

Thursday, September 24, 2009

New disc golf course transforms OU grounds with student help

By Eric Reikowski, media relations assistant

Oakland University has a new sport on campus. The recently completed disc golf course, unveiled in early September, provides yet another recreation opportunity for students and marks an additional step in the enhancement of the university's nearly 1,500-acre campus, according to Greg Jordan, director of Campus Recreation.

Plans for a disc golf course began to materialize when the Oakland University Student Congress (OUSC) allocated \$8,000 toward construction of the 18-hole course near the Upper Fields. The Department of Campus Recreation also contributed funds for the project.

"The area had never been developed," said Jordan, adding that the OU grounds crew was called in to mow the grass and remove tree stumps and other debris from the site.

Construction of the course began in June and was undertaken by students in the Summer Student Campus Corps, the university's innovative work program created to provide OU students with an array of professional employment opportunities.

The three students who worked on the project assisted in laying out the course, clearing brush, rocks and fencing from the rugged terrain. Jordan estimates that more than a mile of woods was groomed between everyone who worked on the project.

"This is a great example of a project funded by the students and built by the students," he said. "We're developing a nice activity area to complement the Upper Fields."

OU student Jarret Schlaff, who sponsored the appropriations bill in the OUSC, also designed the course and helped with construction. Stretching across a wide expanse of scenic hills and trees, the 5,541-foot course, dubbed Grizzly Oaks, is situated amid more than 4,000 feet of walking trails and poses an exciting challenge to all disc golfers, novice and experienced.

"It's a really nice course," said Schlaff, a senior Public Administration and Public Policy major who currently serves as director of Student Services in the OUSC. "The sport is definitely growing and the best thing is that anyone can play, regardless of age, gender or disability."

Additionally, Schlaff touts the eco-friendliness of the course, noting the launch pads are made of a synthetic blend of rubber and recycled materials, the holes are marked by rocks and the tees—fashioned from wood instead of cement—are easily moved. The course was constructed with minimal disruption of the natural landscape and many trees and bushes were left in the fairways to make the course more challenging, he added.

The course held its grand opening celebration back on September 10 when hundreds of OU students got their first look at a sport gaining in popularity, particularly on college campuses. In fact, a handful of universities across the country boast disc golf teams and a national collegiate disc golf championship tournament is held each year. As interest in the sport grows at OU, Schlaff sees opportunities not only to form a competitive disc golf team, but also to host tournaments and charity events on campus.

"This course has great potential to get Oakland's name out there, as well as introduce a new activity for students to get involved in," Schlaff said. "The possibilities are endless."

Grizzly Oaks is officially approved by the Professional Disc Golf Association. There is no cost to play the course. For more information on disc golf at OU, contact Schlaff at (248) 622-6448 or jschlaff@oakland.edu.



OU's new disc golf course boasts 18 holes and an expanse of 5,541 feet. The project was student-driven.

SUMMARY

The recently completed disc golf course provides yet another recreation opportunity for students and utilizes part of the university's nearly 1,500-acre campus.

Created by Katherine Land - Deleted (land@oakland.edu) on Thursday, September 24, 2009
Modified by Katherine Land - Deleted (land@oakland.edu) on Thursday, September 24, 2009
Article Start Date: Thursday, September 24, 2009