

# Women's Center to host 're-investment' conference

Women of color are the focus of the 10th-annual event, which will feature various speakers and workshops

BY AMANDA BOLSINGER  
NEWS REPORTER

The 10th-annual Women of Color Conference promises to be unlike any of the previous conferences. This year's event will host speakers from around the world, five separate workshop tracks, an open mic and two performances.

"This year is a re-investment in women of color," ASUO Women's Center Interim Director Erin O'Brien said. "It is an exciting prospect for the Women's Center addressing women-of-color issues."

The conference is titled "Dialogues About the State of Women's Rights as Human Rights" and focuses on the rights of women of color

as basic human rights that have been denied or jeopardized.

The conference will feature keynote speaker Ninotchka Rosca, a former political prisoner under the Marcos regime in the Philippines. She is also the founder of GABRIELA, a women's rights organization of the Philippines. Her primary concerns are the issues of sex tourism, trafficking, the mail-order bride industry and violence against women.

Issues women of color face will be discussed in a sexual orientation and sexuality workshop and a theater of the oppressed.

"It's giving a voice to cover all different parts of life," said Stefanie Loh, public relations coordinator for the

Women's Center. "Being a woman of color is not a single thing."

Some of the workshops will be closed workshops, open only to women who identify themselves as women of color. Other workshops will be only for those who do not identify themselves as women of color.

"The whole thing is a big deal," Women's Center Diversity Coordinator Ma Vang said. "Every workshop, performer and speaker is important."

The conference will begin today at 2:30 p.m. in the EMU Ben Linder Room and will continue throughout the weekend with the closing session ending at 1 p.m. Sunday. More than 50 people have registered for the conference, and registration will remain open for the weekend. The conference is free for University students, staff and faculty.

abolsinger@dailyemerald.com

## IN BRIEF

### Honors fraternity to offer free tax assistance

A student group will be making it easier for University students and community members to file their tax returns.

Beta Alpha Psi, an honors fraternity for financial information professionals, will offer its Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program for free in Chiles 228 between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Saturday and again on April 9.

Patrick Meadows, a junior accounting major and Beta Alpha Psi member, is the coordinator of the program.

"A lot of the time there'll be certain things that we know about that will reduce your taxable income," Meadows said. The tax counselors are Beta Alpha Psi members and law students and were trained by AARP members in tax assistance. They will answer questions and assist in preparing federal and Oregon state tax returns for submission.

Helen Gernon, professor and head of the Department of Accounting, said the free assistance is a good opportunity because it's tough to do taxes without help.

"Unfortunately, our tax law is so complicated that that is usually the case," Gernon said, adding that people can try to do taxes themselves if they have a simple financial situation, but they may miss some tax credits.

Meadows said the volunteer tax program can also help international students who have been in the United States for an extended period of time and are required to file as a resident.

Those interested in the program should bring their W-2 forms, Social Security cards, state-issued identification, checkbooks and financial statements or any other documents that detail taxable income, including those involving scholarships, grants, stocks and investments. Meadows estimated that the process will take between 15 minutes and one hour. The service can't accommodate income from other states.

Meadows said this is the program's fifth year, and next year he hopes to offer sessions every Saturday during tax season.

Any questions should be directed to Meadows by phone at 346-3344.

— Adam Cherry

### Late-winter storm salvages ski season

BAKER CITY — Oregon ski area operators have finally gotten what they wanted for Christmas — four months late.

That would be snow, and lots of it.

For Rick Pignone, operator of Ski Anthony Lakes resort in Eastern Oregon, the warm, dry spell during March almost convinced him to close down his resort for the season.

After all, only 2,082 people skied at Anthony Lakes in March, almost half as many as visited the resort in March 2004.

But then came the snows of late March, and now Pignone has decided to stay open through at least April 10, thanks to 30 inches of new powder.

"One side of me says this is a very poor business decision, but with all this new snow I just didn't have the heart (to close)," he said. "And I have an obligation to my season-pass holders. I'm hoping the public will come back. I hope I'm not wrong."

Meanwhile, after a dismal season at Mount Hood Meadows Ski Resort, the winter storm has dumped about three feet of snow on the slopes so far.

"When we closed in March, a lot of people presumed we'd thrown in the towel, but I was just waiting for the next storm," said Dave Riley, Mt. Hood Meadows' general manager. "I've got thousands of season-pass holders, and I'm going to do everything possible to reopen if we've got the snow."

Forecasters are predicting another cold front this weekend with the wet pattern continuing into next week.

### Oil prices may rise above \$100 a barrel

Oil prices rose above \$55 a barrel Thursday, boosted by rising prices for gasoline and heating oil and an investment bank report that said strong demand and tight supplies could cause a "super spike" that sends prices above \$100 a barrel.

After climbing as high as \$56.10 a barrel, light, sweet crude for May delivery settled at \$55.40 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange, an increase of \$1.41. A Nymex peak of \$57.60 was set on March 17.

Heating oil rose more than 5 cents to finish at \$1.6576 a gallon on the Nymex, while unleaded gasoline rose nearly 6 cents to \$1.6549 a gallon.

On Wednesday, heating oil futures

settled more than 5 cents higher and gasoline futures closed more than 2 cents higher following the release of U.S. government data that showed a drop in the nation's supply of gasoline and distillate fuel, which includes heating oil.

The report, which also showed a large increase in crude oil inventories, said gasoline demand over the past month was 2 percent higher than last year.

"I think the market is a little surprised that demand is staying pretty strong even with record-high prices," said Tom Bentz, a broker at BNP Paribas Commodity Futures in New York.

The average retail price of regular unleaded gasoline is \$2.15 a gallon, according to the Energy Department.

The report from Goldman Sachs raised the possibility of oil prices rising as high as \$105 a barrel.

"Oil markets may have entered the early stages of what we have referred to as a 'super spike' period — a multi-year trading band of oil prices high enough to meaningfully reduce energy consumption and recreate a spare capacity cushion only after which will lower energy prices return," Goldman Sachs analyst Arjun N. Murti said in the report.

Murti said factors contributing to the run-up in prices include geopolitical turmoil in oil producing nations and greater energy efficiency worldwide that has enabled economies to grow in spite of the higher prices.

The U.S. government's latest supply snapshot showed that refineries were running at 91 percent of their output capacity and that imports of crude have averaged 10.2 million barrels a day over the past month, compared with 9.9 million barrels a year earlier.

In the latest signal that OPEC considered the market under control, Qatar's oil minister, Abdullah bin Hamad Al Attiyah, said there were no supply problems and that he did not expect the group to meet before June, as scheduled.

OPEC agreed earlier this month to raise production quotas by 500,000 barrels per day and said it would consult on whether to increase them by a further 500,000 if prices continued to rise. It recently decided against such immediate action.

While oil prices are roughly 47 percent higher than a year ago, Nymex futures would need to surpass \$90 a barrel to approach the inflation-adjusted high set in 1980.

— The Associated Press

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