

Financial Aid: Picture Still Isn't Clear

The Tribal Education Program staff attended the 1993 OREGON ASSOCIATION OF FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATOR'S conference on February 6-9. Primary topic of discussion focused on changes brought about by the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. By now many students are aware that the Financial Aid Form (FAF) has been changed to be called the Federal Student Aid Application (FSA), which is free.

In past issues of Smoke Signals, the Education Department stressed the urgency for filing your Financial Aid Forms early, and at the OASFAA convention, this issue was extremely emphasized. More middle income students will become eligible for financial aid, driving applications to an all-time high. Furthermore, there will be an elimination of "special circumstances" regarding those students who have moved out of a parental household, earned a minimum of \$4,000 per tax year, and has declared him/herself to be single and head of a household. Parents and students must be aware—if a student is under 24 years of age, has no dependents, has not served in the military, has not been declared by the courts to be his/her own legal guardian, is not married, and not a graduate student, that student will be considered to be dependent.

Those students who were declared to be independent during the 1992-93 school year, you may be facing a change in your status for financial aid eligibility as well. The Tribal Higher Education Program is advising all students who face a change in their dependent/independent status next year to appeal this determination to your Financial Aid Office on campus.

Currently, Financial Aid Office staff at the community colleges, universities, and four-year colleges as well as the proprietary schools, are facing stricter guidelines in how they will award financial aid. They also are facing the possibility of more federal audits to review how they determine and provide financial aid, as well as their record of compliance. Several issues were addressed at the OASFAA conference as to how appeals regarding dependent/independent status is determined. Factors regarding parent contribution changes, being necessary or by choice, will play a key part in determinations. Students need to be aware, if you are going to appeal financial aid determinations, it will be extremely important for you to provide the necessary documentation you can to support your appeal.

The best advice you can follow is, if you are going to be attending school during the 1993-94 school year, file your financial aid forms now! The Tribal Education Program will not be accepting applications for Higher Education during the month of August. If you wait until August to consider going to school in September, you are too late. Your application will not be considered until Winter Term, 1994.

Apply Early For School

During Winter Term, 1993 enrollment at the start of the term, a significant number of tribal members and employees attempted to enroll in one or two classes at the local community college, only to find out that classes were filled and no new sections were going to be added on. The word is, many of the community colleges in Oregon are filled to capacity, and as a result of this student increase, those students currently attending school have first shot at signing up for classes for the following term. This leaves many classes filled, and may result in your inability to enroll in just one class at the start of the term.

If you plan on signing up for classes during Spring Term 1993, do so now! A number of tribal staff attempted to register for classes a week before and during the week of

Winter Term, 1993 registration and were informed the classes they wanted were full. Spring Term catalogs were distributed during the last week of February. Avoid being shut out! Register for classes now!

Cultural Awareness Week: A Huge Success

By Cecile Kneeland

The students at Grand Ronde Elementary School got to experience a little of all types of cultures during Cultural Awareness Week, February 1-5. Some of the major activities included a general assembly on Monday, a rice tasting festival on Wednesday, and dance assembly on Thursday. During the general assembly, Principal Sumner explained the importance of understanding different cultures, because we live in a multi-cultural society. Tribal Council member Kathryn Harrison talked about tribal history, and Molly Rimer, Miss Grand Ronde 1993, did the Lord's Prayer in sign language to conclude the assembly.

During the rice tasting festival, each classroom created a different ethnic dish with rice as the base, and then everyone in the school sampled each other's food.

At the beginning of the dance assembly on Thursday, Tribal Council Chairman Mark Mercier presented Principal Sumner with a Pendleton blanket, in recognition of her joint effort with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde in the spirit of sharing cultures. Music teacher Linda Robertson directed the children in a variety of dances, such as the Mexican Hat Dance, and the Jamaican and Afro-American Hand Jive. Two Native American Indian dances were performed, one inter-tribal straight war dance, and a circle dance that most students and teachers participated in. Bill Wilson, concluded the program by playing a courting song on his Native American flute.

Various presentations were given throughout the week by many tribal members, employees, and other Native Americans, and on Friday, four students from Western Oregon State College attended: Meca Iwasawa and Shukuko Miyachika, both from Japan; Liying Zheng from China; and Samboon Rakmanusa from Thailand.

All the students learned about various cultures, but the Native American students showed a sense of pride as they gained more knowledge about being a Native American Indian.

Many thanks to the following people:

Mark Mercier, Tribal Council Chairman
Kathryn Harrison, Tribal Council Vice Chairwoman
Candy Robertson, Tribal Council Secretary
Margaret Provost, Tribal Council member
Kathy Sumner, Principal, Grand Ronde Elementary
Dean Azule, Education/Training Division Manager
Michelle Kimsey, Title V
Wendi Spencer, JOM
Shawn Hostler, Education Department
Vernon Kennedy, Alcohol Prevention
Darlene Aaron, Education Committee Chairwoman
Molly Rimer, Miss Grand Ronde, 1992-93

Cindy Butler
Craig Whitehead
John Mercier
Camille Mercier
Margo Mercier
Thomas Ainsworth
Jerry Brandon
Tom Bean
Lonnie Leno
Tracy Olson
Bill Wilson
Liying Zheng

Jean Azure
Caroline Cruz
Rhoda Kameroff
Jacques Martinez
Simone Copley
Claudia Leno
Carmen Mercier
Bonnie Martin
Lisa Schmid
Meca Iwasawa
Samboon Rakmanusa

**Before And After School
Care at Grand Ronde
Elementary during the week
of March 22-26, from 7A.M.
to 6:00 P.M.
The children will go on field
trips March 23 and 25.**

Other Education Deadlines

During the month of August a significant number of tribal members scramble to apply and gain entry into school at the last minute. Because of the high enrollment in both the Higher Education Program and Adult Vocational Training Program, the Education Department is establishing application deadlines for funding consideration.

While both programs have witnessed an increase in applicants, there haven't been extra monies allotted to meet this increase. Because of the time it takes to process applications, it becomes necessary to implement these deadlines. If you plan on attending school during the 1993-94 academic year, you must submit your funding applications into the Tribal Education Program by the following dates:

Fall Term, 1993—deadline is July 1, 1993
Winter Term, 1994—deadline is November 1, 1993
Spring Term, 1994—deadline is February 28, 1994
Summer Term, 1994—deadline is April 30, 1994

There will be no exceptions made for applications received after these deadlines. If your application is received after the deadline for the term in which you want to receive funding, it will be placed on a waiting list until next term for consideration. All applications must be postmarked on or before each representative deadline.

Scholarships

It is scholarship application time again. A list of some available scholarship programs, agencies, and foundations are listed below. Many of these scholarship resources also carry a Spring Term deadline:

GRAND RONDE EDUCATION TRUST FUND SCHOLARSHIP

The Tribe sponsors three graduate scholarships at \$5,000 dollars each, and five undergraduate scholarships at \$3,000 each for tribal members pursuing degrees in business administration, medicine and health, law, forestry & natural resources, education, and science. The scholarships are based on academics and leadership on a competitive basis. This year, the program will offer three vocational/technical scholarships in the amount of \$3,000 for students enrolled in community colleges, technical, or proprietary schools. Also to be offered this year include three part-time scholarships for students pursuing completion of advanced degree requirements. All applications must be submitted by April 30, 1993. For more information contact Dean Azule 1-800-422-0232.

Continued on page 11