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Nepotism concerns prompt hiring ban

ASUO President Petkun decides against giving more Web design contracts to staffer's husband

JARED PABEN
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Citing concerns about the appearance of nepotism, ASUO President Adam Petkun has banned University graduate Dean Neiwert from performing contracted work for the ASUO, after Neiwert was paid more than \$850 in incidental fee funds for contracted Web site work.

Neiwert — the husband of ASUO Accounting Coordinator Jennifer Creighton-Neiwert — received two ASUO contracts this year and in 2003, prompting Petkun's decision to restrict ASUO employees from giving contracts to Neiwert, Petkun said. The contracts were first brought to his

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ASUO, students debate value of retreats

The student government, as well as some students, disagree on the purpose and benefits of the retreats

OMIE DRAWHORN
NEWS REPORTER

ASUO President Adam Petkun, Vice President Mena Ravassipour and ASUO Executive staff members returned Sunday from a three-day retreat to Lincoln City, the first of two staff retreats the Executive has planned for this year.

In all, Petkun estimated before the trip that the Executive would spend, in fundraised money, about \$460 on a house rental and about \$300 on food.

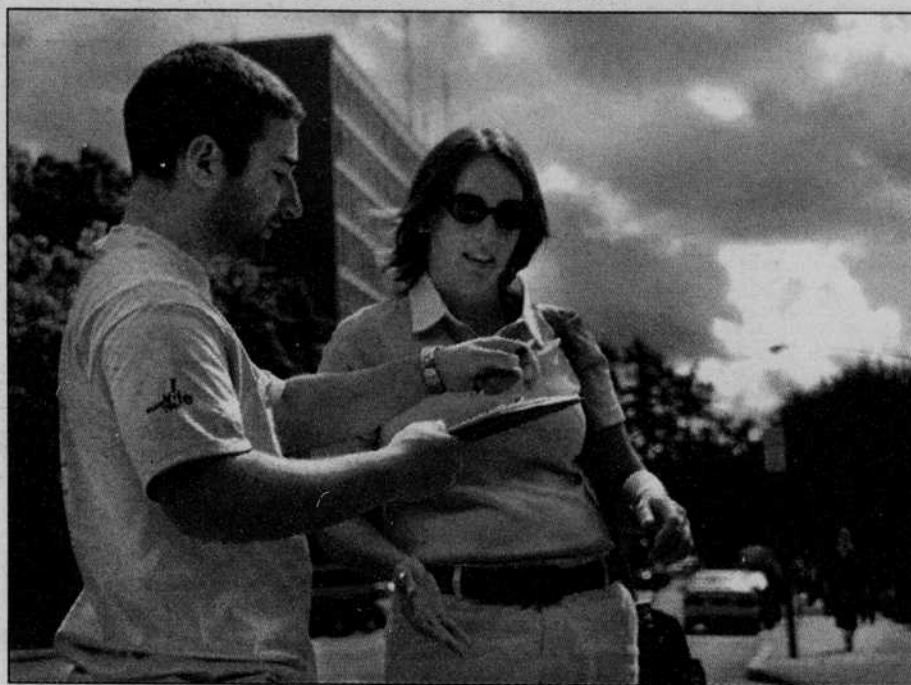
In the 2002-03 school year, ASUO spent \$1,891 in incidental fees and \$978 in fundraising money for transportation, food and house rentals for retreats, totaling \$2,869. According to ASUO purchase orders and accounting ledgers, the ASUO spent \$3,533.62 in student incidental fees and \$850 in fundraising money on retreats to Sunriver and Waldport for a total of \$4,383.62 for the 2003-04 school year. The 2003-04 retreat budget represents an 87 percent increase in incidental fee spending and a 53 percent increase in total spending from the year before.

Some former ASUO Executive members and University students said they are skeptical of using student money for coast and central Oregon retreats, but those involved in the ASUO Executive and Student Senate said that the money is being used appropriately, because it is benefiting all students.

Petkun said he feels retreats are essential to the success of ASUO because it helps the staff

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GET OUT THE VOTE



ERIK R. BISHOFF | ONLINE & PHOTO EDITOR

ASUO President Adam Petkun helps elementary education graduate student Emily Zoboski fill out voter registration paperwork outside the University Bookstore Wednesday afternoon. The ASUO's goal is to register 7,500 students.

Democratic drive

ASUO hopes to register 7,500 students with a non-partisan voter registration drive this fall

OMIE DRAWHORN
NEWS REPORTER

Six members of ASUO, 60 interns and 100 volunteers are coming together this week, aiming to register 7,500 students to vote during the first two weeks of school. If successful, they will have registered the largest number of students in the University's history.

The ASUO will kick off its annual voter registration drive Thursday. But this year's event will include fewer big events and will rely on more day-to-day efforts to register students.

"It's more about groundwork than big events," Student Vote Coalition co-coordinator Christina Swartz said.

Oregon Student Association Campus Organizer Courtney Hight said approaching students doing day-to-day activities yields more registrations than putting on big events.

Amy DuFour, ASUO state affairs coordinator and registration drive volunteer, said she is confident the ASUO will exceed its 7,500-student goal.

During last year, a non-legislative year, the ASUO registered 3,000 people to vote. Its largest previous goal was 5,000 students in 2000.

The ASUO will take to the streets, visit classrooms and set up tables at Bean,

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Bike theft a problem at the University

DPS says rise in theft can be ebbed if students take proper precautions with their bikes

TIM BOBOSKY & MICHAEL A. BOOTH
FREELANCE REPORTERS

University graduate student Bryan Kolaczowski planned on riding his bike home on the evening of Sept. 3 after his shift in a University biology lab. Instead, he left Pacific Hall at 6 p.m. only to find a broken cable lock instead of his \$700 Bianchi road bike.

Kolaczowski, who is studying computer science, said he wishes he had known how to deter criminals from stealing his bike — his primary mode of transportation — before the theft occurred. Unfortunately, Kolaczowski's experience will probably be shared by an increasing number of incoming and returning students this fall term. The University Department of Public Safety expects 20 to 25 bikes to be stolen in the first two weeks of fall term alone. September and October are typically the peak months for the crime, which has become more common each year since 2002, according to the Eugene Police Department.

Thieves have already been busy this month.

Eugene resident Ryan Ashton, 13, and Lane Community College student Bethanie Ogletree both said they had expensive bikes stolen recently, after thieves broke their locks.

Ashton said that on Sept. 8 his custom-built Diamond Back BMX bike, worth more than \$1,000, was locked to four other bikes with the same lock, but only Ashton's bike was taken.

Ogletree said that on Sept. 5 she locked her Mongoose mountain bike within sight of the University Bookstore's coffee shop, where she works. Despite Ogletree's effort to lock her

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UO residence halls ranked worst in the nation in survey

University Housing says the Princeton Review's study is skewed and sloppy

BEN BROWN
NEWS REPORTER

The ballots are in, the votes have been counted, and according to the Princeton Review the University has the worst residence halls in the country.

In a national survey of students, the University ranked first in the category 'dorms like dungeons,' moving up from second place last year and 15th place the year before.

Director of University Housing Michael Eyster said the ranking is unwarranted.

"Our satisfaction ratings when we do surveys don't reflect that," he said.

The Princeton Review, a

New York-based company known for its test-preparation courses, education sources and books, has been publishing its annual review of colleges since 1992.

Jeanne Krier, publicist for the Princeton Review, said rankings are determined by a survey of 110,000 students at the 357 colleges ranked, which works out to an average 300 students per campus. The survey is offered at the Princeton Review's Web site and is 70 questions long.

Eyster said he felt the University received the number one spot this year because the survey is skewed and its

methodology is sloppy. Eyster said the survey only has one question about residence halls and students are asked to rate their residence halls on a scale of one to five.

"I wouldn't call it an adequate survey," Eyster said.

However, Eyster admitted that the University's residence halls aren't entirely up to par, having been built 40 to 50 years ago for a different student population. Eyster said he understands that today's student needs more space.

"I can't make excuses," said Eyster.

Many students agree the size of the rooms is their chief complaint.

According to the University Housing Web site, the

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DANIELLE HICKEY | FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHER

Cliff Dailey sweeps leaves in Bean Complex on Tuesday afternoon as the University prepares for its new freshman class.