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Four UO students awarded in research paper contest

The top two students received \$1,000 scholarships for schoolwork done during the 2004 calendar year

BY EVA SYLWESTER
NEWS REPORTER

Most University students don't get paid for doing schoolwork. Four students who recently won the University's Undergraduate Library Research Awards competition did.

Junior Alletta Brenner and senior Dunya Chirchi each won \$1,000 scholarships in the competition, which evaluated work done in University upper-division (300-400 level) credit courses during the 2004 calendar year.

Brenner's paper, "The Good and Bad of That Sexe: Monstrosity and Womanhood in Early Modern England," was written for a Robert D. Clark Honors College seminar. Chirchi's paper, "The Combined Success of the International Tropical Timber Agreements," was written for International Environmental Politics, a political science class.

Associate professor of political science Ronald Mitchell, who nominated Chirchi's paper for consideration, wrote in an e-mail that Chirchi's paper stood out from others in the class because of the depth of her understanding of existing theories on environmental treaties and the extent of her research and data collection on a specific environmental treaty.

"I was very excited when I found out my paper had been selected, and I am truly honored to be one of the first recipients of this prestigious award," Chirchi wrote in an e-mail.

Brenner said her 20-page paper almost failed to come together

when a computer crisis destroyed a week's worth of work the day before it was due. She's now considering submitting the paper to journals, and she said she plans to use the scholarship to cover living expenses while she works on her Honors College thesis.

Students entering the competition had to supply a letter of support from a University faculty member.

Lacey Ehrenkranz and Lezlie Frye, both seniors, won \$500 honorable mention scholarship prizes. Ehrenkranz wrote "Ovid Transformed: The Dynamics of Sexual Positioning in Titian's Poesie" for Critical Approaches to Art History, an art history class. Ehrenkranz said in an e-mail that she is now expanding her paper into an honors thesis.

Frye wrote "As Trans as Trans Could Be" for a transgender issues class and expanded it for a thesis in women's and gender studies.

This year was the first time the University has had such a competition. Associate University librarian for instructional services Andrew Bonamici wrote in an e-mail that the library hopes to hold the competition again and is currently raising funds for future awards. Information about future competitions will be posted on the Internet at libweb.uoregon.edu/general/libaward.html.

"I think it is a shame that most excellent student work is never read by anyone except the student and the professor, and is lost once it is graded," Bonamici wrote. "Why not publish valuable student work so it is available to the community? This

is good for the student's portfolio by providing a bona fide publication, good for the scholarly community because the research is valuable, and also reflects well on the UO campus."

Winning entries are posted on the Internet at scholarsbank.uoregon.edu.

Bonamici said the competition also aimed to encourage undergraduates to use the University libraries' primary sources collections, which include "manuscripts and archives, photo collections, government documents, Map/GIS resources, microfilm sets, facsimile editions of historic works and more."

Bonamici said entries were evaluated on extensive, creative use of library services, resources and collections in any format; effective application of information literacy and fluency principles; evidence of significant personal knowledge in the methods of research and inquiry; originality of thought, mastery of content appropriate to class level, clear writing and overall quality of presentation.

"I can honestly say that reading these papers was one of the most exciting experiences I've had in nearly 20 years at the UO," wrote Bonamici, who judged the competition's 12 entries along with four other faculty members and administrators. "All of the entries were excellent, and proved that we have students here with world-class academic talent, passion for their subjects, curiosity and tenacity in the research process. It made me very proud to be part of this academic community, which is something we need to celebrate more often."

evasywest@dailyemerald.com

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Senate: NASU requested \$413 for blankets

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groups whose members favor the second option.

But Senator Baret Volkman said it's logical that groups want the second option because it gives them the most money.

"I think we need to be careful about continuing to spend money and sign away and not care anymore," he said.

Senator Nick Hudson motioned to approve the first option, saying "realistically, I think this one would be the best case to have it approved" by the executive and Frohnmayer. The Senate defeated the motion 2-10.

Senator Rona Yang later motioned to use option two with a provision that calls for a relief committee to be established if the spending is not approved. The motion also failed in a 5-8 vote.

The Senate postponed the matter to hear from student group leaders.

Special requests granted

The Senate also approved \$2,820 in special requests. Senators started the meeting with about \$5,335 in surplus funds after two accounting errors showed Senate ledgers two weeks ago with only about \$335 remaining.

Senate President James George notified groups about the change in an April 25 e-mail, noting that "this does not change the fact that Senate Surplus should be a last resort."

Senators approved \$413 for the Native American Student Union to provide 44 people associated with

the group with a "traditional honoring" of blankets. But some senators said the blankets fall under the Senate's rules against providing money for gifts worth more than \$25.

Sherman called cultural gifts a "gray area," noting that many cultural groups could give gifts.

"I do think this falls under the gift policy," Sherman said. "It appears not to violate the rule to the letter, but it's violating the rule in spirit."

NASU Co-Director Natasha Joseph said the blankets cost about \$5,000 total, of which the group raised all but \$413. She said NASU has given the blankets out for at least five years but gave out a larger amount this year and came to the Senate "as a last resort" after failing to fundraise the entire amount.

Hudson said the blankets are a gift, but if the \$413 is divided among the blankets, each gift costs about \$10 and is allowed by the Senate's rules.

The Senate voted 10-3 to approve the funding.

The Senate also approved \$2,407 of surplus funds to the Men's Lacrosse Club to attend a national competition in Minnesota.

Club Sports Director Sandy Vaughn said the organization has used all its money for the first time and was unable to contribute to the team.

Rule-making attempts also fail

Tension escalated during the meeting when senators attempted to approve changes to the Senate's

rules, formulated this year by the Rules Committee, resulting in a vote to postpone approving the rules.

Because approving rule changes requires a three-fourths vote of the 18-member Senate and only 14 members currently sit on the Senate, Sherman said he could vote against the overall changes and cause them to fail. He was the only senator who threatened to do so, saying the voting rules are flawed.

ASUO Vice President Mena Ravassipour questioned why Sherman had that power.

"Is it just because the squeaky wheel gets the grease?" she said. "It is like one person votes 'no' and it all goes to shit."

George asked the Senate to take into consideration the work the Rules Committee did on the changes. He said delaying the vote might prevent the ASUO Constitution Court from reviewing the rules before several of its members resign this month.

Senator Kevin Day eventually threatened to leave the meeting.

"I feel everybody is tired, frustrated and has things to do," he said. "If this motion doesn't pass, I'm walking out of here anyway."

He said the vote could be delayed because no matter when the Senate votes, approving the changes will become the court's decision.

"It's still in their court," he said.

The Senate postponed the issue.

parkerhowell@dailyemerald.com