

Ross won't campaign for Youth Job Corps in '84

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Gov. James J. Blanchard is so enthusiastic about the 25,000 Youth Job Corps members that he's thinking seriously of expanding the program next year.

"You've made us all look good," Blanchard told an audience of 170 young workers taking a day of career counseling at Oakland Community College in Royal Oak.

Smiling on the sidelines was the other half of "us" — program director Doug Ross, former state senator from Southfield.

BUT ROSS wasn't campaigning for the recession program to continue.

"It stops by law — totally — by Sept. 30," Ross said in an interview, "so there's no one around to lobby for its continuation. It's up to the governor and legislature."

Ross himself had been skeptical about a summer youth job program before Blanchard recruited him to become director.

"My skepticism revolved around two popular assumptions: First, the next generation didn't want to work; second, could local government really do this?"

The answers, Ross found, were that the young people "worked damn hard," even for the \$3.35 minimum wage, and that local government and private non-profit agencies provided "very high quality" projects.

"The key thing was providing important work, not make-work," said Ross. He added that 90 percent of the 25,000 jobs were provided by other than

state agencies and only 2,000 by state government. YOUNG WORKERS picking up trash along roadsides were the most familiar sight to Michigan taxpayers, who picked up \$36 million of the program's \$39 million tab (the rest was federal money).

But Ross said fewer than 10 percent worked on roadsides, while the others worked in nursing homes, conservation projects and park jobs "where you leave something behind."

"I was at Escanaba last week for the 50th-anniversary reunion of the OCC (Civilian Conservation Corps, a Roosevelt anti-depression program). Our Youth Job Corps had replaced the roof on a CCC building. Each CCC member would point to something and say, 'I did that 60 years ago,'" Ross said.

A one-term senator, Ross had gone back to a family business after losing a bid for Congress in the 17th District Democratic primary last year.

Blanchard announced the program May 10; Ross was hired May 16; the Michigan Legislature passed it May 28; the first applications were taken June 1, and the first jobs were started June 15, Ross said.

BLANCHARD underscored Ross's point about meaningful work as he opened the career guidance program at OCC, just a mile from his Pleasant Ridge home.

"There are important things to be done — not just picking up pop bottles, though that's important, too," the governor said. "We've forgotten in this country how many people want work and how much important work there is to be done."

To skeptics who doubted the new era of 18-21-year-olds wanted to work, the governor said, "You've proved them wrong. Thank you for making the Michigan Youth Job Corps a success."

THE YOUNG workers across the state were given a day off to attend voluntary career guidance seminars at the 29 community colleges.

After an inspirational speech, they attended small group seminars on these topics:

- Choose Your Job Weapons: "What Do I Need to Get a Job?"
- Attitude Makes the Day: "What Can I do to Find the Key to Success?"
- What Community Employment Resources Are Available?

- How to Get a Job: "Apply and Interview Successfully."

Ross said the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research would do a follow-up study to see what happens to the 25,000 corps members, who were culled from 67,000 applicants.

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— Doug Ross



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OU seeks cardiac rehab grant

Oakland University is seeking a \$985,000 grant from the federal Economic Development Administration to construct a regional cardiac rehabilitation and health maintenance improvement center to serve a 12-county area.

OU would put \$500,000 additional funds into the new facility, to be constructed on the site of a former Meadow Brook Estate barn, one of two barns destroyed by fire earlier this summer.

The center would serve residents of Oakland, Macomb, Genesee, Saginaw, St. Clair, Bay, Livingston, Shiawassee, Lapeer, Tuscola, Sanilac and Huron counties.

THE CENTER will meet the expanding regional needs for programs of prevention of coronary artery disease.

Its purposes will be to provide a program of cardiac rehabilitation, to provide health maintenance/health improvement programs, to provide training programs for health professionals, and to conduct research in the relationship between physical activity and cardiovascular health.

OU officials explain that in 1978 the university cooperated with St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Pontiac to establish a cardiac rehabilitation program.

With the aid of many physicians who donate their time, this program now has 80 patients. There is a long waiting list, and many patients cannot be accepted because of space and manpower limitations.

In addition, a preventive health program has been established at the university with approximately 500 participants involved in exercise, nutrition, weight control, and stress management. This program also is limited by space.

BECAUSE THE leading cause of death in the United States is cardiovascular disease, OU officials said the center would emphasize coronary heart disease risk factor modification.

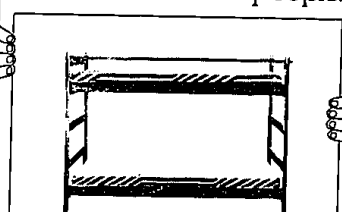
The center will focus on (1) a comprehensive program for cardiovascular health starting with childhood to the onset of symptoms, the time when primary prevention approaches are employed, and (2) rehabilitation and secondary intervention, the stages when the patient is restored to the optimum possible vocational, physiological, and mental health.

The university programs are run by exercise physiologist and cardiac rehabilitation specialist Alfred W. Stransky from facilities in the Lepley Sports Center.

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