



Azle Malinao-Alvarez Emerald

Marshall Russell and Sherry Franzen participate in a mid-August meeting for the Independent Police Review Project, a new community watchdog group. The IPRP is planning for its second SpeakOut! to be held Oct. 22 on campus.

Citizen-run police review board wants to get students involved

■ The Independent Police Review Project, a sounding board for activists with complaints about police misconduct, will present findings to the Eugene City Council

By Kristina Johnson
Oregon Daily Emerald

Last April, Human Rights Alliance member Randy Newnham was arrested when he refused to leave Johnson Hall during protests over the Worker Rights Consortium issue. Newnham said the Eugene Police Department used a "pain compliance hold" — twisting his arms and strategically applying pressure to pressure points — to remove him from Johnson Hall.

“We want to have a better relationship with the ASUO and fraternities, groups that we’ve had adverse relations with in the past.”

Sgt. Rick Gilliam
Eugene police officer

According to Newnham, the police use this type of hold to quiet protesters.

“They make you very uncomfortable in an excruciating way,” he said. He said that while the police “were not especially rough” with him during the protests, another student, Nolan Brewer, still suffers from injuries allegedly sustained during his arrest at the same event.

“This [event] was internal business of the University,” Newnham said. “Here we are in our own building, and we’re told we don’t have a right to be there, and they call in the EPD — a group of people whose brutality has been decried by Amnesty International.”

In an effort to address growing complaints of police misconduct, Eugene activists Carol Berg and Trish Binder have established the Independent Police Review Project, which aims to educate the community about what constitutes police brutality and advocate for those who have specific complaints of misconduct by the EPD.

“We’re a community advocate and watchdog,” Berg said. “Our main role is to act as a conduit and present complaints to the City Council.”

The IPRP plans to focus on University students this fall. Its second SpeakOut! against police misconduct will be held on campus on Oct. 22, International Police Brutality Day. The first SpeakOut! occurred at the EWEB building in July and was attended by 73 peo-

ple, of which 27 came forward with complaints against the EPD, according to Berg.

“We hope that by the second SpeakOut! in October, we’ll have more student involvement,” Berg said.

Binder added that students are particularly vulnerable to police harassment, because “they don’t want their parents to know what’s going on, so they try to deal with it by themselves.”

Sgt. Rick Gilliam of the EPD pointed out that the majority of police interactions with students are related to alcohol, not activism. He said in general he thought relations between students and the EPD were improving.

“We’re making some headway,” he said. “We want to have a better relationship with the ASUO and fraternities, groups that we’ve had adverse relations with in the past. We try to make ourselves available. We’re reaching out, doing presentations.”

Part of that approach involves distinguishing acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

“Free speech is a good thing, but you know ... demonstrators should respect other people, too,” he said. “We see activist groups marching through the halls while classes are going on. Activists forget that the purpose of the University is to get an education.”

He said one major problem with student demonstrators is communication.

“A lot of times, activist groups don’t want to communicate what they’re doing,” he said. “When we’re on site, if they would be willing to communicate their intentions, it would give us a better indication of the number of staff necessary, of whether we could cut back.”

Since June 1997, when police clashed with activists at an urban tree sit-in downtown, the relationship between the EPD and activists has gone from strained to near-catastrophic. Evidence of this were the anarchist rallies of June 17 and 18, in which more than 100 police officers arrested roughly 60 protesters, drawing charges of excessive use of force.

Citizens with specific grievances have traditionally sought justice through the EPD’s Internal Affairs Department, while complaints about EPD’s crowd control policies were directed to the Police Commission. But Berg said that rather than evaluating police practices, the Police Commission has fo-

cused on promoting ballot measures that increase funding for the police department.

She said EPD’s Internal Affairs Department is ineffective because police are unlikely to uphold complaints against their colleagues. She pointed out that Internal Affairs meetings were closed to the public, unlike the IPRP meetings, which she said will be open.

Gilliam said if students think the EPD has treated them unfairly, they should file complaints with the Internal Affairs Department.

“We have a well documented complaint system,” he said. “There are forms they can fill out. If it rises to that level, there will be an investigation. And if they don’t trust the EPD, they can go to the Human Rights Commission, and they’ll follow up on the complaint.”

Eugene’s Human Rights Program provides trained advocates to help complainants through the Internal Affairs grievance process. Human Rights Program manager Greg Rikhoff said they try to make themselves available to all parts of the community, including students.

“We do a ton of outreach,” he said. “We table at events, we do dozens upon dozens of workshops, but people still have to find us when an incident occurs.”

Rikhoff said the Human Rights Program distributes its “Tell Us About It” brochure to organizations throughout the community in hopes that people will contact the Human Rights Program with complaints.

Newnham said student activists don’t consider the police an enemy.

“They’re a symptom of the problem,” he said. “They’re here not to protect us, but to protect the interests of a certain class of people who own Nike and use sweatshop labor — the same people who run this school.”

Sgt. Gilliam said there is no specific police policy for dealing with student demonstrators.

“The policy is the same, whether they’re students or not students,” he said. “It boils down to whether the University staff wants the EPD to come in. If they don’t want us, we don’t get involved. We won’t take action unless somebody from Johnson Hall wants action taken.”

In addition to its October event, the IPRP plans to create a guide to the existing channels for addressing police grievances. We’re going to put the pedal to the metal for groups that aren’t following through,” said Trish Binder. “We can let people know: This is what these groups say they do.”



942-8730



484-1927

GOLF 9 HOLES \$10

Students Only. Must show ID. (Monday - Friday)

**Emerald
Laundromat**

Always clean!

Newly remodded with new dryers.

All new front loader machines with 18-50 lb. capacity

Beginning Oct. 1st
fluff n' fold laundry service

Look for upcoming student specials throughout the year!
Hours: 7am-11pm daily



Located behind Hiron and Safeway 165 E. 17th
Deli on site.



**Black & white
and READ**

all over campus.

Oregon Daily Emerald

Suite 300 EMU • 346-5511
www.dailyemerald.com

If you advertise, they will come. Try it.
Advertise your event in the Oregon Daily Emerald. Call 346-3712