

Activists to boycott corporations

Global Boycott for Peace is boycotting Bush campaign contributors to ensure that activists' voices are heard

Aimee Rudin
City/State Politics Reporter

Money talks on a daily basis. But during the 2000 presidential election, money didn't just talk — it yelled.

The Bush campaign collected \$193,088,650 in campaign contributions in 2000, according to reports by the Federal Election Commission. Of that amount, 42.1 percent of contributions came from individual donations of more than \$200.

These contributions were made for a variety of reasons, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. Some individuals may have donated because they supported the Bush administration's platform, or they may have wanted to try and influence the administration and its work on public policy. Regardless of the reason behind the contribution, most of the donations were accepted.

Now, numerous activist organizations around the globe are wondering how indebted the Bush administration is toward those contributors and what kind of strings were attached to the \$81,260,283 worth of individual donations. In the hopes of having their opposition to the war in Iraq and the administration's policies heard, activist groups like Be The Cause, Peace-Ac-



tion and Do The Right Thing have formed a coalition called Global Boycott for Peace.

GBP members believe if they boycott corporations that have made significant contributions to the Bush administration, the administration will have little choice but to protect the interests of the corporations that supported them in the past. "The U.S. administration has dismissed our vocal

opposition to the war," according to a press release from Be The Cause. "Now it's time to take our voice to the next level. We will affect them where it matters most — in their wallets."

Be The Cause Executive Director Sukh Chugh said now that the war in Iraq is winding down, there will be efforts to team the peace movement with the anti-globalization movement. "We personally believe the war in

Iraq was just a symptom of a greater problem," Chugh said. "We're actually in talks with other peace organizations around the nation, and we're getting ready to take the movement to the next level."

GBP has chosen five major corporations to boycott based on the amount of contribution made to the Bush administration: Exxon-Mobil-Esso, Pepsico Inc., United Parcel Service, Wal-Mart stores and Kraft, a subsidiary of Philip Morris.

A spokesman for Wal-Mart said the company headquarters was unaware of the boycott, but because there are stores located in all fifty states, it is possible that one or two stores could be affected.

Boycotts have been a successful operating tool in the past, according to GBP. The group cites the success of the consumer boycott on tuna fish in the name of protecting dolphins as an example of how placing economic pressure on a market can ultimately result in industry-wide change.

"It's not enough, any longer, to point the finger at unethical practitioners," a GBP statement read. "It is time for people, shareholders, companies and organizations to show they act with responsibility. Your investments as a consumer or as a shareholder does and will affect global economies."

Contact the senior reporter at aimeerudin@dailyemerald.com.

Boifest

continued from page 1

Stitt said he was interested in appearing at Boifest simply because he loves performing.

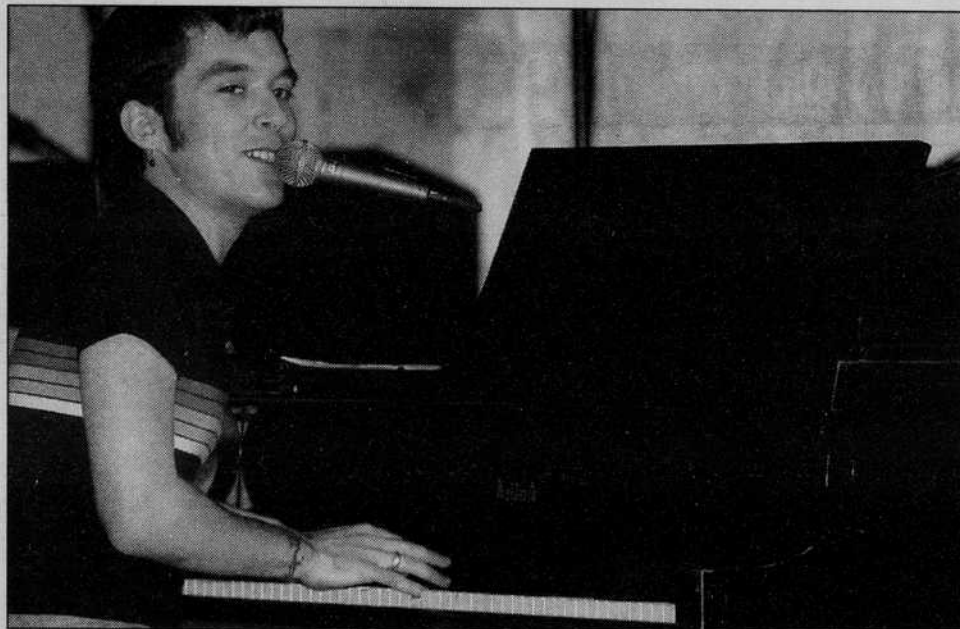
"I don't think I have an agenda," he said, laughing. "Or at least one that I would admit to. I am in favor of the sexuality issue not being an issue, so I try not to make a point of it."

Oakland-based artists J.B. R.A.P. and Soulubian, who hail from the five-member gay hip-hop group Deep Dickollective, said they performed at Boifest with the goal of representing "independent underground queer artists and people of color." The duo presented a "cornucopia of hip-hop," which included comedy and dance.

"It's important to support the ongoing equal human rights movement," R.A.P. said. "We are all not free if one of us is in captivity."

Soulubian added that he also became involved with the event to connect with other artists.

Both Soulubian and R.A.P. work with youth service providers in their spare time. They said the themes of their mu-



Rory Merritt Stitt, who originally hails from Alaska, plays theater-inspired "cabaret-pop." Liz Carskadon for the Emerald

sic and Deep Dickollective's new EP, "Them Niggaz Done Went and Said," reflects the group's aspirations — to stop the spread of AIDS and encourage the acceptance of all people.

"There's no rainbow if all the colors can't show," R.A.P. said.

Other Boifest performers includ-

ed the Olympia rockers of Rad Community and the glam, Puyallup, Wash.,-based Madame Morte. Festival sponsors included the UO Cultural Forum, LGBTQA, the University Bookstore and several other volunteers.

Hazard said he hopes the celebration will become an annual af-

fair because it serves an important function for the entire community.

"It raises awareness not only that there are queer musicians out there, but just what queer people are doing in general," he said.

Contact the Pulse editor at jacquelynlewis@dailyemerald.com.

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