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-MLK Jr.

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Fundraiser: UO students find creative ways to help

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Douglass said the organization hopes to donate the money to dig 50 fresh water wells in Sri Lanka. One well could serve a community of 300, and Douglass emphasized that fresh water is one of the most urgent needs for tsunami victims.

"The students at the University of Oregon could actually affect a community in a really profound way by keeping them alive with clean drinking water," she said.

The Day of Tsunami Relief concluded with a candlelight vigil, hosted by ASUO, that attracted about 30 people.

Sophomore Remi Nagata was moved to tears during the vigil because she said she remembers what it's like to lose everything. Nagata survived a 7.2 magnitude earthquake in Japan almost ten years ago that devastated Kobe and southern Japan, killing more than 5,050 people and causing \$200 billion in damage, according to a University of Washington Web site.

"You don't have anything," she said. "The only people you can ask for help are the people around you, even if they are total strangers."

Nagata is a member of the ISA and said she hoped the vigil would raise more awareness about the tsunami.

"I personally know how hard it is," she said. "If people can know about it more, the better it will be."

Elsewhere, other student groups found diverse and creative ways to raise money.

Beta Theta Pi decided, in the words of Daniel Occhipinti, former fraternity president, to do "one of the things we know we do best": host a dance party.

On Sunday night, an estimated 300 students packed the fraternity house's basement for the Tsunami Relief Party. Guests were asked to donate at least \$2 to get in, and the fraternity committed to matching the funds raised at the door. Social Chair Dan Scheinman said the

funds would go to the Red Cross' tsunami relief fund.

The Tsunami Relief Party was a huge success, Philanthropy Chair Kyle Liljegren said. The dance attendance exceeded his expectation three-fold, and \$600 was raised in donations at the door.

Liljegren said the party raised awareness of the tragedy as well.

"A lot of people gave more than we expected," he said. "There were more people there for the cause rather than people looking for something to do on a Sunday night."

The Presidential Scholar Student Association took a more subtle approach to raise funds. Last week, the group began making buttons to sell for \$1 each to raise money for the organization Doctors Without Borders. The buttons, designed by PSSA Co-President Sarah Koski, say "Project Tsunami Relief" and feature a single candle.

"We did this theme of bright colors to represent the urgency of the need," she said. "The candle is both in memory of the lives lost and ... a recognition of hope for students that wear the button that they can make a difference."

Koski said button sales have gone so well that the group's small cadre of 12 volunteers has been unable to keep up with demand because the buttons can take up to 10 minutes each to make. The group's first 50 buttons sold out within the first two days, and it has had requests from Portland businesses that want to sell the buttons. Even University President Dave Frohnmayer wears one.

Regardless of how students support tsunami victims, Woodard said their efforts benefit both the volunteers and the victims.

"You kind of feel helpless when it's on the other side of the world," she said. "Volunteering gives you the sense you can help."

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