



Learn more about OU's Eye Research Institute in Libby Baker's article on B1.



Children's anti-drug story helps explain what Marijuana is and its harmful effects. — A5



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50 cents

# Applying race

## Panel talks diversity in professional world

BY ANTHONY MARTINEZ BEVEN  
THE OAKLAND POST

How relevant is race in the workplace, in educational circles?

It's the unrelenting question a lot of people, particularly Metro-Detroiters, struggle to answer.

No longer for OU students though, as they were afforded the rare and unique opportunity to take a glimpse into "Diversity at Work," a panel of professionals in both business and academia on Sunday, Jan. 23 in the Oakland Room of the OC.

A group of nearly 50 – sipping on coffee and nibbling on fruit and veggies –

gathered to hear notable panelists: Ariela Shani, vice president-general manager of Neiman Marcus; Michelle Cook, senior manager of DaimlerChrysler's Diversity Strategic Division; Marcey Uday Riley, partner in IRI Consultant Management; Dr. Jude Nixon, director of Oakland University's Honors College and Derrick Thomas, Great Lakes regional director of Starbucks Coffee.

Daniela Shani, moderator and president of Diverse Voices – the student organization which sponsored the affair – reminded those in the audience that this was only the "precursor" to OU's Seventh Annual Diversity Conference next month.



Dante Ciullo/The Oakland Post

A panel of professionals discuss diversity in the workplace on Sunday Jan. 23.

She then thanked the panelists, inviting each to share their thoughts and views on the value of diversity.

### Common Obstacles

Ariela Shani, a former teacher with a Masters of Business Administration in

finance, was the first to address the group, mainly comprised of human resource development majors.

"I think there's a difference between real diversity and political correctness – one is a passive concept, while one is an active concept," Shani said.

Please see DIVERSITY on A2

# France: Not just fries

BY ALLISON BRUNNER  
SENIOR NEWS WRITER

Claude Baillargeon and his wife spent two years living in France.

In that time he saw and photographed almost everything famous the country has to offer.

Baillargeon, professor of studio art, art history and photography, who received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Barbara, presented a slide show of his favorite pictures in his "France in the Age of Freedom Fries" lecture.

His lecture was the first in the six-city lecture series hosted by the department of art and art history.

He noted that people should realize that french fries are actually a product of Belgium, not France.

Baillargeon compared his photographs to those taken of ancient France to show the drastic changes the country has undergone, especially in its capital, Paris.

The reason he chose France was that he had a prior understanding of the country and its history.

"It is better to go somewhere if you have knowledge of what it looks like beforehand," he said.

Then, when you see something you can recognize it and you know something about it already, Baillargeon said.

He began by showing pictures of famous buildings from the

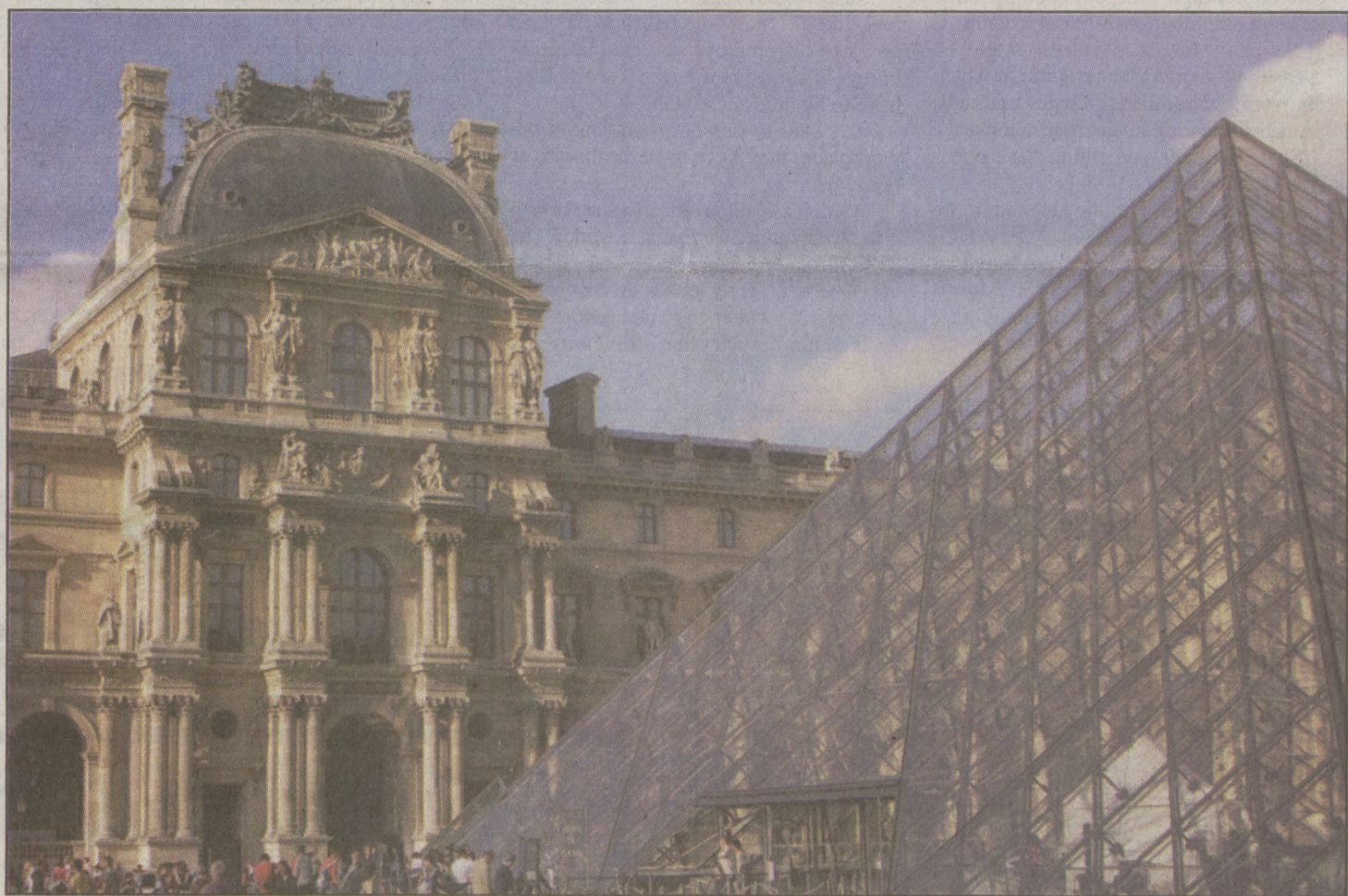


Photo courtesy of Claude Baillargeon

The Louvre was one of the famous landmarks Claude Baillargeon, professor of studio art, art history and photography recommends.

19th century such as Notre Dame, the continuous restoration the buildings are undergoing and then comparison pictures from his stay a few years ago.

"The gardens behind Notre Dame are a beautiful place to

take a moment and write a postcard or simply marvel at all that you have seen," Baillargeon said.

Another famous landmark he recommends is the Louvre, where he has spent quite some time.

However, Baillargeon said if

you do not have the time to go inside the Louvre, be sure to at least stop by to see it all lit up at night.

"The French have an amazing way of lighting their buildings beautifully," Baillargeon said.

Other pictures he shared included those of the Pantheon, the Institut de France, the Porte St-Denis, the Ecole des Beaux-Arts (the School of Fine Arts) and the Opera Garnier.

Please see FRANCE on A8

# Series hits Islam 101

BY CHRISTA ELAINE BADON  
THE OAKLAND POST

There are approximately 1.2 million Muslims in the world, and Nora Mohammad is one of them.

What is this religion? Who are these people? And what do they believe?

Last Wednesday, the series "What is Spirituality?" explored the Islamic religion.

Mohammad, acting president of the Muslim Student Association (MSA) at OU, hosted the event along with MSA Secretary Jameelah Muhammad and MSA Treasurer Sadia Chaudry.

Islam is the name of the religion and Muslims are those who practice it, said Mohammad, a senior.

Like Judaism and Christianity, Islam is an Abrahamic religion.



Roqaya Eshimawi/The Oakland Post

Students gather to learn about Islam with the help of the Muslim Student Association.

Muslims also believe that Abraham, Moses, Isaac and Jesus were prophets of God.

But in Islam, the prophet Muhammad is the chief prophet and messenger.

The god of Muslims is Allah, and they believe he is the same god of Judaism and Christianity.

Please see SPIRITUALITY on A8

# OU students help with relief

BY LOREEN BAHRI  
THE OAKLAND POST

OU students and organizations joined together in an effort to aid victims of the tsunami tragedy.

Thousands more were left homeless and despairing.

OU students are among the millions around the world who are trying to help heal and rebuild.

Tsunami death tolls have reached over 200,000, and the OU community has contributed over \$2,000.

The Indian Students Association (ISA) held a fundraiser benefiting victims of the tsunami from January 10-14 in the OC.

According to Senior Krishna

Gummadi, ISA vice president, \$1,713.55 was raised.

"It's a great help for everyone over there," he said.

ISA was not alone in holding a tsunami fundraiser; the Center for Student Activities contributed with the Soup for Supper Tsunami fundraiser on January 17 from 5-7 p.m.

A \$5.00 donation gave an endless bowl of soup per person and was also part of the Martin Luther King Jr. celebration, which is devoted to community service, according to Jean Ann Miller, director of the Center for Student Activities.

"About 175 people came that

# Congress decides to support new GSC

BY ALLISON BRUNNER  
SENIOR NEWS WRITER

A handful of OU Student Congress legislators headed up a resolution to urge congress to support the creation of a Gender and Sexuality Center (GSC) at Monday's meeting.

Recent letters to the editor have shown not everyone is for building this center.

Because of this, legislators presented a slide show displaying details of the proposal to urge OUSC to take a stand as one body on the issue.

The GSC's mission is to enhance the lives of women and men and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ), students, faculty, staff and alumni.

And further, to increase Oakland community's awareness, understanding and acceptance of its sexual and gender minority members through education, training and advocacy.

Some programs the GSC would offer include mentoring programs, Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) program training for women, a "Love Shouldn't Hurt" program for helping men build intimate relationships based on mutual respect and trust and a women's leadership conference.

The center would also maintain a large collection of books, periodicals and videos to assist students and faculty doing research on women's and LGBTQ issues.

The GSC would be responsible for collaborating with various campus and community organizations, including academic advising, Planned Parenthood and OU's current counseling resource, Graham Health Center.

Students against the GSC voiced their opinions in letters to the editor, but were not present at the meeting to urge congress to vote against supporting it.

Their main reason for being against the GSC is that there is already a counseling center on campus, the Graham Health Center.

OUSC's Public Relations Agent, Duane Hurt, negated that statement by saying that Graham Health Center is not fully equipped to handle gender and sexuality issues.

Gallery members expressed their support for the GSC.

Heather Brewer, vice president of the Women's Issues Forum, spoke on behalf of the group in support for the center. She read a short essay written by a girl who was assaulted and the emotions she felt inside.

Suzanne Spencer-Wood, director of women's studies, followed Brewer.

She too expressed complete support for the GSC. Spencer-Wood explained that almost all public universities in Michigan have some type of center for students, faculty and staff. The only two that do not have one are Wayne State University and Oakland University.

Oakland Community College even has a center, Spencer-Wood added.

The legislators presenting the proposal included that OU

Please see OUSC on A2

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