

Developing their abilities



Juno Dean Clackamas Print

**Emily Walters**

*The Clackamas Print*

They are disappearing throughout the country – no, I speak not of the fairies, although they are getting mighty rare these days. Alas, I am talking of darkrooms, the realm of photographers.

With the coming of digital photography to the art scene, many darkrooms have vanished. However, many schools, including Clackamas, still have them in use. Oregon State University, for instance, has several.

At Clackamas, film photography has been taught off and on throughout the years. Several years ago, a makeshift darkroom was set up in the old Art Center.

The photography classes had to use that darkroom for about three years, sharing space with the jewelry and metals classes. Then, in June 2003, the current darkroom was built in the new Art Center, and the students were able to develop their film without having to set up all the equipment, only to have to tear it down again at the end of class.

Smith Eliot is the sole film photography instructor at Clackamas, and also teaches at Portland Community College. Though having experience with both film and digital photography, she has observed that film is generally the preferred medium.

"Amongst those who are invested in photography, there is a lot of controversy over whether

digital prints last as long as silver prints," said Eliot. "There are very few people who think that digital prints are better."

Surprisingly, her photography classes have not suffered at all for students, even with the ever-gaining popularity of digital photography.

"Here at Clackamas, I find that classes are still as full as they ever were," she said.

Eliot believes that the photography classes would not be the same if the darkroom was not available to the students.

"Here's an analogy: It would be like telling a volleyballer how to play, but never putting them out on the court," she said. "The students have to train their eyes as part of the process to becoming an accomplished photographer."

The Clackamas darkroom is a key part of Eliot's classes. Her passion for photography has been enriched by the hands-on darkroom experience.

"I personally prefer the darkroom to the printer because there is a certain degree of interaction that you cannot get from the computer to the printer that you have in the darkroom," she said.

Walking into the darkroom is almost like entering a different world; the lighting and smell creates an unearthly atmosphere.

"There is something really magical about the alchemy of darkroom printing," said Eliot. "It's kind of like turning silver into gold, but the gold is the image."

'Displace Me'  
Students learn plight of refugees

**Katie Wilson**

*Co-Editor-in-Chief*

1.7 million: That's the estimated number of displaced people currently in Uganda.

Last Saturday, 67,871 people gathered in cities across the United States to raise awareness for the situation in Uganda and to experience exactly what it's like to be a refugee.

This event, 'Displace Me,' was organized by a non-profit group called Invisible Children, Inc.

The group was born from a film the three original founders created in 2003. Now, according to their mission statement, they are actively involved in improving "the quality of life for war-affected children by providing access to quality education, enhanced learning environments and innovative economic opportunities for the community" through various outreaches.

One of the 'Displace Me' cities last weekend was Seattle, Wa.

According to Useni Makano, a student ambassador and "Displace Me" participant, ages ranged from 16 to 30 years old, and there were quite a few Clackamas students

present.

What is hunger? Participants got a taste of it. For 24 hours all they had to eat was Saltine crackers, and all they had to drink was water.

What is homelessness? The participants only had cardboard boxes.

"We built our own houses," said Makano. "There were some creative people there."

It wasn't only about the refugee experience: They showed the Invisible Children movie, had a time of silence and wrote letters to U.S. senators and the president of Uganda.

"I think it was good," said Esther Prentice, a Clackamas student and president of the college's Global Activism Club. "They'll get so many letters. I think there was a news station there too."

Makano, who was born in Africa, wants to continue spreading the word here at the college. The most effective way, he thinks, is to show the original Invisible Children film.

"I look at it and just go, 'Wow,'" he said. "I really want to get the word out. If people are willing to come watch the video, I want to show it. It's an eye-opener. You can't ignore it."



Contributed Photo

ABOVE: CCC student Esther Prentice builds a shelter out of cardboard. BELOW: (Left to right) ASG Members Margo Wyatt, Mitch Hayse and Useni Makano take a moment to relax during the event. BOTTOM: The Displace Me site where nearly 68,000 people gathered last weekend. For more information about Invisible Children, Inc., visit [www.invisiblechildren.com](http://www.invisiblechildren.com).



"The academic experience is great, and spending time with others who sacrifice so much to grow personally and professionally is inspiring."

**Shannon Thorson**  
Fire and Life Safety Chief  
McMinnville Fire Department

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