

# Public and Government Affairs Update



Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy (right) greeted university students at Flock the Block.

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

### University, city leaders welcome students in campus neighborhoods

UO President Richard Lariviere and Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy welcomed students to Eugene on Tuesday, September 28, at the third annual Community Welcome. President Lariviere and Mayor Piercy were joined by ASUO President Ben Eckstein, Eugene City Councilor Alan Zelenka, State Representative Phil Barnhart (D-Central Lane and Linn counties), Eugene City Manager Jon Ruiz, UO Vice President for Student Affairs Robin Holmes, Dean of Students Paul Shang, Assistant Dean of Students Sheryl Eyster, UO Department of Public Safety Chief Doug Tripp, and Eugene Police Department Chief Pete Kerns, among other campus and community leaders.

Participants knocked on doors throughout the Fairmount, South University, and West University neighborhoods, talking with a total of more than 1,000 students, welcoming them to the community and sharing information on crime prevention and being a safe, respectful neighbor.

After leaders walked campus neighborhoods, students gathered at a block party on East 13th Avenue between Kincaid and Alder streets. Dubbed “Flock the Block,” the event featured a DJ, samples from local businesses, a scavenger hunt with prizes from merchants, the Oregon Duck, and an opportunity to talk one-on-one with Mayor Piercy.

## STATE RELATIONS

### Legislature holds interim ‘legislative days’ meetings; OEIB confirmation postponed

The Oregon Legislature met for its first round of interim meetings on September 21–23, holding mostly informational hearing meetings and receiving updates on the implementation of policies enacted during the 2011 legislative session.

The full Oregon Senate also convened, in order to confirm Governor John Kitzhaber’s appointments to the Oregon Health Insurance Exchange Board. The Senate had originally been scheduled to confirm appointments to the newly created Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB), but last-minute concerns raised by the Senate Republican Caucus held up the vote. The OEIB confirmation vote is now scheduled for the November 16–18 legislative meetings.

The OEIB had been scheduled to hold its first meeting on Friday, September 30, but will now not meet until the board’s membership has been confirmed. The governor instead invited OEIB nominees to participate in a SB 909 workgroup on September 30. SB 909 was the governor’s education reform bill, supported by the UO, which created the unified board to oversee all public education, from early childhood to post-secondary.

## FEDERAL RELATIONS

### UO signs letter urging Congress to reach a ‘big agreement’

UO President Richard Lariviere joined more than 130 university presidents and chancellors in signing a [letter](#) to the members of the Congressional Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction urging them to reach “a big agreement—not incremental steps” as they pursue a plan to reduce the national deficit.

The university leaders also called on the committee to “reach a balanced agreement that reduces budget deficits, reins in the nation’s debt, and creates economic and job growth.” The budget agreement should focus on entitlement and tax reform, rather than further cuts to domestic discretionary spending, according to the letter.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Expert discusses local governing boards
- 2 President signs patent reform
- 2 Keny-Guyer appointed to legislature
- 2 Short-term continuing resolutions passed
- 3 Community celebrates improvements west of campus
- 3 Springfield, SCI celebrate new partnership

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(Continued from page 1)

Domestic discretionary spending “is not the primary cause of our rising debt. Imprudent additional reductions in domestic discretionary expenditures and other federal programs that train the next generation risk undermining our nation’s human capital, infrastructure, technological, and scientific needs,” according to the university leaders.

#### FEDERAL RELATIONS

### President Obama signs patent reform bill

In a press conference at the White House on Friday, September 16, President Barack Obama signed the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act. The act reforms the U.S. patent system and is designed to strengthen innovation and improve the country’s potential for economic growth. Passage of the bill was a top priority for higher education groups including the Association of American Universities and the Association of Public Land-grant Universities (APLU).

#### STATE RELATIONS

### University of Virginia education economist discusses institutional governing boards in Oregon

David Breneman, professor of economics in education at the University of Virginia Curry School of Education, visited Oregon on Friday, September 23, to present to a joint meeting of the Senate Education and Workforce Development and House Higher Education committees. Breneman has done extensive research and writing on higher education governance and finance.

In an agenda item entitled “Governance: Beginning Conversations About Local Boards for State Universities,” Breneman reflected on the strengths and weaknesses of institutional boards in Virginia and discussed the differences between states with governing boards and states with coordinating boards. Breneman was joined in the presentation by Oregon University System Chancellor George

Pernsteiner, Oregon University System Chief of Staff Bridget Burns, and Oregon Community College Association Executive Director Andrea Henderson.

Breneman then traveled to the University of Oregon campus to discuss governing boards with a variety of campus leaders. Participants ranged from Associated Students of the University of Oregon leadership and Service Employees International Union representatives to faculty members and university administrators.

#### FEDERAL RELATIONS

### Stopgap spending measure passes Congress

On September 29, Congress passed a continuing resolution that funded federal government operations through October 4, shortly after the beginning of the fiscal quarter. On October 1, Congress finalized a continuing resolution that will fund government operations through November 18. President Obama signed the bill on Wednesday, October 5.

Originally, the outlook for a funding agreement was dim, due to disagreements between Republicans and Democrats over how to pay for Federal Emergency Management Agency funds.

The continuing resolutions are needed because Congress has not approved the appropriations bills for the fiscal year which began this month. These bills continue funding for federal programs based on the previously passed budget bills, until congress passes a new budget.

The agreement eliminates the \$1 billion in FY11 disaster assistance and the \$1.6 billion in spending offsets from energy-related programs that were included in the original House-passed bill. The new version includes the House bill’s \$2.65 billion for FY12 emergency disaster assistance, without offsets.



#### STATE RELATIONS

### New state representative appointed to replace Ben Cannon in HD 46

On Tuesday, September 27, Multnomah County commissioners appointed Democrat Alissa Keny-Guyer to Oregon House District 46, representing southeast Portland. The seat had previously been held by Ben Cannon, a Democrat, who recently vacated the position in order to accept the job of education adviser to Governor John Kitzhaber.

Rep. Keny-Guyer will serve the remainder of Cannon’s term. She can seek election to her own full term in the 2012 election. Currently Keny-Guyer works as the program manager at Oregon Solutions, housed at Portland State University. She has an MPH in health education from the University of Hawaii and a BA in human biology from Stanford University.



Representative Terry Beyer and Oregon Department of Transportation Director Matt Garrett

#### COMMUNITY RELATIONS

### Dedication ceremony hails new UO LTD station and East 13th Avenue street improvements

A host of elected officials and state and local transit executives participated in a celebration of the new UO Lane Transit District bus station and improvements to East 13th Avenue and Alder Street in and near the University Small Business District west of campus on Tuesday, September 27. Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy, State Representative Terry Beyer (D-Springfield), State Representative Nancy Nathanson (D-Eugene), State Representative Phil Barnhart (D-Central Lane and Linn counties), Eugene City Councilor Alan Zelenka, Oregon Trans-

portation Commissioner Mary Olson, Oregon Department of Transportation Director Matt Garrett, Lane Transit District Board Chair Mike Eyster, and ASUO Chief of Staff Kerry Snodgrass all remarked on the projects.

Comments included urging support for increased access to a variety of modes of transportation, as well as commending the vitality of the west university business district.

Changes to the bus station include additional shelters and bus loading platforms with improved lighting, additional crosswalks, new sidewalks, a traffic signal at Kincaid Street and East 11th Avenue, better bicycle parking, and increased landscaping and street trees.

#### COMMUNITY RELATIONS

### Elected officials attend Sustainable City Year kickoff on campus

The UO's Sustainable Cities Initiative (SCI) on Wednesday, September 28, kicked off its Sustainable City Year partnership with the City of Springfield. Springfield Mayor Christine Lundberg expressed her excitement at Springfield's participation in the partnership, while SCI Director Robert Liberty detailed some potential outcomes of the work. Congressman Peter DeFazio (D-Oregon), ranking member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, attended the celebration, and expressed appreciation for the projects that bridge the town-gown divide.

State Representative Terry Beyer (D-Springfield) also attended the kickoff, as did staff members from the office of U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley (D-Oregon).

The UO students in the Sustainable City Year program will work with a variety of Springfield city staff members on projects that will include:

- A critical analysis of assets and barriers to retrofitting the Laura Street neighborhood, which is situated between a large transportation corridor, a bustling big-box commercial center, and a large industrial warehouse area
- An update to Springfield's Bike-Pedestrian Plan and the creation of a Bike Path Connectivity Plan to be reviewed and potentially adopted into future city-wide plans
- Design standards, historic preservation recommendations, and city code revisions to update the current Glenwood Refinement Plan
- Urban design and redevelopment concepts for the Mohawk-area Waremart property
- Research and documentation to assist Willamalane Park and Recreation District in applying for the National Landmark Designation for the Dorris Ranch Living History Farm
- Redevelopment concepts for the Booth Kelly Center, which includes seventeen acres of land and more than 200,000 square feet of industrial business space currently renting to Springfield businesses



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