

'Great' service helps students resolve conflicts

The Conflict Resolution Services lets disputing parties interact with each other in a program that its supporters call 'miraculous'

By A. Sho Ikeda
Reporter

It's 2 a.m. and a student wakes up from hearing someone loudly shouting in his residence hall. He peeks out his door to witness his neighbor drunkenly stumbling around, yelling obscenities. Other students open doors, rub their eyes and poke their heads out to see what the commotion is. Angry at being rudely awakened, the first student closes his door and makes a mental note to talk to his resident assistant in the morning.

The above incident is one of many that can occur during college, said Annie Bentz, director of Conflict Resolution Services. When a student complains about the actions of another student, the offender must go through a process where the transgression may be resolved through a mediator, such as a complex director, or through a formal judicial process, which is similar to a court trial.

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Annie Bentz
Director of Conflict Resolution Services

However, through cooperation between the Student Judicial Affairs Program and Conflict Resolution Ser-

vices, students will be able to choose an alternative means of settling disputes beginning this fall.

Unlike the current student judicial process where the offenders and "harm parties" are separated, the Restorative Justice Program aims to reconcile transgressions through a cooperative effort by all involved parties, Bentz said.

The first step in the program is for the offender to accept responsibility for his or her behavior and the trouble he or she caused, Bentz said, as well as have the opportunity to explain the actions. The next step is for all participants — the offender, "harm parties" and student facilitator involved with the program — to create an appropriate way to redress the harm done.

"The program focuses less on punishment and more on repairing harm and enhancing a sense of community," Bentz said, adding that the Restorative Justice Program allows all sides of the incident to talk about the situation and discuss how they were affected.

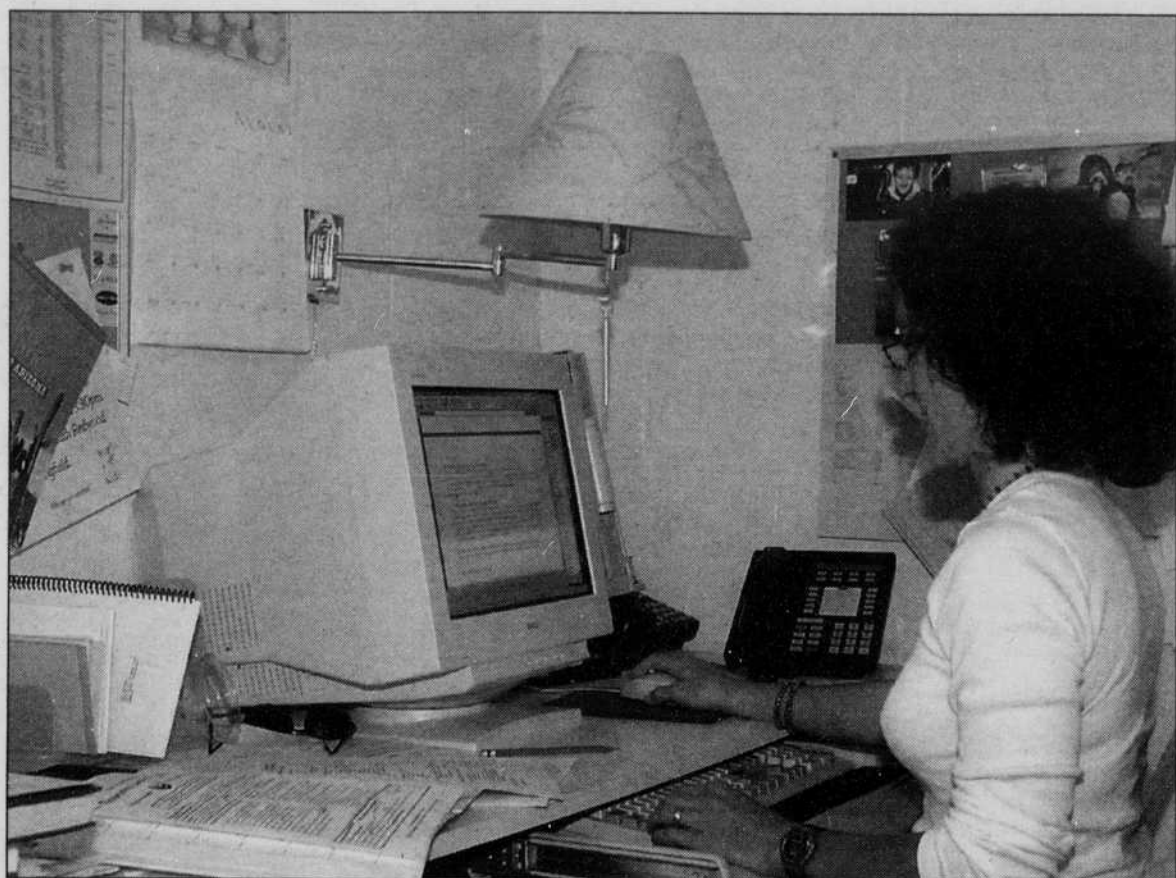
"This creates the opportunity for people to care about each other again," Bentz said.

Bentz and Director of Student Judicial Affairs Chris Loschiavo worked together to create the Restorative Justice Program at the University. Loschiavo said he and Bentz were inspired to create the program after learning of a similar successful program at the University of Colorado-Boulder.

"The difference between this program and the normal judicial process we have now is that both sides get to talk to each other," Loschiavo said.

Loschiavo said misunderstandings can arise when students harm other students accidentally, or when they are drunk and aren't considerate toward other students' feelings.

"It can be very helpful and a relief to find out that there was no malicious-



Jessica Waters Emerald

Annie Bentz, director of Conflict Resolution Services, helps students resolve grievances outside the Student Judicial Affairs Program. Bentz serves as a mediator in this process that focuses more on restoring community than on punishment.

ness behind an act," Loschiavo said.

One example where the program could be implemented is a case of vandalism in a neighborhood adjacent to the University, explained Kary Meier, office specialist for Conflict Resolution Services. The owner of the vandalized property and other neighborhood residents could talk to the offenders and discuss how they were affected by the crime, Meier explained. The offenders could then explain why they committed the vandalism. Finally, the parties and

facilitators could come up with an appropriate way to resolve the harm, such as having the offenders repair the vandalized property.

Meier has already seen restorative justice techniques at work in juvenile justice programs in Eugene.

"I've seen miraculous changes happen when there has been communication between the offender and the people who were harmed," Meier said, adding that she believed the program would work well at the University.

"For the most part, everyone here

wants to learn and this makes it more possible for people to learn from each other," Meier said.

Both Bentz and Meier said they hope to see more students become involved in the program as facilitators. Bentz said she hopes to recruit student facilitators in the fall.

"This is a great opportunity for students to get involved with the program," Bentz said.

Contact the reporter
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Budget

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"As unpalatable as raising taxes is to most people, the benefits to higher education would be better for students," Farr said.

The Senate's proposed budget would enact a temporary income tax surcharge, which Farr described as being "very progressive." Families who earned between \$40,000 to \$50,000 would pay a 3 percent surcharge — about \$7 — on their income taxes,

according to the Legislative Revenue Office. Those who earned more than \$100,000 would pay about \$370. Families who earn less than \$20,000, on the other hand, would not have to pay the surcharge.

Farr said the surcharge would be in

effect for three years. If an improvement is seen in the economy, the surcharge would be eliminated, he added.

Farr said he believes the Senate's budget proposal has a good chance of passing both the Senate and the House, but that it could be possible

for "anything to get derailed."

"I think that we're doing what's right for Oregonians," Farr said. "Better education is beneficial for all Oregonians."

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Horoscope by Linda C. Black

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Aug. 20). Hang in there during a difficult phase. You're learning about discipline. It's a valuable skill to have. And besides, it will help you learn to climb. By this time next year, you can be much higher than you are now. To get the advantage, check the day's rating: 10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.
ARIES (March 21-April 19) _ Today is an 8 _ The first several things you try may not work, but don't lose your self-confidence. These are actually positive steps toward achieving your final goal.
TAURUS (April 20-May 20) _ Today is a 6 _ You're certainly stubborn, and that's a good thing, but your progress seems to be slow. Remember, the tortoise did win the race. You can get what you want on your terms.
GEMINI (May 21-June 21) _ Today is a 7 _ You're becoming more powerful, but that also means you have to be more disciplined. Don't get yourself into trouble by not realizing your own strength.
CANCER (June 22-July 22) _ Today is a 6 _ If anything can give you trouble now, expect that it will. Be alert and flexible for the next couple of days and all will turn out well — or as well as can be expected.
LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) _ Today is a 6 _ You're a much happier person when you have an unlimited allowance. You should be rich, and you can be, too, once you learn not to waste money.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) _ Today is a 5 _ Stay calm, even if everything seems to get a tad confusing. You're quick and smart, and you have a good team on your side.
LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) _ Today is a 7 _ When you expand your influence, you get out of your comfort zone. That means you encounter new problems, or, challenges. Whoopee!
SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) _ Today is a 5 _ A seemingly solid situation may have been an illusion. Hold off on a final decision until you see how the next few days go.
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) _ Today is a 7 _ You wanted changes, and you've sure got 'em, one right after another. Luckily you love excitement. Get a partner to help.
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) _ Today is a 6 _ As you know, money is a concept. It can be created and destroyed. That's why it's so important for you to focus on creativity. Don't dwell in the past; learn from it.
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) _ Today is a 6 _ Don't worry about a recent purchase. If you didn't get the right thing, you can always take it back. If you did get the right thing, it's both strong and comfortable, and you got it at a good price.
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) _ Today is a 6 _ You may feel as if you're running into one barrier after another. If that's the case, start watching where you're going! Wake up!

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