

programs for transition, along with drug and alcohol treatment in prisons.

"They have reduced the very programs which would make a successful transition a more likely income," says Chase. "Research based cognitive restructuring programs are the core of offender rehabilitation programs ... which would reduce recidivism and consequently reduce incarceration costs."

Chase blames not only the governor, but also the DOC and the Legislature: "What this says about our priorities as a state and our hopes and dreams for the future is not encouraging," he says.

The DOC's mission statement is to "promote public safety by holding offenders accountable for their actions and reducing the risk of future criminal behavior." — *TJT*

PRETEXT FOR PROFILING

Cortez Jordan's allegation that police stopped and searched him while walking on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard because he is black has sparked a storm of criticism of Eugene Police and calls for reform.

The police investigated themselves and cleared themselves of wrongdoing. A summary of the police investigation of the complaint against police states that the stop was legal because officers may legally stop an individual who commits a traffic violation. What was Jordan's alleged "traffic violation?"

Hundreds of white people do it every day in Eugene without police stopping them. Jordan allegedly violated Eugene Municipal Code Section 5.425 which states, "A pedestrian shall cross a street at a right angle, unless crossing within a crosswalk."

Since most people don't walk with tractors, such a broadly worded ordinance in effect gives police a legal pretext to stop anyone they want.

But EPD hasn't used the ordinance to sweep up violators in North Eugene cul de sacs. Police, of course, have enforced this ordinance with a high degree of selectivity. Police reform protesters in the 1990s complained that the police had singled them out for "right angle probation" violations. Jordan now complains he was targeted because he's black.

Statistically, Eugene police stop blacks at a much higher rate. A Eugene police department study of 18,000 traffic stops in 2002 found that officers chose to stop black drivers at a rate 2.3 times higher than whites. Police officers then chose to search those black drivers at a 37 percent higher rate.

The rate at which police stopped young black males (like Jordan) was especially high. There are only about 280 black males aged 18 to 29 in Eugene, according to Census data. But Eugene police reported 151 traffic stops among this small group in 2002. That's an annual rate of more than one stop per two young black men in Eugene. — *Alan Pittman*

EVEN TORREY NOW BACKS IT

Sex abuse and racial profiling scandals at the Eugene Police Department have had an impact. No one now appears to openly oppose creating an independent citizen police review board for police complaints.

Mayor Jim Torrey opposed creating such a board in 1998, when a measure to create one failed by less than 1 percent. But at a Dec. 6 council meeting Torrey announced, "I'm convinced it is now time to move forward with a civilian review effort."

The Police Commission that Torrey has largely packed with uncritical police boosters for the past four years has also come around. At a Dec. 9 meeting, commissioners unanimously voiced support for creating a citizen review board.

But Police Commissioner Angie Sifuentes pointed out, "the question is not if we need an external review board, but what is the best external review board for the community."

Deciding that next year could be a tough political fight for advocates of meaningful police reform. Police Commissioner and City Councilor Bonny Bettman said she "wholeheartedly supports" external review, but warned, "I will not hesitate to oppose a body that lacks empowerment."

Police Commissioner Tim Laue also warned that real external review has to be

open and transparent to the public and have real strength and teeth; "otherwise it's just a waste of time." — *Alan Pittman*

UNDERCOVERED VOTE FRAUD

Michigan Congressman John Conyers of the House Judiciary Committee stated last week that he and others are "prepared" to formally challenge the Ohio electoral votes when U.S. presidential votes are counted in Congress on Jan. 6. However, Conyers has not yet decided to proceed. At least one senator willing to join a challenge is also necessary, and many grassroots groups are working to find a senator.

Locally, members of truthinvoting.org are holding a Vigil for a Fair Vote in the Eugene offices of U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio and Sen. Ron Wyden, asking them to agree to join in a challenge if it is brought by Conyers and/or others (www.truthinvoting.org).

Ohio Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell delayed the beginning of his state's recount until Dec. 13 — just in time for Ohio's electors to cast all their votes for Bush. They did this despite a lawsuit asking for a court order to stop the electors' meeting, and a request by Conyers and others to delay or treat the electors' vote as provisional until the recount could be completed. The recount is now proceeding but so far shows little change in vote totals. The lawsuit, brought

by a group of Ohio voters, demands an overturn of the state vote, alleging that Kerry won. Dismissed on a technicality Dec. 16, the suit was refiled the next day.

Reports of voting irregularities and recount sabotage surface on a daily basis, and major newspapers such as the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* have begun to cover them. An employee of Triad Systems, which provides vote-counting software for almost half Ohio's 88 counties, allegedly arrived at a county elections office before the recount and dismantled a machine, apparently replacing parts, then suggested to elections employees that they post machine-count totals inconspicuously in their office so they could make hand-recount numbers match exactly. Conyers has asked the FBI to investigate. Elections officers in one Ohio county took polling books away from recounters, reportedly on Blackwell's orders, then left the books and ballots lying in an unlocked building all night.

John Kerry has now written a letter to election boards in all Ohio counties, asking a series of questions about the vote count. However, Blackwell has refused to answer any of Conyers' 36 questions about state election irregularities. "If these allegations are obviously baseless as you have claimed," responded Conyers, "it would seem you could perform a public service by dispelling them. The voters deserve no less."

For frequent news updates, see www.solarbus.org and www.audit-thevote.org — *Kate Rogers Gessert*

BLUEPRINT FOR DIVERSITY

By Kera Abraham

The UO's year-old Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity (OIED) is taking steps to create a diversity action plan for the university. OIED has formed a work group and an advisory group to lay out the plan, assist with consulting and incorporate feedback from a series of public "diversity conversations." The goal is to align diversity initiatives and resources "so we can get the best bang for our buck," says Vice Provost of Institutional Equity and Diversity Greg Vincent.

The diversity action plan has five prongs: developing cultural competency, building critical mass, expanding the "pipeline" (a metaphor describing the student's journey from high school through college and into the work force), strengthening community, and developing the diversity infrastructure.

John Shuford, director of the Center on Diversity and Community (CoDaC), is involved in the cultural competency aspect of the plan. "Cultural competency is basically the possession of the awarenesses, knowledges, skills, values, and beliefs that are necessary to effectively engage and serve a diverse population," he says. "Diversity demographics change constantly. There's an ongoing need for skill-building."

Vincent, who runs the OIED, is responsible for leading and coordinating the diversity action plan across campus. He says that community members as well as senior university officials have expressed a commitment to bolstering diversity at the UO.

Participants in the first two public diversity conversations offered suggestions such as improving the complaint-resolution process and holding supervisors responsible for diversity issues within their units. The family member of one student of color said that the student felt isolated on campus and was thinking about leaving the university. "Our goal is to keep that to an absolute minimum," Vincent says.

The numbers of underrepresented students at the UO is at a historic high of 13.3 percent, partly due to the university's diversity-building scholarships and minority recruitment programs, Vincent says. Although the proportion of minority students is lower than that at some other universities (UC Berkeley's student body is 65 percent non-white), Vincent says that the numbers are heartening given Oregon's racist history.

"I'm certainly aware of the unfortunate history of Oregon, and I think that did artificially keep the numbers [of underrepresented students at the UO] low, but then we have these other demographic realities of Oregon — a growing Latino population, for example," Vincent says. "All of the growth is in the minority populations."

The UO's diversity action plan will draw from similar programs at the University of Wisconsin and Ohio State, Vincent says. If the development process goes smoothly, the diversity action plan will be implemented by January 2005.

"People here are really excited about this," Shuford says. "It's an area that a lot of folks have wanted to work on in a more structured way, and I think that the creation of this new office [OIED] has created the conditions to do that."

The next public diversity conversation will take place Jan. 18 from 9:30 to 11:30 am in the Knight Library Browsing Room.



Vice Provost Greg Vincent