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Series/Staff Member: Kristine Gebbie
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Interview with Oregonian 3/8/94

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February 9, 1994

**INTERVIEW PROPOSAL
FOR
KRISTINE GEBBIE
NATIONAL AIDS POLICY COORDINATOR**

ONAPC STAFFER:

John Paul Gurrola

30 to

DATE/TIME OF EVENT:

At your convenience (preferably soon) - 45 minutes to an ~~hour~~ interview and she wants to accompany you for part of a day

LOCATION:

At your convenience

ORGANIZATION:

The Oregonian

CONTACT:

Rose Ellen O'Connor - (202)383-7825

PURPOSE:

Interview with NAPC

OTHER PARTICIPANTS:

None

MEDIA COVERAGE:

The Oregonian

REMARKS REQUIRED:

The reporter wants to know about your job, your impact on AIDS policy, and your contact with the President. She also would like to go over the budget with you.

BACKGROUND:

You were featured in The Oregonian on February 11.

[SEE ATTACHED]

The Oregonian

ESTABLISHED 1830

1320 S.W. BROADWAY PORTLAND, OREGON 97201

Feb. 22, 1993

Mr. Andrew Barrer, [REDACTED]
Office of the National AIDS Policy Coordinator
750 17th Street, N.W., Suite 1060
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Andrew:

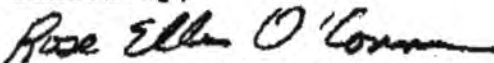
Per our conversation, I would appreciate your help in setting up an interview with Ms. Gebbie. I would need about 45 minutes to an hour. If possible I would also like to accompany her for part of a day.

My questions will cover her time in Washington. Does she feel she's having an impact on AIDS policy? What's a typical day like? What's the toughest thing about her job? The best? What kind of access does she have to the president? I would also like to go over the budget with her, as we did.

The sooner the better for me, even if it means less time with her. Mornings are also better for me so that I can stand by for breaking events in the afternoon, although that's not essential.

Thanks for all your help. I can be reached at 202-383-7825.

Sincerely,



Rose Ellen O'Connor
bhs/

? about
Spring that
would protect
or against
HIV

Students get warning about AIDS



BOB ELLIS/The Oregonian

Kristine Gebbie, the Clinton administration's AIDS czar, delivers a warning to Oregon Episcopal School students about the disease.

Nation's AIDS czar tells OES students danger from dreaded disease is real

■ Kristine Gebbie, the former Oregon health administrator, speaks at Oregon Episcopal School

By TOM HALLMAN JR.
of The Oregonian staff

There's something about statistics that causes a young mind to shut down and the eyes to glaze over.

And so it was Thursday when Kristine Gebbie, President Clinton's AIDS policy coordinator, began speaking to high school students at Oregon Episcopal School, where her son, Eric, is a senior.

As Gebbie talked about the millions of deaths worldwide from AIDS and the hundreds of thousands of

deaths in this country, it was clear that to some in the audience the epidemic was far removed from their own lives.

Some students talked, others read books. But their attention was riveted to the front of the room when Gebbie made the statistics come alive by using them in a way that forced the kids to think not only about themselves, but the person sitting next to them.

Please turn to
GEBBIE, Page F8

“Most of you have a plan for your life. You want to be doctors or lawyers. That won't happen if you get HIV.”

Kristine Gebbie,
to OES students

”

Gebbie: Speaker says our society hasn't dealt well with issue of AIDS

■ Continued from Page F1

"I know that even at a nice suburban school like OES at least one of you is having sex," she said. "I know that at least one of you has had a sexually transmitted disease."

She paused.

"And maybe one of you has been exposed to HIV," she said. "Most of you have a plan for your life. You want to be doctors or lawyers. That won't happen if you get HIV. Believe me, the threat is real."

Gebbie told the students that she was speaking to them as a parent and as a health official.

"I know this is a hard subject for parents and kids to talk about," she said. "But we have to. Our society thinks it's fine to put douche ads on television, showing women waltzing through a field of flowers, and yet we have no condom ads on television. Our society has not dealt well with this issue. And it is essential and lifesaving that we do so."

Changing those attitudes is just one of the tasks facing Gebbie, who is the nation's first federal AIDS czar, a post Clinton appointed her to last year. Gebbie was the administrator of the Oregon Health Division for 11 years before leaving in 1989 to become the top health official in Washington state, where she developed a national reputation for her AIDS work.

When OES learned she was re-

turning to Portland to visit with her son, it asked her to speak to the students. She agreed. On Thursday night, she gave a similar talk to school administrators and parents.

In an interview Thursday, Gebbie said she is focusing her efforts in Washington, D.C., on AIDS research, service and prevention.

"I want to make sure the research is broad and remove any roadblocks standing in the way of that research," she said. "I also want to look at health care reform. Many HIV patients are not insured, or lose their insurance once they are infected. Finally, I want to do what we can to stop this epidemic."

Gebbie said too many people view AIDS as "someone else's problem."

"As a nation, we need to understand that this is everyone's problem," she said. "Before I was appointed, there was no central focus on AIDS at the White House. That's changed. When we look at a drug strategy, for example, we see how that is a part of AIDS prevention."

Gebbie, 49, said she typically works 12- to 13-hour days and sees the president several times a month.

"It hits me now and then that I am sitting across from the president," she said. "It's like I'm in someone else's body. Ten years ago, I was at the Rotary Club in Portland talking about sex and semen and condoms and now I'm in the Cabinet room at

the White House talking about the same things.

"I view this as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," she said. "I feel I can make a difference. But all the programs in the world won't help unless we get individuals to make wise choices."

And that's one of the reasons why Gebbie agreed to speak to the OES students.

"Our society does not want to talk about sex, especially to kids," she said. "I think being open is important."

Gebbie gave the students a primer on how HIV is contracted and answered questions that ranged from when children should be told about AIDS (Gebbie said by the fifth grade, at the onset of puberty) to the safety of oral sex as compared to anal and vaginal intercourse.

"Sex is normal," she said. "All of us are sexual beings. The choice is how you will act out a sexual life. There are healthy and unhealthy ways."

Gebbie recommended that the students — for a variety of reasons — abstain from sex until they are adults.

"I don't know what the magic number is," she said. "But I do know that it is not at 13, 14, 15 and 16 years old. Talk with adults about these issues. All I can do is underscore the importance of talking."