



RESOLUTION

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"harmed parties" are separated, the Restorative Justice Program aims to reconcile transgressions through a cooperative effort that includes all involved parties, Bentz said.

The first step in the program is for the offender to accept responsibility for his or her behavior and for the disruption he or she caused, Bentz said. The offender also

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Chris Loschiavo

Director of Student Judicial Affairs

has the opportunity to explain the actions that prompted the grievance. The next step is for all participants the offender, the "harmed parties" and a student facilitator involved with the program to agree on an appropriate way

appropriate way to redress the inflicted harm. "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 Student Judicial Affairs Director 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 successful similar 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 others accidentally, or while they are drunk and may not be considerate of others' feelings.

"It can be very helpful and a relief to find out that there was no maliciousness behind an act," Loschiavo said.

A hypothetical situation in which the program's services could be invoked 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 vandal-

ized property and other neighborhood residents could talk to the offender and discuss how they were affected by the crime, Meier said. The offender could then explain why he or she committed the vandalism. Finally, the parties and

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

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

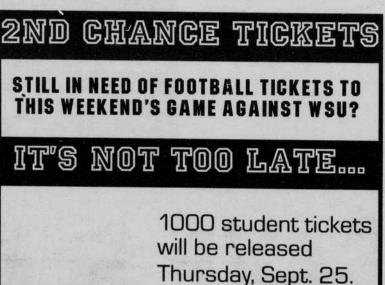
"I've seen miraculous changes happen when there has been communication between the offender and the people who were harmed," Meier said, adding that she believed the program would work well at the University.

"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 city/state politics reporter at shoikeda@dailyemerald.com.



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