

Queer Prom generates safe, fun environment

LGBTQA held the dance for students who might have missed high school prom because of insecurity

BY BRITNI MCCLENAHAN
NEWS REPORTER

Many lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students never went to their high school prom because of insecurity caused by negative attitudes toward them from some students, parents and faculty.

For that reason, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Alliance first held Queer Prom three years ago — to give these students a chance to go to the prom they might have missed in high school.

On Saturday night, the LGBTQA held this year's Queer Prom at the Red Lion Hotel with the theme "Rainbow Royalty."

But this year's event, created to promote diversity and acceptance in the Eugene community, was more about having fun, Prom Queen and event organizer Jenn French said.

"There's a lot of community support — it's great," French said. "We're here to have a great time."

The event was a venue for groups of high school and college students and for community members to dance and sing in unison to house music all night long. Donations collected from the event were used to help fund the prom, French said.

University freshman David Hill offered to volunteer at the event.

"The point is to promote diversity," Hill said. "This is a big issue and I think events like this one do a good job of telling people we're here."

Luke Good volunteered at the event and said he was really excited to just have a good time.

"It's great to get everyone together and have a good time. It's a good end-of-the-school-year event," Good said. "There's homosexuals, heterosexuals — everyone. We're having fun, we're dancing and we're together. It's all that matters."

Good, a freshman at Lane Community College, said there's more diversity in Eugene compared to his hometown of Roseburg.

"Roseburg is a cesspool of ignorance and arrogance," he said. "It's full of people who can't just accept people who are born the way they are. It's awful."

Good and Hill talked about the difference between Eugene and Roseburg.

"Let me put it this way, in Roseburg, Luke or I would never have gone out in heels," Hill said, referring to Good's strappy high heel shoes.

"We wouldn't have even thought about it," Good said.

North Eugene High School students Joey Slagley, Naomi Bradley and Ehren Indell attended the Queer Prom for the first time on Saturday and said the event was a lot of fun. They agreed that while Eugene is better than a lot of cities with its liberal views, it still has some progress to make in accepting and promoting diversity.

"I think it's overrated," Slagley



MATT NICHOLSON | FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHER

Jenn French is crowned queen of the LGBTQA's Queer Prom at the Red Lion Inn on Saturday night.

said. "The community perpetuates that it's accepting but it really depends on where you are."

"Our school's pretty good, but there are some people who make you feel uncomfortable," Indell said.

University students Billy Hatch, an

international studies major, and Minh Quan, a pre-med student, went to the prom for the fun and dancing and didn't think of the event as addressing a larger social issue.

"(Queer Prom) gives a lot of people a place to show their identity and

feel comfortable," Quan said.

"A lot of people say they're cool with it but they're full of shit," Hatch said. "There's a difference between being tolerant and being accepting."

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Class features chance to see like a CEO

The class consists of only 20 students and provides an opportunity to see the inside of big business firsthand

BY EVA SYLWESTER
NEWS REPORTER

A University class this term offered select students the opportunity to look at businesses from a unique vantage point: that of the chief executive officer. Five current and former CEOs of Fortune 500 corporations visited the University and worked closely with students.

Chuck and Gwen Lillis co-taught the CEO Leadership Series in the Lillis Business Complex, built in part by their \$14 million donation. Both have doctorates in business; Chuck Lillis earned his at the University and was the CEO of Fortune 500 cable and broadband communications firm MediaOne Group, Inc. until AT&T bought it.

"My observation was that you learn a lot of things in business school, but you don't have an opportunity to see how those things come together at the higher level of management in large public companies," Chuck Lillis said. "I was fortunate to be an academic and a CEO."

The 20 students in the class, mostly M.B.A. students, were each chosen through a competitive application process.

"We wanted to put together ... teams of students with balanced skills," said professor of management Rick Mowday, who helped coordinate the class.

The class met for three hours, once per week. The Lillis' home is in Denver, Colorado. For the first few weeks of the term, the couple tried living at a local hotel, but having pet dogs made that problematic, so they switched to flying to Eugene for two days each week and staying in touch with students via the Internet,

Chuck Lillis said.

The other four CEOs involved with the class were Tim Boyle, CEO of Columbia Sportswear Co., Jeff Fetting, president and CEO of Whirlpool Corporation, Steve Malcolm, chairman of the board, president and CEO of the Williams Companies, which deal with natural gas, and Jeff Noddle, chairman and CEO of SuperValu, Inc., a food retailer. Each visited the University to hear presentations from students and give public lectures.

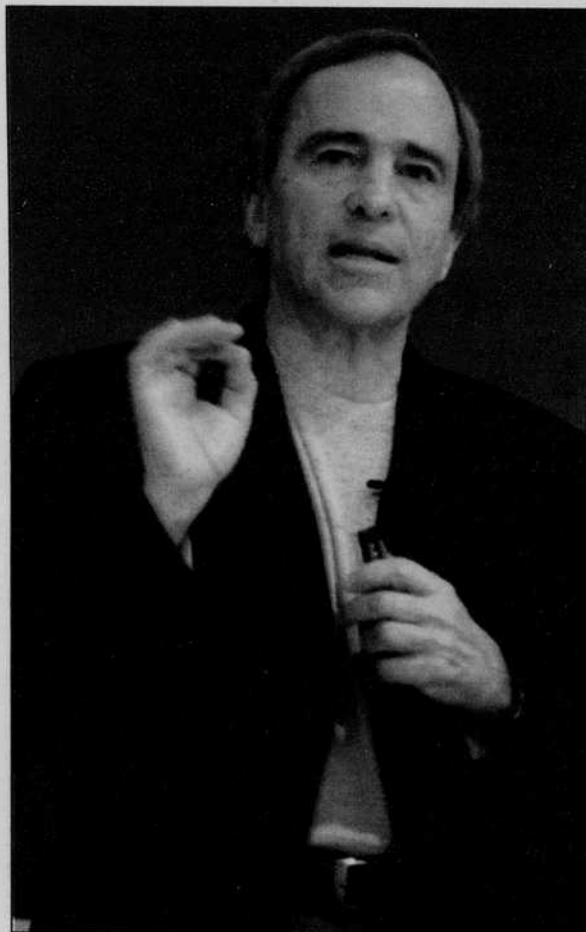
Mowday said the Lillises approached 18 corporations and all were willing to participate in the class. Of those 18, four companies that face a variety of challenges in the business world were selected.

For instance, Mowday said, SuperValu, Inc. directly competes with Wal-Mart in the realm of grocery retail.

"If that doesn't make you a little bit nervous, you probably need medical attention because Wal-Mart's a formidable competitor," Mowday said.

In addition to the CEOs, Mowday said the Lillises also brought consultants who work with CEOs to the class. The consultants talked to students about leadership and how to give presentations to high-ranking executives.

The class was divided into five teams of four students, and each team researched one of the corporations involved with the class. Each team then visited its assigned company's headquarters, which meant, depending on the team, traveling to Tulsa, Okla., Benton Harbor, Mich., Eden Prairie, Minn., or Portland, Ore.



ZANE RITT | PHOTOGRAPHER

Accounting masters student Daniel Geiger visited SuperValu, Inc. in Minnesota with his team in mid-April and found the school-funded trip educational.

"You never get to know anything about a company just from reading articles," Geiger said.

"When you can really get out and touch and feel a real company, that's a great advantage the University has, and the University should retain that," Noddle said. He added that the common practice of teaching

business through case studies is ineffective because case studies quickly become outdated and don't reflect the unplanned events that come up in the course of running a business.

Noddle said the students' bright conceptual thought and speed with which they learned about the corporations impressed him.

"It once again told me that our country's in great future hands," Noddle said.

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Budget: Fees slated to rise in colleges

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to pay for it."

The law school's fee will increase by \$600 per term next year if the fee book passes, a 16 percent change Paris said will help pay for increasing costs in salaries and benefit plans. She added the fee also addresses expenses like scholarships. Law students paid \$3,125 in resource fees per term this year.

The AA&A college has proposed a \$75 or \$125 fee for its students next year. According to an e-mail from Doug Blandy, AA&A associate dean for academic affairs, the purpose of the resource fee is "to provide new and expanded non-instructional support services for students."

Blandy anticipated that 40 percent of the revenue would be returned to AA&A programs and departments for distribution and 60 percent would be allocated to enhance the college's infrastructure, including improvements to computing and faculty and student facilities and career services.

The Honors College would increase its fee rate, which steps down as students progress through five years in the program. Next year's freshmen will pay \$700 per term according to the Fee Book. Sources at the Honors College said this year freshmen paid only \$500.

"The populist in me is not real happy about it," Richard Kraus, Honors College director, said of the fee. "But ... we need it."

Kraus added that the Honors College already operates "in the red." The number of tenure-track faculty in the college and the 25 student cap on classes differentiates it from the rest of the University.

"If our students can afford this, it's still a bargain I think," Kraus said.

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