

Student Senate appoints new elections coordinator

■ The body also approves funds for student groups, including University Theatre

By Emily Gust
Oregon Daily Emerald



Student Senate

Unanimously and quickly, the ASUO Student Senate confirmed Shantell Rice as the next ASUO elections coordinator Wednesday night.

Rice, a journalism major, is a former student senator who also served as the ASUO Programs Finance Committee chairwoman last year.

"I have a lot of experience in the ASUO, so I know a lot about student government," Rice said. "And this is the job I want."

The elections coordinator position was left unfilled for some time last term, which is one of the duties freshman business major Jarrett White and junior sociology major Chris Fosnight accused ASUO President Jay Breslow of neglecting to complete.

But as of Wednesday, the upcoming elections are in new hands.

"She's a very diligent worker ... and a stickler for rules," Student Senate President Peter Watts said, adding that although Rice will be facing a "steep learning curve" taking the position now, he is sure she can do it.

In special requests, the senate granted \$7,500 out of the general surplus to the University Theatre for an upcoming conference.

Almost a dozen students attended the senate meeting to ask for the funds, which will help send several

of them to the American College Theatre Festival and Northwest Drama Conference in Anchorage, Alaska, later this year.

Nine out of 10 years, the conference is held in a nearby city, the group said. In those years, the cost to travel isn't too high.

But this year it will be. "Our fine arts programs are so under-funded here at the University," Watts said, voicing his support of the request.

Another large request was granted to Land, Air, Water Wednesday night: \$2,800 to fly a keynote speaker from Madagascar for its annual environmental conference.

LAW approached the senate last term and asked if it would consider giving the group \$7,000, the original estimate for a plane ticket. However, LAW members found an even better deal that would be held for them only for 48 hours.

Sen. C.J. Gabbe said that because of the importance of the conference, the request was something the senate should support.

"I don't think every organization has a conference that is the largest of its kind here at the University," he said.

Sen. Jennifer Greenough, however, spoke against the request, saying she felt uncomfortable with giving LAW money when a lot of its funds

Surplus allocation

Requests from surplus granted during first meeting of the term:

University Theatre: \$7,500

Land, Air, Water: \$2,800

Leaves in surplus for winter term: \$29,700

were being transferred to another group, the Friends of LAW.

Watts explained that the Friends of LAW help LAW put on the conference each year. The money transfers were simply LAW's paying the group back.

In other business, Breslow asked the senate to allow a transfer between the ASUO Executive's accounts to help pay for the increased costs of an officer of administration, a position that is now filled by one of the ASUO's current staff members.

The Executive needed to move \$13,523 from one Executive account and \$2,338 from another — for a total of \$15,861 — into an account that would pay for the staff member's additional responsibilities.

Other transfers included \$250 for the Asian Pacific American Student Union and \$10 for the Future Lawyer Association.

Mexico shuts army base, awaiting rebel response

By John Rice
The Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — President Vicente Fox's new government closed another army base in convulsed Chiapas state on Wednesday, vowing further steps to convince Zapatista rebels to resume peace talks.

"What is important is for the government to have proven in deeds and not in words its good faith ... its willingness to address the demands of the Zapatistas," Foreign Secretary Jorge Castaneda said in a telephone interview from New York.

Roughly 150 troops marched out of a rapidly dismantled army base in Cuzula, leaving behind a clearing and a pile of wood where barracks had stood for five years on the edge of a pro-Zapatista village.

Fox has moved rapidly to ease tensions with the Zapatista National Liberation Army since taking office on Dec. 1. The Zapatistas staged a brief rebellion in 1994 seeking expanded rights for Mexican Indians. The situation in the state has been tense since then.

Fox earlier closed two other bases, shut down 53 military checkpoints, eased limits on pro-rebel foreigners, freed nearly 20 Zapatista prisoners and presented a rebel-backed Indian rights measure to Congress.

He hopes to resume peace talks that broke down in late 1995 when the rebels accused the former government of breaking a promise to enact the Indian rights pact.

While the rebels have welcomed Fox's moves, rebel leader Subcomandante Marcos has demanded the closure of four other military bases and the release of more than 100 alleged political prisoners.

Castaneda's statement appeared to be the strongest government statement yet that it may not be able to meet the letter of the rebel demands, while arguing that it is complying with their spirit.

"I do not think that Marcos could be so naive or unskillful as to think that only total and full 100-percent compliance with each and every one of the demands he comes up with is really the issue," Castaneda said.

That seemed to conflict with the impression of Zapatistas who turned up to watch the army pull out of Cuzula on Wednesday.

A spokesman, wearing a rebel ski mask under a swoosh-embellished baseball cap, used a loudspeaker to repeat the rebel demands.

"When you comply with all we have asked, then we will be happy, and yes, we will sit down to talk, but before that, no," said the man, who would not give a name.

In a meeting with reporters at his official residence Tuesday, Fox suggested the time was nearing for the Zapatistas to respond, saying that they had rebelled under different circumstances against a different government.

"It is up to the other side to express its will to enter talks and resolve the matter," Fox said.

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Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. Box 3159, Eugene OR 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co. Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. A member of the Associated Press, the Emerald operates independently of the University with offices in Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union. The Emerald is private property. The unlawful removal or use of papers is prosecutable by law.

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