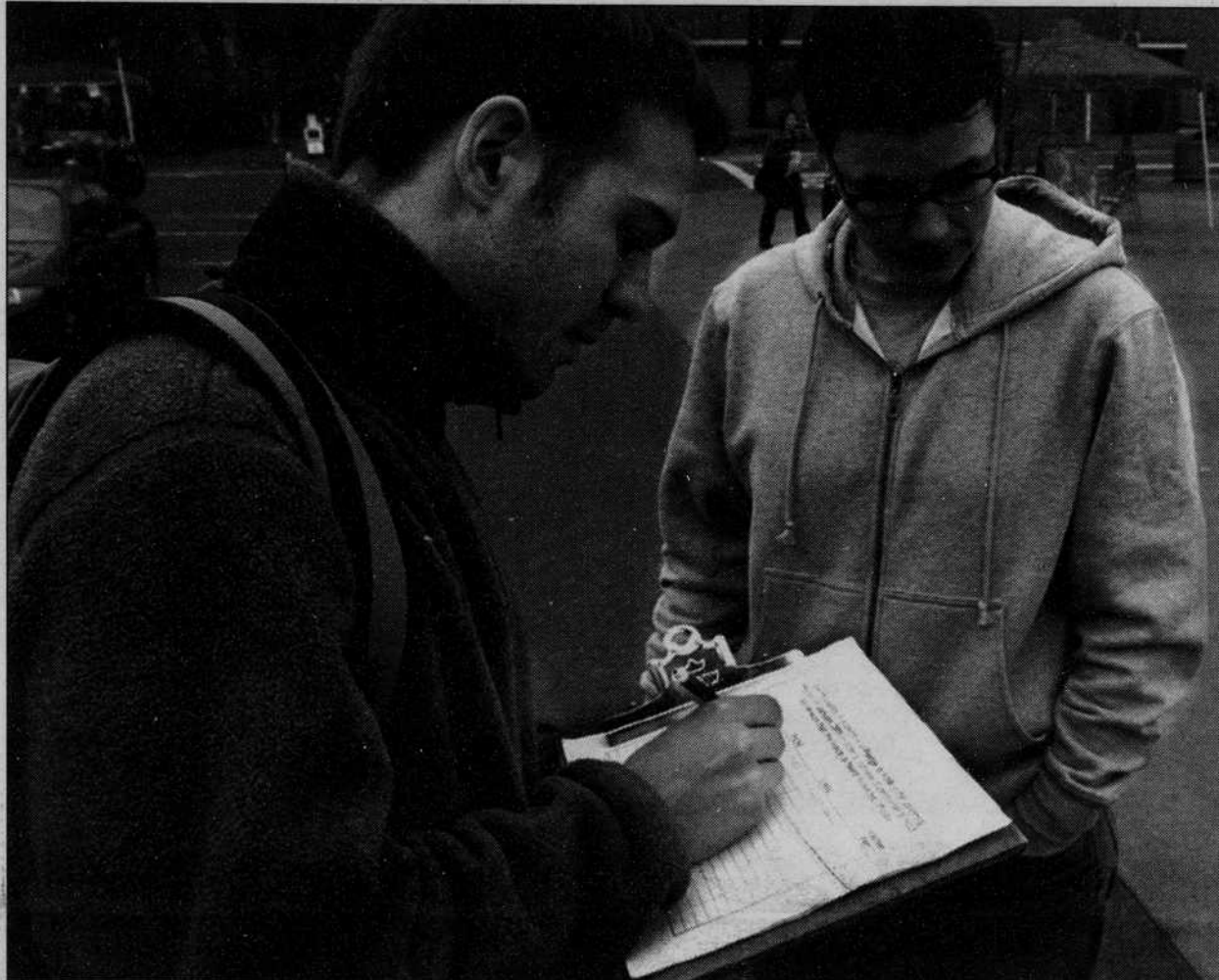




### Voter participation



Mark McCambridge Emerald

Paul Griffes signs a clipboard solicited by ASUO Co-Multicultural Advocate Maddy Melton designed to give the ASUO staff a better idea of how many students and faculty have voted or are registered to vote.

## A collection of pledges

ASUO's goal is to make contact with students in person and by phone before the special election

**Jennifer Bear**  
Campus/Federal Politics Reporter

University students breezing by the EMU can expect to be waylaid by vote pledge gatherers during the next few weeks as ASUO launches its campaign to motivate students to vote in the upcoming special election.

Measure 28, a three-year, \$725 million income tax increase, was referred from the Oregon Legislature's summer sessions. The measure is controversial because of the debate over whether it will

help solve the state's budget problems.

ASUO staff members are mobilizing to inform the University community about this issue because many student services depend on the final outcome of Measure 28. If it fails, there will likely be deep cuts in education, social services and public safety. One result will be increased tuition — students will have to pay a surcharge of \$10 per credit for winter and spring terms in order to help balance the resulting \$6.5 million budget shortfall. But if the measure passes, income tax rates will be affected, causing a 0.5 percent increase for single and joint filers and a 0.33 percent increase in corporate tax rates. The Legislature predicts Measure 28 will cost the average

Oregon taxpayer an extra \$114 per year.

ASUO intern Rebecca Shively said the main thrust of ASUO's campaign isn't to influence students' decisions on Measure 28, but simply to get them to participate in the special election.

"Our goal is increasing voter turnout, not advocating one side or the other," Shively said. "We're intending to be unbiased."

ASUO State Affairs Coordinator Adam Petkun said the vote pledge drive is one way student government can reach students and encourage them to vote. He added that ASUO's goal is to make 2,000 face-to-face and 2,000 phone contacts before the special election Jan. 28.

Turn to **Pledges**, page 8

## PFC awards big increase to law group

The ASUO Programs Finance Committee met with groups Monday for budget hearings; NALSA was awarded the largest budget increase for next year

**Jennifer Bear**  
Campus/Federal Politics Reporter

The ASUO Programs Finance Committee swayed from one extreme to another in awarding budgets for the 2003-04 school year at Monday night's meeting, granting increases as great as 230.33 percent for some groups and cutting funding by as much as 61.49 percent for others.

The Native American Law Student Association was the big budget winner of the evening, taking away \$991, a significant jump from their funding of \$300 for the 2002-03 school year. However, the final funding increase was tiny compared with the original Executive Recommendation for the group — \$5,035, a 1,578 percent increase. The committee was shocked after hearing the suggested budget and immediately launched into deliberations on how to cut down the monolithic increase.

The contributing factors for the huge budget boost were the addition of a telephone, a program director's stipend and increased funding for events. NALSA representatives argued the group was desperate for an expanded budget because of its active role in organizing events, such as bringing in the Navajo Supreme Court this year. They added the group did not receive enough funds for 2002-03 and had to raise about \$4,200 independently.

PFC was torn between the desire to reward NALSA for its fundraising efforts and the need to practice restraint, as it is only the second week of budget hearings and many programs are still waiting to get their cut from student incidental fees. Several PFC members said they weren't comfortable granting such a substantial increase because 2002-03 was the group's first year as an ASUO-funded program.

"We're all saying that (an increase) is warranted, but the way that we work is on a little more of a glide path," PFC Programs Appointee Joy Nair said.

However, PFC At-Large James Tilford argued that even though NALSA is new in terms of ASUO funding, the group has existed for several years. Despite limited evidence in the ledgers, Tilford said NALSA has shown it is fiscally responsible.

"The group has dealt with several issues, and they have been established for several years long before they came to ASUO for funding," Tilford said.

In the end, PFC whittled down the first suggested budget of \$5,035 to \$991, which was still the largest funding increase any program has received thus far.

While NALSA enjoyed a hefty funding raise, the Minority Law Student Association's budget plummeted to \$620, a 61.49 percent decrease, a reflection of PFC's decision to not fund the group's payroll. MSLA was awarded program directors' stipends for 2002-03, but the group hasn't filled out payroll paperwork yet, so stipend checks have been piling up.

Turn to **PFC**, page 4

## State plans health insurance cutbacks

The Oregon Health Plan may suffer cuts and eliminations of several programs as soon as February 1 if Measure 28 fails in the upcoming special election

### Oregon votes 2003

**Aimee Rudin**  
Family/Health/Education Reporter

Health insurance is a luxury that many Oregonians take for granted. Students at the University are often covered under their parents' insurance plans; faculty and other University employees are usually covered through the University's policy.

But for as many as 400,000 Oregonians, insurance could become their biggest concern.

State Ballot Measure 28 contains funding language that would affect the Oregon Health Plan, the state-funded insurance program for low-

come individuals and families that was created in 1989. If Measure 28 fails at the polls Jan. 28, the proposed cuts would be implemented Feb. 1.

When the Oregon Legislative Assembly balanced the budget for the fifth time in 2002, OHP was included in a \$313 million state budget re-balancing package to temporarily fix Oregon's budget deficit. The Assembly sent this package to Oregon voters for their consideration in the form of Measure 28.

State services and departments originally cut from the Medicaid program — the program the OHP was modeled after — would be reduced once again if Measure 28 failed. But this time there would be no excess funding to create a new health care package capable of meeting residents' needs.

Many of the people covered by OHP are either not eligible for or cannot afford a health insurance alternative.

"I have no other insurance options," said Kathleen Ehli, a University senior in the humanities

department. "I rely solely on financial aid. Right now, I pay less than \$10 a month for coverage."

Ehli said she does not see a doctor regularly. However, in the event of an emergency or serious illness, she counts on OHP to cover her medical bills.

"I have OHP in case I get hit by a truck or something — it's for emergencies," Ehli said. "If I got cut out of it, it wouldn't be a huge problem."

For healthy individuals such as Ehli, the proposed cuts may not immediately affect their personal well-being. But others in the Oregon health care system could have more problems.

To meet funding shortages, state officials would eliminate programs in OHP that serve the elderly, school age children, the mentally

Turn to **Measure**, page 12

### Measure 28

A 10-part series examining the budget implications of the Jan. 28 special election.

### WEATHER

Today: High 45, Low 30, cloudy with morning fog

Thursday: High 47, Low 33, patchy fog in the afternoon

### LOOKING AHEAD

Thursday  
Martin Luther King Jr. is still relevant to many on campus

Friday  
How are Oregon alums faring one year after graduation?