

Lawsuit: Harmon draws parallels between coaching track and real estate

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third of the amount asked for in the lawsuit, gender discrimination cases are expensive cases to bring to trial.

"It's part of the settlement that both parties would like to move forward. We'd both rather not drag it through the coals," Harmon said. "I think the settlement speaks for itself, and I wish University of Oregon track and field well," said Harmon.

Harmon said she's glad to put the lawsuit behind her because the realities of the process don't "represent the growth that's taken place."

Harmon, who had been a successful track and field athlete when she attended the University, joined the track and field coaching staff in 1985.

She served as an assistant women's throws events coach for 18 years before being dismissed.

Harmon's circumstances have changed significantly since being dismissed from the University's track and field coaching staff.

Back in her home town with a new career, Harmon has gotten out of athletics and into real estate.

In October, 2004, shortly before filing the suit, Harmon told the Emerald she was struggling financially.

"You're practically going from caviar to rice," Harmon told the Emerald. "I'm just short of picking my children up and moving across the country for a hope and a prayer to not have to deal with what I have here."

It turns out, she would have to move only about 40 miles to find the opportunity she was looking for.

In September, 2004, Harmon's mother broke her arm. Harmon went to Oakridge to help her mother run her Oakridge-based

real estate brokerage while she recovered.

"I had nothing better to do since I was unemployed," Harmon said.

Harmon took a liking to the new business and decided to go pro. She got her real estate license in February, and sold her Eugene home in March. It sold in one day.

"With mom's help, of course," Harmon said.

She bought an 18-acre retreat ranch near Oakridge, where many of her relatives live, and went to work in her mother's brokerage — Oakridge Real Estate.

"It's really wonderful," Harmon said.

Between maintaining her property and working at Oakridge Real Estate, Harmon is staying busy.

"I'm working on a chicken coop right now for 15 little chickies," Harmon said. Clearing blackberries and bramble also takes up a significant portion of her time in

the mornings.

In the afternoons, she goes into the office to serve the walk-in clientele at the real estate brokerage.

"Mom and I hammer it out," she said.

Most of her clients are retirees or pre-retirees from California who are looking to relocate, Harmon said.

"They want a little hunk of land and they want a quiet life," Harmon said, referring to her clients. "They're not dependent on the economy in our town."

She also has clients from Eugene, Portland and Bend — first-time homebuyers who are willing to commute in order to take advantage of the low housing prices in Oakridge.

Harmon says there are a lot of similarities between coaching track and field and selling real estate.

"There's a lot of salesmanship that's involved in both," Harmon

said. "If you're listing a piece of property, you're going to put forth the best aspects possible," which is very similar to the collegiate recruiting process, according to Harmon.

"There's a lot of showing off the wares, so to speak," Harmon said.

Also, both jobs demand irregular hours and involve creative problem-solving, Harmon said.

Harmon is also working on setting up her retreat ranch to host large events and gatherings.

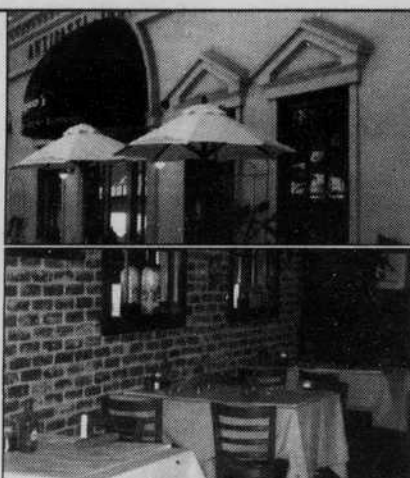
"We're working right now with a Montessori school that's going to be using our facilities for outreach events with their kids," Harmon said.

Harmon's "Tired Dog Ranch" has also hosted a bike race and other events.

"They'd camp out and just have a great time," Harmon said.

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Grievance: Thomson hopes others come forward

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another job."

Weston is an emeritus professor. Thomson consulted with O'Brien during the grievance process.

"I got a lot of support, thank God, because it pretty much disturbed me," Thomson said.

"What we're mainly concerned with here at the Women's Center is providing support for women who are dealing with these issues," O'Brien said. "We act as advocates for students."

O'Brien says the Office of Student Life and the Bias Response Team can also be helpful resources for students who have been sexually harassed.

"The first thing to do is recognize that it's not your fault," O'Brien also suggests that victims of harassment keep a written record of incidents and interactions with their harassers.

"The grievance process is not the easiest process to go through," O'Brien said. "They're not believed at first. They have to prove that this has happened."

O'Brien said the benefit of the doubt is usually given to the alleged harasser rather than the complainant.

"It's really unfortunate that we live in a society that treats sexual violence against women — sexual harassment — in this manner."

O'Brien said she would like to see more training for professors concerning sexual harassment.

"We have professors who are actually ill-equipped to deal with the female gender," she said.

O'Brien said sexual harassment at the University takes place not only between professors and students but between bosses, subordinates and coworkers.

"Anywhere where there's a significant power dynamic," she said. "The University is not only a place where students go to school, but a place where thousands of employees work."

O'Brien said many students who've been harassed are afraid to report it.

"It doesn't always feel safe for the complainant," she said.

Thomson said she hopes other students who've been harassed will see her example and feel safe coming forward with allegations.

"I feel empowered," Thomson said. Weston declined to comment.

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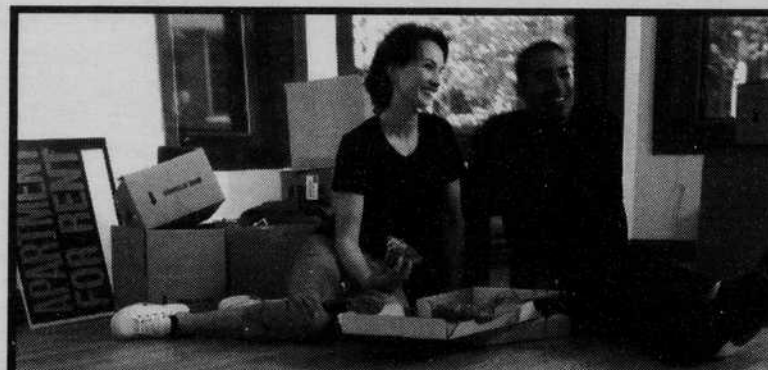
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