November 29, 2024

University of Oregon Coalition for a Human Rights Center

Student Organizers

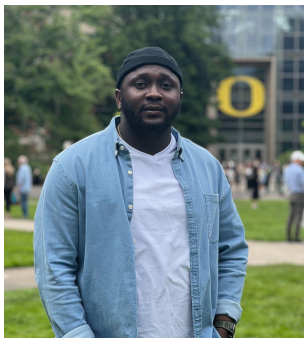
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<td>
Charles Petrik (Senior)</td>
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<td>
Sophia Barghouti (Junior)

Majors in Political Science and minor in Middle Eastern & North African Studies, Arabic</td>
<td>Involved with: UO Law Legal Research and Writing Assistant, CAS Student Advisory Board Representative, UO Senate Undergraduate Council Student Representative, Wayne Morse Scholar, UO Legislative Scholar, UO Scholar Ambassador, Oxford Consortium on Human Rights, Arab Student Association

“As a Palestinian-Lebanese student, I have felt an aching void of opportunities to learn about my people’s history, their struggles, and the relentless human rights violations they endure to this day, let alone broader human rights discourse at the University of Oregon. After the events of October 7 and the wave of protests that engulfed our campus, I realized that the university's silence left us all upset. I needed a space to make sense of it all, to process, to understand, not just emotionally, but intellectually. I needed an institutionalized haven to dissect the complex truths of my people’s struggle and other human rights issues locally and globally. As a modest attempt to fill the void, I began hosting informal discussions about human rights issues in my dorm to try and shape an informed and compassionate campus community. The response was overwhelming. Students crowded into that small room, craving knowledge, yearning for connection, and desperate to understand. Soon I began to realize that my sole efforts as a student to create these spaces were simply not enough and never would be enough without institutional backing. Establishing a Human Rights Center at UO will support this type of dialogue and education coupled with experiential learning and career readiness opportunities for students interested in a human rights career like me.”</td>
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Recommendation for Task Force Members - Student Profiles

 **Samantha Wiesner (Sophomore)** Majors in Global Studies and Planning, Public Policy, and Management and a minor in Arabic	**Involved with:** Student Ambassador, Holden Center, Jewish Community (Hillel, Chabad, Chavurah, JStreet) *"I am interested in creating a University-sanctioned space for community members to learn about human rights issues and to have productive conversations regarding current issues. I would benefit by being connected to learning opportunities and other knowledgeable students and faculty who can help to educate me and to work with me through my thoughts and feelings regarding human rights issues."* swiesner@uoregon.edu
 **Obafemi Akintayo (Second-year Graduate)** Conflict and Dispute Resolution	**Involved with:** Student Bar Association, UNESCO Chair *"I am interested in being part of the task force to help create a Center for Human Rights that will provide valuable learning opportunities, resources, and support for students passionate about making a difference in global and local communities. Being part of the task force would provide me with invaluable opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, networking, and practical experience in advancing peace and human rights, directly enriching my studies and future career in conflict resolution."* obak@uoregon.edu
 **Lee Gray (Second-year Graduate)** History	**Involved with:** Veteran and Family Student Association (VFSA), Peer Advisors for Veterans Education (PAVE) *"UO students need to have a space to have informed, research-driven discussions about conflict and human rights around the world to combat a significant amount of misinformation popular with some students. Fostering robust debate on important international issues of concern would allow me to utilize my experience working in multilateral diplomacy in Africa and develop my skills as a future educator."* leegray@uoregon.edu

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 **Erin Luedemann (Junior)** Major in Business Administration and minors in Spanish and Environmental Studies	**Involved with:** Associated Students of the University of Oregon and Net Impact *"As an ASUO representative, I can help advocate for a physical space for the center and be a resource for building connections on campus. The center would provide educational opportunities that are beneficial to prepare me for future careers."* eluedem4@uoregon.edu
 **Beatrice Kahn (Junior)** Majors in History and English	**Involved with:** UO Prison Education Program (Policy and Reentry intern), Wayne Morse Scholar, UO Legislative Scholar, Clark Honors tour guide, group fitness instructor at UO Rec, and Print Copy Editor for Align Magazine (UO fashion and lifestyle publication). *"I am passionate about increasing access to higher education for individuals who are incarcerated, and by promoting education, we also promote dignity and human rights for those under correctional control. I believe that the student body as a whole will benefit from a Human Rights Center at UO, in addition to students already involved in prison education research and advocacy."* bkahn6@uoregon.edu