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Courtesy of the Outdoor Program

The Outdoor Program, located on the ground floor of the EMU, offers opportunities for students to facilitate and prepare for outdoor recreational trips of all kinds.

Outdoor Program provides enjoyable, secure excursions

Students can participate
in and organize trips
as part of the University
Outdoor Program

By Jenny Sherman
Freelance Reporter

The University Outdoor Program is one of the most friendly, easy to use and versatile programs on campus, one in which students' "wildest wilderness dreams" can come true, according to the Outdoor Program Web site.

Walking into the map- and picture-adorned office, located on the bottom floor of the EMU next to The Break, can be overwhelming at first, but the staff is always ready to assist students and adventure-seekers.

The Outdoor Program, a cooperative started in 1967, is one of the safest programs in the country, senior event coordinator Brad Schallert said. Schallert has participated in the work-study opportunities at the office since he was a freshman.

"We feel our philosophy is different from other programs," Schallert said.

As the Outdoor Program Web site outlines, the co-op focuses on cooperation, responsibility, environmental awareness, leadership, lifelong skills and a way to do it all cost-effectively. Schallert said various trips are available to students and outsiders alike, and while a majority of them are rafting or kayaking on local rivers or hiking on nearby wilderness trails, Schallert said "we'll help you make anything happen."

In the past, the program has traveled to Alaska's National Wildlife Refuge, as well as international terrain such as Thailand, Tibet, Nepal and Cuba. The Outdoor Program office is equipped with "an extremely experienced staff this year," and has the resources to help students get plane tickets, make reservations and attend to all the small details that make a trip successful.

Anyone, experienced or not, can sign up for — and even initiate — any trip imaginable. A large sign up wall in the Outdoor Program office says it all: "Realize you want to go on an ad-

venture, decide where you want to go and what you want to do, fill out a trip sheet, reserve a van if needed, (and) schedule a pre-trip meeting with trip member."

Students can also add their names to already planned trips that change weekly and leave primarily on the weekends. Trips are never exclusive and don't require knowledge or experience. The program also offers evening clinics such as "Rock Climbing 101" and "Mountain Bike Touring 101" for a low price, and they are all listed in the quarterly newsletter available outside the Outdoor Program office.

The Outdoor Program also has a plethora of equipment available to rent, ranging from trailers and vans to kayaks and white water accessories to backpacks and bikes.

Senior exchange student Sergio Porras hopes to take advantage of some of the adventurous opportunities while studying in the United States.

"We don't have this," Porras said of his hometown in Monterrey, Mexico. "It's more like desert."

Porras took his first rafting trip during the first weekend in October and said it won't be his last.

After the trip, he returned to the office to plan a camping trip with his friends, and is one of the many students taking advantage of the information and facilities at the Outdoor Program. Porras added that the Outdoor Program's weekly events are a great opportunity to meet people, and that people should feel comfortable attending trips on their own.

Schallert agreed that students do not need to have a groups of people they already know to attend events. He said most people come to the program by themselves, and as they continue to participate, they see the same people and begin to make friends.

For more information call the Outdoor Program at 346-4371 or visit its Web site at <http://outdoor-program.uoregon.edu>.

Jenny Sherman is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

University of Oregon

CONVOCATION 2003

Friday, October 24, 2003
Beall Concert Hall
2:30 PM Ceremony
4:00 PM Reception

Convocation serves as the ceremonial beginning to the academic year. It provides an opportunity for faculty and staff members, students, alumni, and members of the community to assemble together. On this occasion we focus on the University's rich academic heritage and celebrate our collective accomplishments.



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