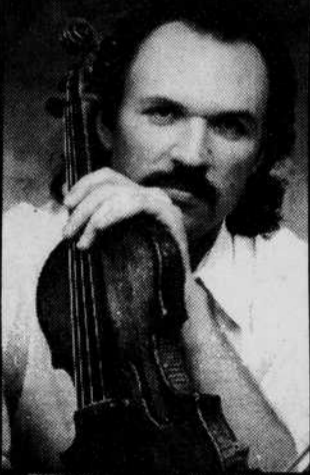

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