

Outreach

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tions to provide the support that students of color need.

According to a report released recently by the Oregon University System Office of Academic Affairs, there has been a nearly 11 percent increase in the number of people of color attending OUS institutions over the past two years, and the number of minority faculty members has increased by almost 5 percent.

The total number of minority students increased by 855, and Asian-Pacific Americans experienced the largest increase, with 523 more students of that ethnicity attending OUS schools.

OUS Director of Diversity Planning and Special Projects Yvette Webber-Davis helped draft the report and said it is another increase in what has become a steady influx of minority students and faculty into the OUS.

"We've actually been seeing this upward trend for some time," she said. "Each year it's been getting better."

Of the minority students attending OUS schools in fall 2000, 78 percent were also Oregon residents.

Webber-Davis attributed the steady increases to outreach programs initiated by the OUS' seven member institutions, along with a rising minority population in the state's K-12 schools that stays in Oregon after graduating from high school.

The number of students of color should also continue to increase. The report predicts that by 2015, students of color should make up 18.5 percent of all undergraduate students.

While Webber-Davis said she was pleased with the growth in the number of students of color, she said the growth in faculty of color is somewhat more impressive because of the difficulties in recruiting professors.

"It's not like hiring at McDonald's," she said.

To motivate professors to teach at OUS schools, Webber-Davis said

the system administrators are attempting to make contacts within the teaching pool early and also are "promoting the benefits of Oregon."

"We are identifying potential faculty early in the pipeline," she said. "We're making sure we're competitive nationally."

However, Erica Fuller, director of the Multicultural Center, said she believes the University is still inherently structured for white culture and is therefore not conducive to convincing students of color to stay on campus.

"If you can't keep [students of color] here, what's the point?" she said.

Fuller said there need to be changes at every level of the campus to ensure that students of color aren't left fighting to provide a strong presence on campus.

"There's a program here and a program there ... but you don't get a chance to see other cultures except for one beautiful spring day," she said.

Because white students are often oblivious to the issues students of color face, Fuller said, there must be a stronger effort on the part of both the administration and other student groups to ensure that diversity is not an afterthought.

Randy Choy, the associate director of the University Office of Multicultural Affairs, said he was not familiar with the OUS study, but he was encouraged by the increase in students of color coming to the University. He said the University overall has increased its recruitment efforts for minority students, and that it was good to see the efforts were having some effect.

"I'm pleased to see more effort on the recruitment of students of color," he said.

As part of the overall effort to recruit minority students, Choy said staff members of the Office of Multicultural Affairs have been visiting both middle and high schools.

According to the University profile of students, of the 4,094 students in the fall 2000 freshman class at the University, 262 were Asian or Pacific Islander, 122 were Hispanic, 74 were black, 59 were

multi-ethnic and 40 were Native American. More than 70 percent of the students (3,076 people) were white, 232 declined to give an ethnicity and 229 were international students. Choy said his office has traditionally been involved in ensuring that the minority students who do come to the University stay on campus and graduate. He said it is not as easy to track this as it is to see how many members of a certain ethnic group are coming to the campus.

"Retaining and graduating is a different story," he said.

Dominique Beaumonté, director of the Black Student Union, said he was pleased to hear there were more students of color entering Oregon universities. "I think there's been a lot of strides," he said.

Beaumonté said he believes recruitment programs through the Office of Student Life and efforts by students themselves have helped bring about increased enrollment of students of color.

He said better information online has attracted more queries from students of color, and outreach programs to high schools have also increased.

"Those interested in coming to the UO, specifically students of color, have a lot more resources now," he said.

Agnes Hoffman, the director of admissions and records at Portland State University, said she has been working toward gaining minority students through local outreach programs.

She said PSU hosts events at area high schools and also uses other methods to recruit minority students, such as direct mail campaigns and campus events that she said have worked well.

"In every population ... we've shown increases in the numbers," she said.

Hoffman said PSU has enjoyed "double digit" increases in its minority enrollment for several years, and added that the school is committed to ensuring a campus as racially diverse as the community that surrounds it.



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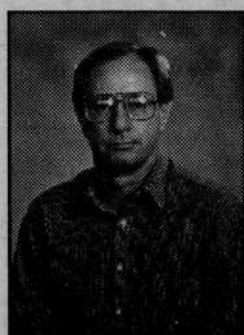
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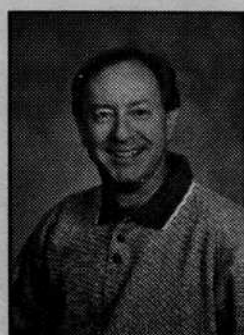
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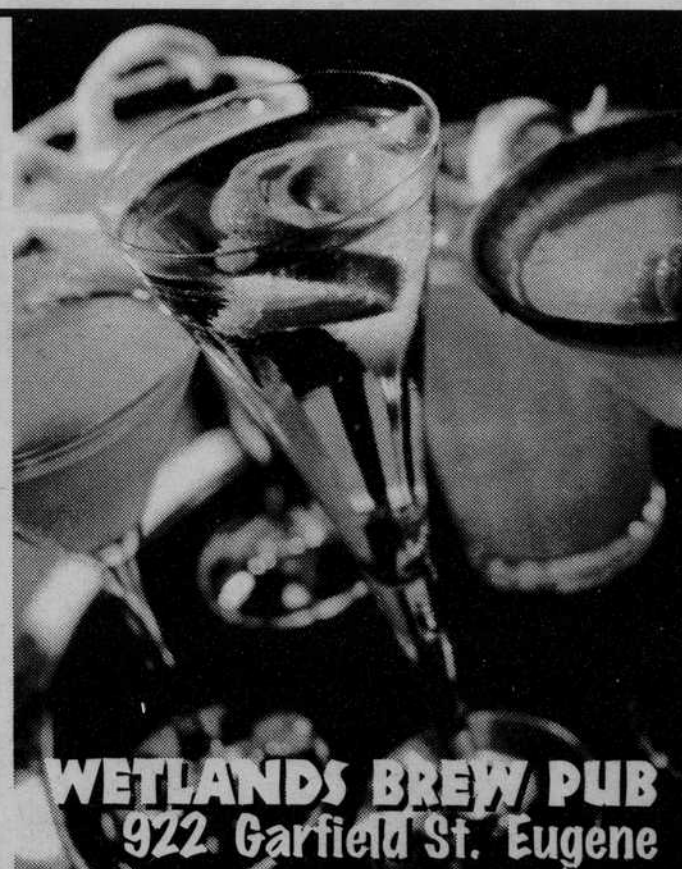
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