

International programs obtain a leader

By CHEN LIN
Online editor

Small and untidy, Eddie West's office appears hardly an apt container for the man's exuberant spirit. Boxes brim with unpacked material throughout, binders and paperwork stacked tall barricade an entire door. In its center is West, himself more casual even than his surroundings. Today, he has on a plaid button-up with no tie; on his round face, a gold-colored Van Dyke.

West is an expressive talker. Like a trapped mime, his hands press outward toward the bounds of an imaginary container, pushing by telekinesis against the enveloping dry wall. He tries to breach the boundaries keeping him from the hallway beyond. No luck however, nothing in his office appears to have yet given way.

But West, the new director of international programs and services at Ohlone, knows well the value of patience. Press as he might, the job of expanding Ohlone's international

outreach, exchange and enrollment he's taken on will take years to see any result.

Before engaging in outreach overseas or hosting exchange students here, West must first establish the required infrastructure at home, starting with the simplest, most overlooked basics. Today, he's setting up an international FedEx account online for Ohlone so information can be mailed to prospective exchange students.

Part of his job's challenge, and what makes it unique, is that no real administration has existed for the coordination of international projects until West. Ohlone lacked the initiative, as the consequences have shown.

Compared to a national average of 4 percent international student enrollment, Ohlone has only 1 percent, consisting only of about 70 students. Internationally, the average is 6 percent.

What's different today, and what has led to the creation of West's office, is a renewed interest in

developing Ohlone's international presence, according to West, largely headed by President Doug Treadway. Beginning in January 2004 with the Taizhou sister college exchange, Treadway's enterprise has encouraged progress in a field once stagnant at Ohlone. Probably, said West, Treadway and others simply asked, "why are we behind the curve?" Ohlone, said West in response, "never devoted enough resources and attention to those areas."

Now that the ball is rolling, only West can steer it. With no real precedent, he only has past experience to work from. Previously at Kokusai College of Foreign Language in Japan, he helped recruit students for a study abroad program to the U.S. and Europe.

That role, combined with a real empathy for "what it's like to leave everything you know and love and to make a new life for yourself," gives West a "more holistic worldview" on the international program at Ohlone. Moreover, he thinks he

"understands what this globalization thing is."

A heady concept, but one that has lately become gradually more tangible. What began in 1989 with the Berlin Wall's collapse continues today with the advent of the Internet and of outreach programs like at Ohlone.

West is only one of many, perhaps millions, working actively to form a better understanding of cultures and people unlike ours, breaching traditional geographical boundaries.

Sitting in his office last Friday, on occasion disrupted by the phone, West eagerly defended Ohlone's international program, arguing for its practicality against detractors who say the program brings no discernible benefit. Ohlone's unique location in one of America's most diverse regions, said West, gives it "so much potential to be a great and active player in the field of international education."

In this regard, West is none too humble about his involvement, and



Photo by Sharon Quintana

Director Eddie West

the prospect of having a key role globalizing the Bay Area excites him.

Only three weeks into his new job, West has first to understand the intricacies of Ohlone's bureaucracy before exploring complex overseas collegiate relationships.

"I am still learning as much as I can about how Ohlone works," said West.

Band's online marketing approach more effective

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demand. With a vertical monopoly on the industry, the Big Five could then raise the cost of entry into the business, making it increasingly harder for independent labels to distribute or sell their music through major label-run companies.

What the music industry couldn't own, they manipulated. Because music is an experience good - it has to be heard to be really evaluated - radio is, or was, an ideal way to promote new music. Payola, the bribing of radio stations to play certain artists, is today handled by a select coterie of industry representatives calling themselves "The Network." It's not the same drug dealing, prostitute pimping scandal that unfolded in the 60's, but it's still as influential, and just as illegal. The Network can afford payola independent labels cannot, effectively fencing out most independent labels with skyrocketing promotional costs.

Producing a successful record

shouldn't cost anything more than decent equipment and exceptional talent - about \$25,000 at most. Instead, it has become for major labels a sometimes multimillion-dollar enterprise involving big name producers, high quality equipment rental and extensive media promotion. Gradually, still-independent labels found the cost of putting a record to market becoming increasingly out of reach. As entry barriers rose, fewer firms could get started in the industry. Meanwhile, the Big Five kept buying up existing labels until each company dominated between 10 percent and 20 percent of the market - totaling in 2002 to some 75 percent. As a result, companies that shirked commercial success for artistic merit could not compete against the millions which major labels poured into one-hit-wonders and boy bands. Innovation was stifled.

But with the Internet came hope. As Clap Your Hands effectively demonstrated last year, the Net is

the ideal alternative to major label distribution. Promotion can be done free of charge by word of mouth through either the blogosphere or Myspace, while distribution is handled using file sharing or with iTunes. Success among bands is selected according to quality, by fans with real taste. Labels will find bribing bloggers difficult, as not only will the community police itself, but also because so few answer to commercial interests. Unlike today's radio, which also suffers intensely from consolidation, blogs are not, and cannot because of their non-profit nature, be controlled with payola.

The onset of the Web does not mean the demise of the independent label. Rather, it marks its revival. When Clap Your Hands became an overnight blockbuster, for example, it signed with British label Wichita Records. Distribution of albums, the kind with covers and plastic casing, is still best handled by labels. In the past, new advances in technology

- the radio, phonograph, cassette, and compact disc, have always helped lower the cost of entry into the industry, ushering in a new wave of independent label startups. The Internet is no different, except that, because it's practically free, the major labels can never control it, like they have with other mediums.

There's no doubt, however, that they're trying. Record labels have resorted to suing consumers for downloading music freely on the Web. If anything, these actions speak more to the major labels' lack of ethics than the threat of piracy on revenue. Major label PR reps exaggerate figures of loss, sometimes placing it above total international record industry revenue. In fact, this number is derived from the false assumption that every download is a lost sale. Most people couldn't afford the volume of music they download, much less take the risk of buying an album without knowing if they'd like it. Keep in mind that music is

an experience good. The Internet is thus a promotional medium the way radio once was, allowing fans to evaluate music before purchase. Thus, the Internet effectively makes up for sales it otherwise would reduce, a conjecture supported by a study conducted at the University of North Carolina.

The Internet, if and when it replaces the major label system, will usher in an era of musical variety unseen since before radio. The music business will become, according to New York magazine ("Facing the Music" by Michael Wolff), "in size and profit margins, the book business" - millions of new artists, few blockbusters, and average sales in the ten thousands range.

Gone will be the celebrity culture developed by major label marketers. People will have true variety. In essence, consolidation of record companies is the foe. If government will not regulate it, then the people must. The Internet, thankfully, is just the tool for the task.

Students build houses in Mexico

By NOAH LEVIN
Staff writer

For three years now, Ohlone College's Interact club has been going to Tijuana, Mexico in the fall and winter to build houses. Sponsored by Rotary International, the club travels to Mexico to participate as part of Project Corazon,

a humanitarian outreach project that helps poor families in Mexico that want a new house. Corazon is open to anyone who is interested and applications to volunteer can be found on their website. The families have to meet certain requirements set by the project.

Once a year, the members go to San Diego for three days, two of

which they spend across the border in Mexico, where the club members build one house a day. "The first time I did it, I handed the mother a key to the house, she started to cry, because she had never had a house she could lock, just guard dogs in the front yard," said Club leader Tatiyana Hamady.

Hamady described the trips as

deeply moving, connecting the volunteers to the families they help in a profound way. Upon finishing her first house a few years ago, the recipients of the house and volunteers alike began to cry together. Amidst tears of joy and feelings of a job well done, the mother of the family exclaimed, "Tonight we will live like kings!"

Safer?

Continued from Page 2 without doing anything major on the real battlefield, Afghanistan. Soldiers are dying in Iraq, and we still haven't caught Bin Laden. We've placed a reward for his head at a measly \$25 million. We're spending that much every seven hours in Iraq.

It's easy to get caught up in negativity involving America's safety, or lack thereof - an offense you may likely accuse the writer of this article of. Still, we can change things for the better. We must hold accountable those responsible for America's failings, and demand an explanation of their actions. And furthermore, we must learn from this, in an effort to really make America a safer and stronger country.

It will take many more deaths like Pat Tillman's before his brother's words are recognized.

But let's remember his words and work toward making America truly a safer nation.

Ohlone to hire sustainability manager

By ERIC DORMAN
Staff writer

Ohlone College has sent out a job listing for an environmental sustainability coordinator and five faculty members have already applied for the position, according to President Doug Treadway.

The coordinator would oversee the college's inputs (such as water and electricity) and waste output, and coordinate the two in an effort

to make the campus as efficient as possible.

Environmental sustainability, helping preserve the environment for future generations, is increasingly becoming a concern, especially in California. Ohlone, along with other colleges, has tried to be as green as possible, especially in its currently under-construction Newark campus, which will devote special attention to preserving the environment.

Treadway said that the decision to hire a coordinator was partially for financial reasons as reducing consumption and waste would save the campus money but it is also part of a conscious effort to leave less of an imprint on the environment. He said that the public's environmental awareness had increased in recent years and that is was important that the campus raise its own awareness.

Treadway will be conducting

interviews for the position shortly. The position will be part-time, though it could be increased to full-time if necessary.

Though many people say they support the environment, said Treadway, few are willing to take action. Hiring the coordinator, he said, is about taking action.

"The consequences of not taking action are very severe," said Treadway, "For us, and for the planet as well."