

News briefs

Another ASUO senator resigns

ASUO Senate president Peter Watts announced the resignation of Senator Devin Dinihanian at the Wednesday night Senate meeting.

Dinihanian, who held the Architecture and Allied Arts seat, said in a letter that he resigned because of "current circumstances." He apologized for not attending meetings.

There are now two open seats on the Senate. Last week, Senator Ben

Lacy, who held the Arts and Letters seat, also resigned.

The Senate approved requests by the International Student Association, Students of the Indian Subcontinent and the Muslim Student Association to transfer funds between accounts within the groups' budgets.

—Kara Cogswell

Churchill to host roundtable discussion

The Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics will host a roundtable discussion of racial issues in law enforce-

ment tonight from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Churchill High School auditorium.

Wayne Morse Chair Charles Ogle-tree Jr. will give an address of race in the national criminal justice system, then moderate a roundtable-style discussion, which will address issues such as trends in incarceration, treatment options, racial profiling, reintegration for outgoing prisoners and efforts to address racism through education. The panel will be made up of local legal experts, law enforcement agents and judiciary and community groups.

—Marty Toohey

Homeless

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Holley is 22 years old, roughly the age of a typical University senior — and she is currently homeless.

Most of the local homeless people don't match Holley's profile. Most are older.

In a recent survey, Assistant Director for the Eugene Mission Lynn Antis reported that out of 247 people at their shelter on a particular night, there were only 13 people in the 18- to 25-year-old age bracket.

However, Looking Glass's Andrea Cosby said the organization she works for, called New Roads, reported contact with 7,800 street youth ranging from ages 11 to 21. There is a small contingent of former University and Lane Community College students that are part of the Looking Glass's youth homeless program, Cosby said.

"We've had a couple of people who have been either at LCC or UO," Cosby said. "It's a very small minority."

Antis said "the majority of homeless people are over 46 years old" in the transient population. At the First Place Family Center, Emergency Services Director Jake Dudell reported that an estimated 10 percent of families that go through the center are headed by parents age 25 or younger.

"I would say it's not significant," said Antis, about the sheer number of college-age homeless.

But for Holley, the everyday life of being homeless is a challenge. Holley said she moved to Eugene from California in September so she could be with her husband and baby boy. Holley was accompanied on the trip by her two other children. She also had \$1,000 in savings, which was all she owned. A friend convinced Holley to loan her the \$1,000 in exchange for a place to live in her apartment.

"After the first month, she said 'I can't pay you back.'" Holley said. "Then she said that we had to move out."

So Holley and her family were stuck. She immediately called an apartment complex to try to secure a place to live. Holley said the only catch was that she had to get \$654 for the one-time move-in fee. With her \$1,000 long gone, housing was out of reach.

"Nobody has been able to help me," Holley said.

Neither of her parents would offer her financial assistance, so Holley turned to organizations around the Eugene area for help, but she reached only dead ends.

So she turned to a place where she knew she could be taken care of while she gathered the funds.

"As soon as I got into these hard times, the first place I thought to turn to was the First Place Family Center," Holley said.

Financial meltdown such as Holley's is just one way people can become homeless.

"Homelessness is a result of many different causes," Dudell said. "It's the combination of all social vices that leave people homeless."

Cosby said she noticed a few common denominators in the homelessness of the youth she has encountered. Cosby said family issues are a large contributor — whether the families have unresolved issues or are themselves homeless.

"The youth we consider homeless are totally distanced from their family of origin," Cosby said.

Other factors include drug and alcohol abuse as well as physical abuse.

"These are all ingredients of a soup — and that soup is called homelessness," Dudell said.

"Everybody has their own problems, whether that's problems at home, bad relationships, drugs or whatever," Holley said.

Holley said she doesn't tend to learn about the backgrounds of the people she meets at the First Place Family Center. But while at the center, she has free access to laundry, "as many clothes as you can carry on your back," telephones, and she is able to receive mail. Holley said the shelter is a good resource for getting jobs and providing potential employers with a legitimate address and phone number.

At night, the center partners with local churches and synagogues. These worship buildings offer space to homeless families for up to two weeks at a time. Every week or so, the sleeping arrangements change, but just keeping the family together is enough, Holley said. The experience of being homeless is entirely new to Holley's kids, she said. Katie, the oldest of Holley's children at age five, has become unruly from the experience of being away from familiar settings. Holley said her two younger children, three-year-old Alyssa and seven-month-old Timothy Matthew, love the experience provided by the center and also enjoy the atmospheres of the various churches where they sleep.

"The good thing about sleeping in the churches is that we stay in classrooms," Holley said.

She said her kids enjoy using the classrooms' art supplies to keep

busy. Holley said she sees her own future as bright.

"Soon I actually see myself getting a good paying job," Holley said.

Holley, a professional receptionist by trade, said she sees a future job getting her a place, a dog or a cat, and everything her kids need. With Christmas coming up, Holley encourages people to adopt a homeless family at the First Place Family Center for Christmas. Not so kids can get a CD player or some toy, she said, but so they can get something "more along the lines of socks and a good warm jacket."

Holley said the center is always looking for donations — whether that's money or supplies. There's always the need for "feminine things," she said.

Under the circumstances, Holley said, it's hard to have those things.

"We (at the First Place Family Center) are always looking for things like perfume. If we had our own houses, we'd be women all the time," she said.

For those interested in donating to these causes, call the First Place Family Center at 342-7728, the Looking Glass New Roads office at 689-3111, the Eugene Mission at 344-3251 or Catholic Community Services at 345-3628.

Marcus Hathcock is a features reporter for the Oregon Daily Emerald. He can be reached at marcushathcock@dailymerald.com.

Saferide

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Only women are allowed to drive or ride in Saferide vans.

The complaint was filed under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits sex discrimination in programs and activities receiving federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education.

According to the agreement, "the University agrees to modify, as necessary, the eligibility criteria for using transportation services and for participating as a volunteer driver of such services to ensure such criteria do not include gender."

University General Counsel Melinda Grier said although she was disappointed with OCR's conclusions, she would work with Saferide coordinators and members of the ASUO to make the changes needed to comply with Title IX.

When asked whether the agreement would mean Saferide would be open to both genders, or if an alternative service offering rides to men would be started, Grier said she did not want to speculate on any possible outcome before discussing it with students.

"I was hoping that when the OCR looked at it, they would be satisfied with the program (as it is)," she said. "We'll just work to get something that keeps both the spirit of the program and what students want, but is consistent with Title IX."

Saferide coordinators and ASUO Executives Nilda Brooklyn and Joy Nair said they were aware of the agreement but declined to comment.

Kara Cogswell is a student activities reporter for the Oregon Daily Emerald. She can be reached at karacogswell@dailymerald.com.

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