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Women's Center serves students and community

by Sallie Valley
Staff Writer

"The Women's Center at UMO primarily serves the student population as well as the community at large as an education center focusing on women's issues. The center is open to all students at UMO who have an active interest in women's issues," Christine Dahlin, member of the center said.

The organization has been in operation for 10 years has a membership of eight and circulates a mailing list to 60 people.

"Though we only have an active membership of eight people, this isn't representative of the support we receive. When we are working on projects, we receive support from different groups. The eight members is somewhat of an advisory board," Dahlin said.

Dahlin said the center receives its funds from student government which must be used for academic activities, but funds raised by the group can be used for political support of causes, such as the Equal Rights Amendment.

The Women's Center, located in the Senior Skull Room of the Union, serves not only as the headquarter of the organization but as an extensive resource center. The resource files

include data on women's issues such as rape, sexual harassment, the human life amendment, periodicals and newsletters. The files can be checked out and used by students.

The center supports a programming group called "Focus on Women" which sponsors films, discussions, and speeches in the Memorial Union weekly on Wednesdays. The center also provides support to the Rape Crisis Center of Bangor and oversees the population control fund (a fund which provides interest-free loans for abortion).

Dahlin said that a representative from the center will be attending a regional conference on March 5-7 at Harvard University in Boston. Women's groups from major colleges in New England will attend the conference, which will focus on leadership in women.

The center held a benefit ballet in conjunction with the Life Science and Agricultural Honor Society Feb. 6. The proceeds were split by two groups and the center plans on using the funds from the ballet for ERA support.

"Though our role is primarily educational and that's what we use our student government money for, the ballet profits will be used to fight for ERA, which is one of our major concerns, as the June deadline looms for ratification," Dahlin said.