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Effect of election money in campus setting debatable

ASUO executive tickets Rees-Anker-Lagos and Walsh-Coy spent almost one-third less than last year's two tickets

BY PARKER HOWELL
SENIOR NEWS REPORTER

ASUO Executive elects Adam Walsh and Kyla Coy took in less than half the campaign contributions opponents Ashley Rees and Jael Anker-Lagos received during this year's elections, according to financial paperwork filed by the candidates.

The Walsh and Rees tickets pulled in combined donations of about \$2,390, about 31 percent less than top contenders Ben Strawn and Adam Petkun received last year. The candidates spent about \$2,031, also about one-third less than expenditures by last year's candidates.

Winners Walsh and Coy solicited and spent about \$726, according to the records.

Walsh and Coy each contributed about \$238 to their campaign, composing about 66 percent of their campaign's income. Ardemis Walsh contributed \$250.

Election rules prohibit contributions larger than \$500 from any one person or group.

Walsh said the small environment for a campus election makes publicity "a lot easier to come by."

"Really I think it goes to show that in such a closed-off environment, money isn't necessarily going to be the decision maker," he said.

He also said monetary contributions aren't as important in ASUO races because of low voter turnout.

"The kids that are going to be voting, ... most of them are going to take it upon themselves to learn about the candidates and who they're going to vote for," he said. "Unlike larger elections where turnout is seen as your civic duty, here it's really if you're

interested, if you want to take the time to check it out."

He added that he wants to motivate students to become more involved next year.

Walsh said he and Coy began planning and saving as early as December to prepare for their Executive bid.

Rees and Anker-Lagos gathered \$1,664 in monetary contributions, spending \$1,305 with a surplus of about \$359.

Contributions from Rees and Anker-Lagos made up about 11 percent of their income. Rees contributed \$175, while Anker-Lagos did not contribute.

The ticket received major contributions from family members. Roberto Anker gave \$500, Sara Beth Rees gave \$350, Pat Rees gave \$320 and Natalia Anker-Lagos gave \$100. Friend Sara Berger contributed \$120.

Rees and Anker-Lagos said they spent the majority of their funds on T-shirts and on copying fliers and posters.

Rees said money can help a campaign gain visibility, but it won't help a campaign that doesn't engage students.

"You can't say that you need to have money to have an effective campaign," she said. "We spent our money on visibility and we're happy with the amount of visibility we had in the campaign."

Although election rules don't specify when the ticket must return unused funds, past candidates have been encouraged to repay excess money within two weeks, Election Board Coordinator Kelly Cheeseman said.

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IN BRIEF

New Oregon Daily Emerald editor in chief selected

The Oregon Daily Emerald Board of Directors has named Senior News Reporter Parker Howell as the newspaper's next editor in chief to follow the current editor Jennifer Sudick, who will graduate in June.

Howell, a 20-year-old junior journalism student from Hillsboro, started working for the Emerald in March 2004. He now reports on campus and federal politics.

Mark Watson, chairman of the Emerald board, said Howell's strong news sense and experience distinguished him from the other candidate.

"Both candidates are extremely strong, and the board really made a very difficult choice," Watson said. However, he added, Howell's answers to some tough questions and his ideas on renovating the newspaper persuaded the board to select him.

Sudick said she has a lot of confidence in Howell and believed he would improve the overall quality of

the newspaper with his work.

Howell pledged to work hard to offer the "best professional leadership."

"We will continue the things we are doing well, and renovate the things we need to improve," he said.

Howell suggested changes to three aspects of the paper. First, he proposed renovating the newspaper's online presence and offering more multimedia sources online.

"We will put some of our interviews on our Web site to let people decide whether our reports are accurate," he said.

He said he also plans to put some short video and documentaries online to help readers better understand the stories the paper runs.

Another big change will be on the commentary page, where, he said, all kinds of voices would have the chance to be heard.

"We will also try to offer more answers in the editorials rather than only asking tough questions," he said.

The Emerald will also run some sports coverage on the front page under Howell's leadership. He said he believes lots of readers want to see their favorite stories upon their first look at the newspaper.

— Aibing Guo

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