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Decatur, Herald & Review, January 21, 2006

She likes it here: Saunders decides to stay at Richland, withdraws from field for Joliet job

By AMY HOAK - H&R Staff Writer

DECATUR - Richland Community College President Gayle Saunders on Saturday took her name out of the running for a job at a community college in Joliet.

"When I was up there, involved with the interview - I found myself making remarks about the wonderful things at Richland Community College and Decatur," she said.

Saunders had her last interview for the president job at Joliet Junior College about a week ago. Interviewers asked her why she would want to leave her current position, given the positive developments at Richland. Saunders started wondering the same thing.

The Chamber of Commerce for Decatur and Macon County, Richland trustees and others encouraged Saunders to stay, also helping to lead the college president and her husband to their final decision over the weekend.

"I've been given the affirmation that Richland is moving in a progressive way and I've been able to contribute to the community," she said, adding that she didn't want to leave in the middle of all the excitement.

Saunders, who has held the top job at Richland since 2001, also praised the quality of the staff and faculty at the school.

After hearing the news, Kevin Breheny, president of J.L. Hubbard Insurance & Bonds, praised the president.

"She's done so much, and she has so much momentum, and the community has so much confidence in her leadership," he said.

He listed Saunders' involvement in luring and hosting the Farm Progress Show and overseeing the expansion of the school as recent significant achievements. If nothing else, Saunders considering another job gave the community a reason to show her how much she is appreciated, Breheny said.

"She's such a positive influence in the leadership of the community. She's a great find, and shame on us if we didn't try to talk her out of leaving," he said.

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The Chicago Tribune, January 22, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Michael Wallerstein

1951 – 2006

Leading political scientist
Former Northwestern professor and department chairman focused on social justice and economic equality

By Jodi S. Cohen
Tribune staff reporter

Even after a brain tumor was diagnosed in him, his speech hampered and his skull protected by a helmet, Michael Wallerstein didn't stop pursuing his passions. One of the country's leading scholars in political economy, he continued to teach and write until just months before he died.

Mr. Wallerstein, 54, former chairman of Northwestern University's political science department, died Saturday, Jan. 7, in his home in New Haven, Conn.

"He had this incredible force to push on and do whatever he needed to do," said his wife of 32 years, Liz Atlas. "He was an amazing man in so many ways."

Mr. Wallerstein, a professor of political science at Yale University since 2004, specialized in issues of social justice and economic equality. He taught courses on comparative politics and political economy, and he wrote dozens of articles and one book, expected to be published this year. The former Wilmette resident was a Northwestern professor from 1994 to 2004, including three years as chairman of the political science department.

Born in Topeka, Kan., Mr. Wallerstein received a bachelor's degree from Stanford University in 1974 and a PhD from the University of Chicago in 1985. He met his wife while he was an undergraduate student on an archeological dig in Mexico.

He taught at UCLA from 1984 to 1994 before moving to Northwestern.

Mr. Wallerstein is credited with groundbreaking work that used economic models to understand and answer problems in comparative politics, particularly those involving the redistribution of wealth in advanced democracies.

One of his studies showed that it is more expensive to organize workers into trade unions in larger countries, thereby offering an explanation on why the rate of unionization in the United States is lower than in countries such as Norway and Sweden.

"What distinguished his work was his commitment to egalitarianism and equality," said New York University professor Adam Przeworski, who was Mr. Wallerstein's dissertation adviser at the University of Chicago. They later co-wrote several articles.

"What was really unusual about him is that he was very deeply committed ideologically without ever being rigid. He was open to all ideas, all methods, all counterevidence."

In 2005, Mr. Wallerstein was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences for his contributions to the field of comparative politics. His work was recognized and funded by the National Science Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation among other organizations.

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He held several leadership positions in the American Political Science Association.

Mr. Wallerstein also enjoyed the outdoors, especially sailing, and he raced sailboats on Lake Michigan as a member of the Arrow Fleet. His 20-year-old daughter, Hannah, was his sailing companion, and the family sailed together in the Caribbean a few years ago. He also enjoyed skiing and canoeing with his family.

"The best way to describe my dad is that it was so easy for him to love people. There was nothing that got in the way," Hannah Wallerstein said. "There was no one who didn't like him. He was so easy to get along with."

Other survivors include a son, Jonah; his parents, Robert and Judith Wallerstein; and two sisters, Nina Wallerstein and Amy Friedman.

Funeral services have been held. A memorial service is being scheduled for this year at Yale University.

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The Chicago Tribune, January 24, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Erica Reiner

1924 – 2005

**U. of C. professor was authority on ancient languages
One of the few experts on Elamite noted for knowledge of Babylon**

By Lorene Yue

Tribune staff reporter

Published January 24, 2006

Erica Reiner used her passion for ancient written languages to help produce the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary, a multi-volume compilation of Mesopotamian civilization.

"She was amazing," said Martha Roth, Reiner's cousin and editor of the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary. "She was an extraordinary scholar and a brilliant woman."

Ms. Reiner was also the John A. Wilson Distinguished Service Professor Emerita at the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute and one of the few people in the world proficient in the ancient language of Elamite.

Ms. Reiner, 81, died Saturday, Dec. 31, of lung cancer in her Hyde Park home.

She spent decades on the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary project, first working closely with A. Leo Oppenheim when she came to the University of Chicago in 1952 and then taking over as main editor in 1973. She retired in 1996 but continued to work on the dictionary

Her role at the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary included writing, editing and reviewing entries.

"Everybody did everything, as we still do," Roth said.

The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary is an encyclopedia-like project conceived in 1921. The first volume was published in 1956. Twenty-two more volumes followed, with two more in the printing stages and a final volume scheduled to be published this year, Roth said.

The dictionary serves a dual role. It is a reference for Akkadian, or Assyro-Babylonian, language, which was the predominant tongue in Mesopotamia for 2,500 years. The dictionary also provides information about Mesopotamia's culture.

The information comes from cuneiform written on clay tablets recovered from Iraq, Iran, Syria and other nearby areas.

During the 1974-75 academic year, Ms. Reiner was among nine University of Chicago faculty members who were awarded research fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation.

Ms. Reiner published several books, including "Enuma Anu Enlil: Babylonian Planetary Omens," "Astral Magic in Babylonia," "A Linguistic Analysis of Akkadian" and a collection of essays titled "Your Own Thwarts in Pieces, Your Mooring Rope Cut: Poetry from Babylonia and Assyria."

Ms. Reiner was born in 1924 in Hungary.

She earned her undergraduate degree in linguistics at the University of Budapest in 1948 and then

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moved to Paris to study at Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes. It was there that she focused her studies on Middle Eastern languages.

"She always had a passion for languages," said her sister, Eva Cherna. "By the time she went to Paris, she spoke Hungarian, German, French and English, and she was learning Hebrew."

In 1952, Ms. Reiner became a research assistant at the University of Chicago, and she began working on the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary. She was 28.

In 1955, Ms. Reiner received her doctorate and joined the University of Chicago faculty in 1956.

Ms. Reiner was also an avid gardener who threw a lavish annual party at her home. She had a penchant for antiques as well as entertaining. Roth said it was not unusual to find economists, literature professors and others seated around her dining room table.

And, Ms. Reiner was an excellent cook.

"There is a Hungarian chocolate creamy cake which she made exceedingly well," Cherna said.

Ms. Reiner is survived by her sister.

Services were held. The University of Chicago will hold a memorial at 4 p.m. May 1 at Bond Chapel, 1050 E. 59th St., Chicago.

The Daily Herald, January 25, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Back on campus, new president learning on the job

Leader wants to see efforts spark new campus activities

By Mike Riopell
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Richard Fonte started his term as College of Lake County president Tuesday, coming from directing We the People, an arm of the federal National Endowment of the Humanities.

Fonte, 60, has served as a executive at other suburban community colleges and once served as a village official in Palatine. His most recent experience at a college comes from Austin Community College in Texas, where he was president until 2004.

Fonte sat down with the Daily Herald Tuesday afternoon to talk about his new job.

Q. What made you want go back to working at a college after working for the federal government?

A. I guess I'm a community college junkie. I really believe in the mission of community colleges and missed being on a campus.

Q. You've said this is going to be your last stop as a college administrator. Does that have any unique meaning?

A. It probably means that I'm fairly committed to this institution. I'm not thinking in terms of: let's do one or two quick things, make a record and move on.

Q. How do you hope the college will be different when you do leave?

A. I've been at institutions where the task is one of rescue. This is not an institution that needs to be rescued. What you want to do is see some of the initial efforts continue to grow new campus activities in Waukegan and Vernon Hills. You want to see them really become viable campuses.

Q. In Austin, you pushed for that college to raise local taxes to bolster its finances. Was that a rescue effort?

A. They had an extremely low tax rate and were in an area that was exploding in population. In order to serve the community, we developed a plan. The community understood, essentially, what they were buying. That was a situation of trying to respond to probably one of the fastest growing communities in the country.

Q. Lake County is growing, too. Is a tax increase a possibility here?

A. I don't think that's the approach that I would see. I think what you need to do is let the natural growth of revenue match the natural growth of programming. You also don't need to continue every program just

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because it was there in the past. If there's no longer a need for widget makers, you ought not have a program in it.

Q. What have you done since you arrived early Tuesday?

A. A lot of real mundane activities, like figuring out how the e-mail actually works. How the phone works.

Q. Now that you can check your e-mail, what's on the agenda for tomorrow?

A. Meetings. Then I'll actually go and do a lot of roaming around. It's one of my approaches to go out and meet people and get out into the community.

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Lincoln library director leaving for academic post

By Ray Long
Tribune staff reporter

SPRINGFIELD -- Richard Norton Smith, who threw himself into launching the heralded Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, announced his resignation as executive director Tuesday to accept an academic post where he will lecture about the American presidency and work on a biography.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich, who selected Smith to quell the controversy surrounding former Gov. George Ryan's attempts to turn the Lincoln complex into a patronage haven--and to add a guiding hand as construction entered its final stages--credited Smith with "making the library what it is today."

"Richard poured his heart, energy and creativity" into the complex, which "tells the Lincoln story like it's never been told before," Blagojevich said.

Crowds at the Lincoln complex have outpaced attendance at the presidential library for Bill Clinton. The complex has recorded more than 500,000 visitors since President Bush dedicated the museum to the 16th president in April.

Smith, 52, who has run six institutions for former presidents and top political figures since 1987, said the Lincoln Presidential Library will be his last.

"If there's such a thing as going out on top, Lincoln is it," Smith said.

He will leave his job at the end of March to become a scholar in residence at George Mason University in Arlington and Fairfax, Va. Smith also will undertake a comprehensive review to assess the nation's presidential library system and complete a biography of Nelson Rockefeller, already six years in the making.

"I had come to the undeniable conclusion that there were only 24 hours in a day," he said.

Smith, who arrived in late 2003, said he had wanted to stay for a year after the museum opened to be sure all of the diverse parts of the museum and library were "moving pretty much in sync."

Smith, who helped reinvigorate a foundation's languishing support efforts and the Lincoln acquisitions program, set a course for scholarship at the library as Illinois and the nation approach the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth in 2009.

Using state-of-the-art technology, the museum provides a home for the state's copy of the Gettysburg Address and gives a largely unvarnished perspective to the personal tragedies and political struggles of Lincoln and his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, as he led the nation through the Civil War and unveiled the Emancipation Proclamation.

Still pending, however, are efforts by the Blagojevich administration to seek up to \$15 million for cost overruns following alleged delays or defects in design and construction that slowed the project, which was started under former Gov. Jim Edgar, largely funded under Ryan and opened under Blagojevich.

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Julie Cellini, chairwoman of the Historic Preservation Agency and a guiding force on the project for decades, hailed Smith's "unique combination of scholarship and media savvy to articulate the museum's bold concept of telling a 19th Century story with 21st Century technology."

"There is a bipartisan sense of pride in this institution," Smith said, "and a real adjournment of politics as usual. At all levels of government, in both parties, here and in Washington, people feel good about" the library and museum.

U.S. Senate Minority Whip Dick Durbin, a Democrat who resides in Springfield, said he and other early backers of the project "owe a special debt of gratitude" to Smith, saying his credentials helped establish the library and museum's reputation.

"Our job now is to find a worthy successor who will build on our early success and challenge all of us to find new ways to bring the Lincoln story to the world," Durbin said.

The interim head of the complex will be Thomas Schwartz, the state historian.

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The Chicago Tribune, January 26, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Joliet college offers president job

Trustees' choice only out-of-state candidate among 4

By Dennis Sullivan
Special to the Tribune

Eugenia I. "Gena" Proulx, executive vice chancellor of Community College of Baltimore County in Maryland, was offered a contract Wednesday to become president of Joliet Junior College.

Proulx has not yet responded, said Jim McFarland, chairman of the board of trustees, adding that the 5-2 vote to extend the offer demonstrates commitment to her.

Proulx, who also served as interim chancellor of the Baltimore college, was largely responsible for the \$135 million budget of the school's campuses, two extension centers, division of continuing education and economic development and nearly 70,000 students.

Before that, she spent more than six years as president of the Dundalk and Essex campuses of the college, where she was responsible for the overall academic and administrative management of more than 23,000 students.

"We received positive feedback about her from many in the [Joliet] campus community and after the board interviews with Dr. Proulx, we were convinced that she is the best person overall," McFarland said in a news release.

Proulx also directed a \$30 million academic and student development budget, served as the chancellor's lead cabinet member for athletic programming on all campuses and was liaison to two college foundations, alumni associations, collective bargaining units and the Baltimore County Police Training Academy.

She was the only out-of-state candidate among four finalists for the Joliet position. A fifth candidate withdrew.

"Her credentials are excellent and her love of students convinced us that she will be a great fit for the position," McFarland said.

She would succeed J.D. Ross, who is retiring on June 30 after seven years at the helm and 30 years at the college.

Proulx's academic background also includes serving as vice president for academic affairs at Erie Community College in Buffalo, N.Y., dean of the college of business and technology at Franklin University in Columbus, Ohio, and associate dean of career and vocational education at Genesee Community College in Batavia, N.Y.

She also has more than 20 years' teaching experience in higher education.

"She is a perfect balance of what we are looking for in our next president, not only from the academic and administrative perspective, which is admirable, but from a community involvement perspective," McFarland said.

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Proulx holds a doctorate in philosophy in higher education from the State University of New York at Buffalo, a master's degree in education and a certificate of advanced study in administration and supervision from State University of New York College of Arts and Sciences at Plattsburgh and a bachelor's degree in business education from Montclair State College in New Jersey.

McFarland said there is no deadline for Proulx to respond to the contract offer.

If she accepts, she would begin on July 1.

Champaign, The News-Gazette, January 20, 2006

His name will live on

By JODI HECKEL

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URBANA – Kenneth Rinehart may have been a landlocked Midwesterner, but his research as a University of Illinois chemistry professor took him scuba diving off the coasts of Baja California and Spain, to the San Juan Islands, and to mangrove swamps in Puerto Rico.

Mr. Rinehart, who died June 13, 2005, after several years of battling Alzheimer's, was internationally known for his work with marine organisms containing compounds that might be helpful in fighting cancer. His wife, Marlyn Rinehart of Urbana, has donated money for a \$2 million endowed chair in his name in the chemistry department, the second major endowed chair in the department.

"To be competitive with the Ivy League schools, the coastal schools, we absolutely need chairs and professorships," said Steve Zimmerman, interim head of the chemistry department. "It recognizes our very best faculty and provides them with unrestricted resources to try new ideas, things they wouldn't otherwise be able to get money for. It supports undergraduate student researchers and gets them in labs. These are things that are critical, and our competitors have chairs and professorships, and we need to as well to keep people here."

Mr. Rinehart joined the UI chemistry department in organic chemistry in 1954. His work involved testing marine organisms for bioactivity, or naturally produced compounds that can kill cancer cells.

"The challenge was ... to figure out precisely what compound it is. You have to determine what the chemical structure is of that compound. That was one of Ken's specialties," Zimmerman said. "These were often very complicated molecules, very large, very elaborate in their structure. Figuring out exactly what they were would often take a couple years.

"He was an amazing guy," Zimmerman added. "He managed to find a way to do really fun things, but scientifically very important research."

Zimmerman and chemistry Professor Peter Beak called Mr. Rinehart a pioneer.

"His attitude was one of being out on the leading edge, breaking new barriers, doing new things," said Beak, a colleague and friend of Mr. Rinehart's for 40 years.

Beak said Mr. Rinehart was one of a few people in the field of natural products chemistry who first studied marine organisms. He said Mr. Rinehart devised a way to test samples in the field to determine if there were any potentially interesting bioactive compounds. He was also an early leader in using mass spectrometry to determine the structure of the compounds he worked with, and to use biosynthesis to modify structures and make them more medically functional.

One of the compounds Mr. Rinehart identified has shown promise as an anti-cancer agent and has been through three stages of human clinical trials, and several others are also being tested.

Marlyn Rinehart said she wanted to acknowledge her husband's contribution to the UI's chemistry department – both his research and his role early in his career in obtain money for a mass spectrometry lab for the department – with an endowed chair named for him.

"I felt as though he provided well for me," she said. "I felt so saddened, (seeing him) go from a very exuberant, confident, enthusiastic, adventurous person, to a person who was very tentative, cautious and afraid. I wanted to keep his name out there in the department.

"I can't think of any use of my money that I would rather put it to."

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ISU not surprised by report on literacy

By Michele Steinbacher
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NORMAL - College students and professionals at Illinois State University in Normal say they aren't surprised by reports that say many college students can't handle skills needed in the post-collegiate world.

But they think ISU, like other universities, is beginning to pay attention to the problem.

"The role of the university, ultimately, is to produce good citizens. And many schools are starting to focus on preparing students more for life after college," said Maureen Roach of the ISU Career Center.

The national study, released last week, measured three types of literacy: analyzing news stories and other prose; understanding documents such as job applications and payroll forms; and using quantitative math skills to balance checkbooks, compute restaurant tips and more.

ISU, for example, requires all freshmen to enroll in a "career link" course, she said. The content covered includes showing students what it's going to take during college for them to be successful after graduation, she said.

One ISU student says part of the reason the survey results showed life-skills problems is modern society's increasing dependence on technology.

"We have so many gadgets," said ISU senior Rick Meister. "Technology simplifies things. But in some ways it dumbs people down, too."

The survey says about half of students can handle complex tasks. Meister, who serves as an ISU student government leader, said he and most of the people in his circle would fall in that category, but he's not surprised many college students don't.

A decade ago, people heading on a trip might have pulled out an atlas and measured mileage with the scale printed on the bottom of the page.

"Now everybody goes to 'Mapquest' or some other map program online," he said. Just enter a departure point and destination, and the computer fills in directions and mileage. "It completely directs someone," he said.

Considering balancing checkbooks, Meister noted that such a skill was needed when his older brother arrived at college. But now, most students use debit cards and go online to get an account printout listing the computations.

"I think students are hurting themselves in the long run by not learning these skills," said Roach, senior assistant director at the career center.

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By depending on automatic devices and programs, students are taking away opportunities to gain analytical and organizational skills.

"It's a very competitive job market. Even if an employer hires someone holding a college degree, any potential promotions down the road will be tied to whether they can function and adapt at learning skills to do the job effectively," said Roach.

In some cases, parents inhibit student growth in these literacy skills, said Roach.

Helicopter parents - so-called because of their tendency to hover closely over every aspect of this generation's college students - sometimes don't allow students to take on responsibilities, such as paying bills or preparing for job applications, she said.

The danger in not learning literacy skills is that organizing such ideas aids in the development of analytical thinking, said Larry McQuillan, a spokesman for the Washington, D.C.-based American Institute for Research. The organization, with the help of the Pew Charitable Trust, conducted the survey.

The study's purpose was "to provide information so university leaders and administrators could look at the results and assess them. It's so they can do some soul searching about whether the men and women have been taught and prepared for the outside world," he said.

The spirit of the document also looks at the expectations employers have of a job candidate holding a college degree, he said.

"They expect a certain level of competence tied to that degree," he said. "And universities need to think 'If we're going to bestow our degree on someone, what will that degree represent?'" he said.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

On the Net

American Institutes for Research www.air.org

The Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, January 23, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Community members welcome on EIU alternative spring break

By *NATHANIEL WEST, Staff Writer*

CHARLESTON -- You don't need to be a college student to be part of "alternative" spring break activities associated with Eastern Illinois University, said officials.

The Student Volunteer Center is again sponsoring and accepting applications for the annual Alternative Spring Break Program, March 12-18. Applications are due Feb. 15, and community members may participate as well, said Doris Nordin, SVC coordinator.

"It's open to anybody over 18," she said. "As long as they are willing to work, they are welcome."

This year will mark the 13th go-round for the Alternative Spring Break, which this time will offer 18 different sites for volunteers.

Included are two Habitat for Humanity International projects, and local participants will join more than 9,000 other volunteers as part of the organization's "Collegiate Challenge."

"Last year, students made such a difference by giving one week of their time to help families," said Alynn Woodson, Collegiate Challenge manager. "The week also gives students a great chance to travel to a new location and spend time with their friends building a home."

The ABS teams will help construct homes in Springhill, La., and Maryville, Tenn., as part of Collegiate Challenge.

However, the EIU teams will venture to numerous other sites as well:

- L'Arch House in London, Ontario, Canada, for work at a home for people with disabilities;
- Windsor House in Huntsville, Ala., for work at a facility for the elderly;
- Catholic Worker program in New York City, to help the homeless;
- Project Lazarus in New Orleans, La., to work at a home for people with HIV or AIDS;
- St. Francis of Assisi Bessemer, Ala., for work at a Head Start program for inner city children;
- Sioux YMCA, Dupree, S.D., for work with youth and elderly in Reservation communities;
- Christian Appalachian Project, Mt. Vernon, Ky., to repair homes in rural Appalachia;
- Nature Conservancy, Appling County and Floyd County, Ga., to plant trees, repair trails and pick up litter at nature sites;
- Big Oak's Boys/Girls Ranch, Gadsden and Springville, Ala., to work at ranch facilities for abused, neglected or orphaned children;

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- Cherokee Nation Head Start; Tahlequah, Okla., to help build educational foundations for children;
- Amor Children's House, Puerto Penasco, Mexico, to repair houses and schools;
- St. Vincents Family Center, Kansas City, Mo., to help with an after-school program;
- Refugee Resettlement Program, Nashville, Tenn., for work at a home for refugees from oppression.

According to Nordin, trips to locations within the United States or Canada cost \$150, while the trips to Mexico cost \$450.

Brochures and applications are available on the EIU campus at the Student Activities Office, the Minority Affairs Office, the SVC Office at the Newman Catholic Center and the Office for International Students.

For more information, contact Nordin at 348-0188.

Decatur, Herald & Review, January 23, 2006

Eastern loses some 'Katrina students': Five return to Louisiana colleges

By NATHANIEL WEST - H&R Staff Writer

CHARLESTON - As New Orleans recovers from Hurricane Katrina, some of the universities shut down by the disaster have resumed classes.

While this is good news for the city, officials at Eastern Illinois University - which had eight displaced students from New Orleans for four months - speak of it with a hint of sadness.

"It's a little bittersweet," said Brenda Major, director of admissions at Eastern. "Ideally, we would have loved to have kept all eight. But we know we were not initially their school of choice, and they all had very personal reasons for their decisions."

Five of the eight students from Dillard University, which is now holding classes in a New Orleans hotel, opted to return. However, three students stayed at Eastern.

And these three students' reasons varied from a desire for consistency to having already established strong connections with Eastern, Major said.

"We're so delighted to continue to provide the service to the students who did remain, and we're thrilled they are acclimating so well," she said.

One student, a freshman, has joined many extracurricular programs at Eastern, and decided to stay because of her involvement, according to Major. "She just found a good niche here," she said.

Another Dillard student, a junior, is entrenched in upper-division courses for her major in accounting. "She knew it would be best to stay put and tackle those courses," said Major, noting this student is considering pursuing her master's degree at Eastern.

Another freshman from Dillard now attending Eastern lost several family members during Hurricane Katrina.

"Her family did not feel it would be in her best interest emotionally to return," said Major, noting this student also has friends from high school who go to Eastern.

Major added that Eastern officials wish all the best for the students who went back to New Orleans.

"It felt wonderful to be able to offer them an opportunity to be here as long as they wanted to be," Major said. "The campus and community went out of their way to make the students feel welcome."

Dillard University was one of about six New Orleans-area institutions that evacuated in advance of Hurricane Katrina in September.

Classes also resumed Tuesday at Tulane, Xavier and Southern universities. Dillard was so badly damaged that the campus itself will not reopen until at least next fall.

The Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, January 23, 2006

EIU to host new program on security

Governor announces homeland security field of study at Illinois universities

CHICAGO -- Students at Eastern Illinois University may soon be able to pursue a career in homeland security through university programs.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich and leaders of several public universities in Illinois announced the launch of a partnership that will introduce homeland security as a new field of study in higher education.

Blagojevich said he wants to establish homeland security as a mainstream academic discipline and promote careers in an industry that is protecting the public and spurring economic growth across the state.

Leadership from the Illinois Board of Higher Education, Northern Illinois University, University of Illinois, Southern Illinois University, Western Illinois University, University of Illinois-Springfield, Governor's State University and EIU made the announcement Monday.

"By making higher education a pillar of the Illinois homeland security industry, we're ensuring the work force of tomorrow has the knowledge, talent and skill to continue pioneering in this critical field and ensuring a better future for our citizens," Blagojevich said. "While I'm greatly encouraged by how vigorously this young industry has grown and advanced in just a short time in Illinois, this partnership with our outstanding public universities will ensure we fully deliver on its enormous potential."

EIU officials were not available for comment Monday.

Blagojevich is supplying \$75,000 in Opportunity Returns funding to NIU that will develop a core homeland security studies course, and a web-based version of the course, that will be used by each of the partnering state universities. The new homeland security field of study program will also be supported by a new scholarship program, funded by Caterpillar, which will provide a total of \$25,000 in scholarships to selected students at schools implementing the new field of study.

The partnership with Illinois universities will design, implement, and support courses, seminars, workshops, internships, and programs (both degree and non-

degree) for the student or professional pursuing a career related to homeland security in a number of key fields, including engineering, chemistry, biology and emergency management.

The courses and programs will offer skilled professionals a background in the foundations of science and technology of bio-defense, threat analysis of biological and non-biological weapons, engineering defense, and counter-terrorism/law enforcement defense.

"Gov. Blagojevich's plan to create a new homeland security industry right here in Illinois makes economic sense. To be able to incubate this new industry in our universities, to be able to train, educate, and place our graduates in this growth industry, will strengthen this state's ability to attract public and private investment in this field and provide good paying jobs that will encourage our graduates to stay and work in Illinois," SIU President Glenn Poshard said.

The partnership is designed to promote three main objectives at colleges and universities across Illinois in the long-term:

To develop minors, specializations, and concentrations that focus on the integration of homeland security awareness and generalist skills, to develop baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral programs in areas related to disaster and bio-terrorism preparedness, and to develop 18-credit-hour certificate programs at the baccalaureate level and post-baccalaureate level.

Inside Higher Ed, January 23, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Great books and city lights

What do you get when you cross a tiny, independent Great Books institution, with a big city technology institute?

Shimer College, in Waukegan, Ill., is working on an answer to that question. The liberal arts college is picking up its 100 undergraduates and moving 40 miles south to the campus of the Illinois Institute of Technology, in Chicago.

Initially, the agreement is simply a leasing arrangement, and the two private institutions will maintain their own faculties and boards. Shimer will lease 17,000 square feet on the IIT campus. Some Shimer students will live in IIT dorms, and may soon enjoy some of the benefits of the larger institution.

"We've been discussing having their students use our library services, and maybe moving their [20,000 book] collection to our library," said John Collins, vice president for business and administration at IIT. Shimer students may soon have access to other amenities at IIT, like the athletic and dining facilities.

As far as Shimer is concerned the Windy City real estate is the main attraction. Shimer spokesman Christopher Hawkins-Long said the college is looking to expand and "we can reach a broader audience in Chicago." Hawkins-Long said that Shimer wasn't shopping around for a new venue, but that the plan grew out of personal conversations between Shimer and IIT administrators. Eventually, cross-registration opportunities might be available for IIT and Shimer students. Shimer's curriculum is centered on a broad set of core requirements in the humanities and sciences, and small discussion classes where students read major texts of Western civilization.

George Dehne, an enrollment consultant who has worked with both Shimer and IIT, said in an e-mail that the urban setting is a bit tough, and that "there could not be two more different groups of students than artsy, intellectual and sort of outside the mainstream as the Shimer students and the career-driven, technology oriented IIT students." But Dehne said that Shimer will never reach capacity in Waukegan, and called the move "an ingenious idea."

Dehne said that IIT, which has just over 2,000 undergraduates, is also under enrolled, so the relationship will be symbiotic. Administrators from both Shimer and IIT said that collaboration beyond space-sharing may be in the offing. Shimer president William Craig Rice said that "Shimer will strengthen the liberal arts on the [IIT's] campus, reinvigorate the Great Books tradition with deep roots in Chicago, and Shimer students will benefit from IIT's strengths in science and technology."

IIT has already seen a relationship grow with another tenant, the VanderCook College of Music. "Over time it's evolved where our students take some of their classes," Collins said. "Initially, that didn't happen, but now it does, and it's mutually beneficial."

Still, Dehne said, the Shimer-IIT understanding isn't likely to open the floodgates for similar college partnerships. "Institutional egos are very, very large," he said. "I worked with a consortium of small, relatively desperate, Christian colleges within about 30 miles of each other," Dehne said. "I recommended some kind of consolidation, similar to IIT and Shimer, but none would budge because each did not think the others were Christian enough."

Dehne added that the cultural attractions of the city will be a great complement to the Great Books curriculum, and the kind of round-the-clock activity that Dehne said his firm's research shows "the

Inside Higher Ed, January 23, 2006 (Page 2 of 2)

Millenials crave.... In our current student surveys more than 8 of 10 students say they go to bed at 1 a.m. or later. Obviously, small town or rural colleges have a hard time competing."

Stuart Patterson, who teaches natural sciences at Shimer, said that he's excited about the move because it will help further diversify the student body. "We'll get a great mix of student experiences," he said. "[The move] expresses a certain realism about where we'll do best." He added that there is some "trepidation among students," simply because they're used to the Waukegan setting.

Shimer won't be completely packing up and leaving for the big city. Shimer's graduate teacher education programs, which serves about a dozen students, and its science labs for home schooled middle and high school kids, which serves 40-50 students, will stay in Waukegan.

Richard H. Hyde, the mayor of Waukegan, a diverse city with about 90,000 residents, is sad to see the college go. Hyde said the city "understood their space problem ... so we offered them one of our hotels that's been out of commission for 15 years." Hyde said the hotel is a beautiful old building, but that Shimer would have had to renovate it, and, obviously, it isn't in Chicago.

Hyde said he understands, but that "we hate to see them go. They were a real asset to the community."

— David Epstein

Champaign, The News-Gazette, January 23, 2006

Parkland College students gearing up for Olympics

By ANNE COOK

© 2006 THE NEWS-GAZETTE
Published Online January 23, 2006

CHAMPAIGN – Kaizad Irani's landscape design students in China have set their sights on Olympic gold.

They're getting ready to work on the country's biggest production in centuries – Beijing 2008, the summer Olympics. Irani said landscaping companies are already recruiting his students at Beijing Vocational College of Agriculture so they'll have personnel with high-level design and installation skills to make them competitive for the massive project.

"Plans for parts of the Olympic complex are already in place, but our students will be working on parks in the Olympic Village and in other places all over the landscape there," said the Parkland College instructor, who returned to China for three weeks late last year after teaching a class with 65 students.

Parkland has had a formal relationship with the vocational college since 2002, and has sent teachers with accounting, computer science, English language and other specialties to teach there. Irani said the college asked specifically for him to teach landscape design so students would have an edge in the job market.

"They knew a link with an American college would make students more competitive, marketable," he said. "Their design systems are very strict. Where we come in is teaching the concept of thinking outside the box versus the textbook approach. We want to help them unleash their creative potential."

As an example he cited landscape water features.

"With Chinese designs, everything has to be viewed from a certain angle," Irani said. "I encourage them to make water features more accessible with seating and stepping stones and gazebos. You want to be close to the water."

Irani came to Beijing expecting to teach a beginning design class, but his students were more advanced so he changed the curriculum.

"Here I teach residential design but there, we studied public and urban design, large-scale planning and all the factors involved in regional planning," Irani said.

"It will be a mixture of construction," he said. "That's where international expertise comes into play. My students were very open and receptive to new ideas and creative problem solving."

His students will graduate in June. Irani said before he left, the college held its first job fair and potential employers and Olympics landscapers came to meet his students.

Bruce Henrikson, chairman of the business and agri-industries department, said the relationship with Beijing has been good for Parkland instructors and the students they teach, passing on their exposure to a totally different culture.

"The biggest benefit has been working with a college from another country, thinking college to college," said Henrikson, who visited Beijing last year. "They wanted to see a different approach to teaching. Theirs is lecture and hope they get it. There's very little interaction. We work at interaction."

Irani hopes to forge links between the Illinois nursery industry and landscapers in Beijing so Illinois growers can provide some plant material for the games, good practice, he said, for the 2016 Olympics if Mayor Richard Daley successfully brings them to Chicago.

Decatur, Herald & Review, January 23, 2006

Prospects for wind turbine at Richland get boost from the John Ullrich Foundation

By AMY HOAK - H&R Staff Writer

DECATUR - Marilyn Parker is "pretty confident" that a study done near Richland Community College will show that the area is a suitable place for a wind turbine.

But these days, Parker, executive director of the Macon County Soil and Water Conservation District, is also becoming confident the district will have the funds to make the project a reality.

Those who attended a news conference on Monday about the wind study learned that the John Ullrich Foundation is prepared to donate up to \$42,040 to the Soil & Water Conservation District for the study and installation of a 50-kilowatt turbine. The foundation is administered by Main Street Bank & Trust in the memory of Ullrich, once a Merchant Street grocery store operator who served on the bank's board and invested in Central Illinois farmland in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

"This is exactly the kind of project the foundation is looking for," said Carol D. Craig, vice president of Main Street Wealth Management.

The turbine should run about \$50,000. The wind study will determine wind speed, direction and temperature, and will have a price tag hovering around \$6,200. Other expenses include the upkeep of the turbine, which could be in place on the Richland campus by the time of the 2009 Farm Progress Show.

Additional funding is being provided by the Garden Club of Decatur and individual contributions. Barbeck Tower Partners Inc. and Griffin Tower Connection Inc. are set to lend tower space where the data collection equipment will soon be installed.

Also in preparation for the turbine, a Millikin University professor and his students will study the flight patterns of birds and bats to determine a site that would be the least detrimental to area wildlife. Dave Horn, assistant professor of biology at the school, said preliminary research indicates that local and migratory birds shouldn't be negatively impacted if a wind turbine is erected near the Soil & Water Conservation office.

"This area is agricultural or urban, and is less attractive to birds" than forest land in other parts of the state, he said.

Because birds navigate by the stars, he is recommending that the turbine's strobe lights, required by the Federal Aviation Administration, be red rather than white.

"Red strobe lights are less likely to disorient birds," he said.

Parker said the project immediately caught the interest of Farm Progress Show organizers. The project has the potential to illustrate to farmers a clean, alternative energy source that could be used on their farms, she said.

Amy Hoak can be reached at ahoak@herald-review.com or 421-7972.

The Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, January 24, 2006

EIU offers 'Technology Security' program

By NATHANIEL WEST, Staff Writer

University includes courses as part of statewide homeland security efforts

CHARLESTON -- As Americans rely increasingly on technology, protecting this resource has become an integral part of homeland security efforts.

At least, that's according to officials at Eastern Illinois University, where a techno-savvy certificate program is being offered as part of a statewide initiative by public universities to provide training specifically for careers in homeland security.

"Eastern Illinois University has responded to that state interest with the development of a post-baccalaureate certificate program in 'technology security,'" said Jeffrey Cross, associate vice president for Academic Affairs. "It focuses on the aspects that relate (to) securing the technology that more and more of our daily lives depend on."

For example, the 18-semester-hour program includes classes in the security of various networks, such as cellular phone or computer networks.

"More and more of the transactions of our daily lives go over some network," Cross said. "Securing those networks is one of the focuses of this certificate program."

EIU joins universities from across the state collaborating with the Illinois Board of Higher Education to initiate a new field of study in homeland security.

Along with other public university leaders, Gov. Rod Blagojevich on Monday announced the program that seeks to make "higher education a pillar of the Illinois homeland security industry," the governor said in a press release.

His office is already providing \$75,000 to Northern Illinois University to help implement a core homeland security studies course -- including a Web-based version -- to be used by all of the other participating state schools.

At EIU, the launch of the technology program soon may be followed by other related certificate programs, according to Cross. For example, he said the School of Continuing Education is in the initial stages of cultivating a bachelor of general studies degree that incorporates homeland security.

The technology security program, according to the course description from the School of Technology, "will help prepare the workforce in Illinois to be knowledgeable and competitive in the security profession and the security marketplace."

To complete the certificate, students with bachelor's degrees must also complete four required and two elective courses. Examples of required classes include "Network Security" and "Management of Computer Technology," while "Automatic Identification and Data Capture" is among the electives.

Cross said, "We are very proud to be a partner (with the other universities)."

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, January 25, 2006

College students excel on examinations

01/25/2006

GODFREY

Dental hygiene students at Lewis and Clark Community College have again posted outstanding results in national board examinations.

The students achieved a 100 percent pass rate and scored well above national averages on the tests, required of all graduating dental hygiene students for licensure and certification.

The national average was 81.9 percent, but LCCC students averaged 86.4 percent.

The Champaign-Urbana News-Gazette, January 25, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Local school districts hoping to strengthen bonds with UI

By ANNE COOK
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CHAMPAIGN – The University of Illinois' strategic plan commits to forging stronger ties with Champaign and Urbana schools.

It's not very specific, however, about how UI development plans would affect the schools' tax base and tax revenues.

Expanding development, including retail and restaurant space at the Research Park on the Champaign side of campus could boost tax revenues for Champaign schools. But it's not clear what the redevelopment of the 160-acre Orchard Downs complex, something to be completed by 2011, would mean to Urbana schools' bottom line.

Because that property is currently off tax rolls, the UI pays the district about \$365,000 a year to educate the approximately 130 children living there, and that income could cease if graduate student housing is moved elsewhere.

UI Chancellor Richard Herman said the collaboration between the UI and the schools has been successful.

"Urbana has done an excellent job in terms of working with students for whom English is not their first language," he said Tuesday.

Urbana Superintendent Gene Amberg said he hopes the proposed redevelopment of Orchard Downs into upscale condominiums will generate money for the school district.

"One of our concerns is the tax roll situation," he said. "We are hoping for economic development."

Champaign school officials say they're encouraged by their first look at the chancellor's plans – and they're eager to hear more details.

"We're very interested in the section that refers to partnerships with the district," Assistant Superintendent Beth Shepperd said. "We see the UI as a unique and valuable resource, and we're very open to exploring opportunities. We're also interested in proposals that support a strong tax base and the quality of life in the community."

Goals for new cooperation between the UI and local schools include:

- Developing master teacher positions in the education college to build connections between schools and campus. Three positions would be for Champaign schools, and two would be for Urbana schools. Each would be paid \$70,000.
- Doubling the Chancellor's Academy for Teachers started last summer with 30 teachers.
- Improving math, science and technology preparation for teachers and learning for students by conducting summer programs for students, recruiting participants, providing scholarships and recruiting teachers for them.

UI Education Dean Susan Fowler said details on the master teachers' program aren't final yet.

"It's an idea at this point, a place holder that says we need to engage in careful and critical thinking," Fowler said. "It's a commitment by the chancellor to work closely with the schools and put money behind that commitment because we live in the community. But a critical conversation has to occur, and that's with the schools."

She said every year, the UI conducts about 100 research projects in school classrooms in which several hundred student teachers are also trained.

"We want to be more available, to bridge student teaching with support from the college to the schools," Fowler said. "Funding will help us get engaged talking about how to work together to support student teachers and research projects and focus on critical programs."

She said the master teacher program could match on-campus teachers with those who want to learn more about teaching a specific subject like science or to discuss issues like challenging behavior, achievement gaps or other education topics. Or it could bring teachers from the districts to campus to give them extra training.

Amberg said he's keeping an open mind about town-and-gown education connections.

The Champaign-Urbana News-Gazette, January 25, 2006 (Page 2 of 2)

"I'm looking to see if (the UI) sees itself engaged in a protracted effort to improve the quality of the local schools, some strategy we can all focus on," he said. "Our districts play such an important role in attracting high-caliber faculty. It's important for us to be there at the table.

"Both President (B. Joseph) White and Chancellor Herman have made public comments about strong relationships with communities and schools, and we're going to take them at their word."

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, January 25, 2006

SIUC weighs U.S. proposal in dispute on fellowships

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

01/25/2006

Southern Illinois University Carbondale administrators are weighing a Justice Department proposal that would head off the government's threatened lawsuit over three allegedly discriminatory graduate fellowships, the university system's general counsel said Tuesday.

Jerry Blakemore refused to publicly discuss the Justice Department's recommendations but cast them as a breakthrough, marking the first time in months of negotiations that he's had a proposal of adequate clarity to take to SIUC President Glenn Poshard and other administrators.

"We certainly believe we have sufficient understanding of the legal issues for me to be making a legal recommendation to the president, the board and the university," Blakemore said.

Though the Justice Department has not categorized the proposal as its final offering, Blakemore said the university was treating it as such "because we've had lots of discussions for some time" with the government.

Poshard and Walter Wendler, chancellor of the Carbondale campus, on Tuesday and today were to meet with SIUC administrators and key "constituency groups" for feedback about the government's suggested solution to the dispute. After those private talks, SIUC would respond, said Blakemore, not offering a time frame.

Messages left Tuesday with the Justice Department were not returned.

The Justice Department demanded in writing in November that SIUC halt the fellowships or be sued, arguing that the programs violate the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 and result in "intentional discrimination against whites, non-preferred minorities and males."

SIUC officials have denied that the fellowships discriminate, saying the financial aid incentives promote the university's tradition of diversity.

The Champaign-Urbana News-Gazette, January 25, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

UI's strategic plan includes more diversity, research, tuition hikes

By JODI HECKEL
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URBANA – More minority and international students, more opportunities for undergraduate research, a branch research office in Washington, D.C., a redeveloped Orchard Downs, faculty working in Singapore – they are all part of the University of Illinois' strategic plan.

Accomplishing these goals will mean tuition increases of about 10 percent per year in the next five years, and budget cuts so money can be redirected toward the priorities outlined in the plan.

The campus plan is part of a larger strategic plan for the entire university that has been in the works since last spring. It outlines specific goals for the campus for the next five years, what it will invest in certain areas, and how it expects to pay for it.

"What we are doing is looking at the problems of larger society, looking at giving students a broader experience, reaching out into the corporate sector," Chancellor Richard Herman said. "There are lots of little pieces, but those little pieces all add up to what I think will be notable improvements to the institution."

Among the goals is changing the demographics of the student body. The plan calls for increasing the percentage of freshmen who graduated in the top 10 percent of their high school classes from 50 percent to 75 percent; increasing the number of underrepresented minorities from 13 percent to 18 percent; increasing the number of transfer students from community colleges from 1,200 to 1,700; and increasing the number of international students. It also calls for reducing the size of the freshman class by 1,000, to about 6,500.

To accomplish this, UI officials plan to invest \$3 million in scholarships and \$250,000 in recruiting.

"There are issues you can learn about in the classroom, but it's worthwhile to see the issues from another point of view," Herman said of increasing the diversity of the student body. "Having international students here is one way to change the classroom experience. We often talk about the fact that students learn from each other, so who is here makes a big difference."

Herman speaks about "globalizing" the campus, and the plan calls for increasing the number of UI students who study abroad, from 22 percent to 40 percent. It also sets out the goals of establishing partnerships with Chinese universities for students to study there, and starting research initiatives in Singapore, where the UI already has a joint degree program in chemical engineering with a university.

Campus officials also want to increase the number of freshmen who work with faculty on research projects from 35 percent to 60 percent, and provide more opportunities for students to work in the community. The plan calls for creating five "professors of practice" – businessmen from the private sector who could use their real-world expertise in teaching – and creating more courses with civic components.

"You'd like to prepare people to give back to society when they join it," Herman said. "One of the programs we're trying to open up is sending 100 students a year to Washington, D.C., with the idea they would work in nongovernmental organizations or the government – study abroad at home."

Students will pay for these new opportunities through tuition hikes. The plan calls for raising tuition by about 10 percent per year for five years – from about \$7,000 per year to at least \$11,300 per year, or by 60 percent, during that time. Students are guaranteed to pay the same tuition for four years, so the increases each year would affect incoming students only.

Although reducing enrollment would mean less tuition revenue, the plan states that this will be partially offset by increasing the number of students who pay nonresident rates. The plan also calls for tuition increases of about 5 percent annually for years six through 10.

Even with tuition increases, the academic and administrative units on campus will have to make cuts. The plan calls for reallocating 3 percent of revenues each year for five years, and then 2.5 percent annually for the following five years.

The Champaign-Urbana News-Gazette, January 25, 2006 (Page 2 of 2)

"It does mean harder choices," Herman said. "The plan is not at a level of specificity where specific dollars go from A to B. We do know we need to invest more in undergraduate advising.

"Some of it has to be new money, but some of it has to be stopping some things or being more attentive to (new priorities)," he continued. "At the same time, we have to continue to be responsive to the great ideas that bubble up all across the campus."

UI administrators also want to move several core academic programs into the top rankings.

The plan notes that the universities of Michigan, Wisconsin, California-Berkeley, and UCLA all have stronger reputations for overall excellence than the UI, but the UI ranks higher in its engineering college, most engineering departments, computer science, physics and chemistry. The UI must maintain those strengths and move math, English, political science and history into the top tier, according to the plan. It also calls for moving the law and business programs into the top 20.

The priorities outlined in the plan also include: investing more in interdisciplinary research initiatives, including informatics and biomedical research; establishing a branch research office in Washington, D.C., to foster closer contact with federal agencies; reducing the deferred maintenance backlog of university buildings; redeveloping Orchard Downs as a retirement community; increasing undergraduate advisers and the amount of classes with fewer than 20 students; increasing the amount of money for graduate fellowships; increasing the number of black, Latino and American Indian faculty and staff; going forward with a child care facility in the Research Park; and expanding the Research Park.

Herman said the strategic plan sets out broad research directions, but it will be up to the various colleges and departments on campus to flesh out the plan. Academic and administrative units will be developing their own plans this spring.

He said the planning will help the UI reach his goal of being the top public research university in the country.

"This is a university that is already in the top handful of public research universities in the country," Herman said. "Can we get better? I think the answer is decidedly yes, and I'm committed to making that happen."

The Chicago Tribune, January 26, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Developer buys Barat College site

By Lisa Black

Tribune staff reporter

Published January 26, 2006

Developer Robert Shaw has agreed to purchase Barat College in Lake Forest, with plans to convert the 100-year-old campus into a residential community but retain its legacy through an educational foundation, officials announced Wednesday.

The new development, known as Barat Woods, will offer up to 150 condominiums, townhouses and rowhouses on 23 acres.

DePaul University, which merged with Barat in 2001, closed the small liberal arts college in June after officials said they misjudged the costs of modernizing facilities and could no longer afford to operate it.

Students, faculty and alumni railed against the school's closing last year. But Shaw allayed some concerns by offering to allow the non-profit Barat Education Foundation to stay on site and continue its mission of education and social activism.

"I'm sure all of us have some mixed emotions on the change," said Lake Forest Ald. Roger Mohr, who joined officials from DePaul and the Barat foundation at the historic Old Main Building to announce the news. "But on the other side of the coin, we're pleased to see Bob Shaw as the developer."

Shaw, who said he has lived within a mile of the campus for 37 years, said he plans to carefully consider the property's aesthetics. He will leave vacant the expansive south lawn that can be seen from Sheridan Road and does not expect to destroy any of the land's mature trees or the adjacent ravine, he said.

The facade of the Old Main Building will remain, but Shaw plans on converting the rest of it into 40 to 50 condominiums with underground parking, he said. The condos would range from about 1,500 square feet to 3,000 square feet.

He plans to demolish adjacent residence halls, a theater, a gymnasium and a science center, which are not considered architecturally significant. He will replace them with clustered housing, townhouses and rowhouses, for a total of no more than 150 units, assuming the city approves his plans, Shaw said.

He did not provide the sales prices of the homes but said he will appeal to different segments of the market and adhere to Lake Forest's law regarding affordable housing.

Because the average home in Lake Forest sells for about \$1 million, the city's definition of "affordable" won't be the same as less-affluent communities, he said.

"We're not looking at \$35,000 houses," he said. "Everything is relative."

Shaw declined to say what he paid for the Barat property but said it was "less than \$20 million." He said he hopes to begin construction within a year but must submit formal plans for approval by various city committees and the City Council.

Within a few weeks, he expects to meet with an ad hoc committee formed by Lake Forest last year, when discussions about the property began.

"At that time we'll show a concept plan, as we envision it, prior to city input," he said.

The Chicago Tribune, January 26, 2006 (Page 2 of 2)

Shaw, a retired chief executive officer of International Jensen Inc., has developed several other neighborhoods in Lake Forest, including The Preserve of Middlefork Farm and Academy Woods.

He formed Barat Woods LLC for this project and included wording in the contract that calls for providing an office for the Barat foundation, he said.

The foundation plans to provide scholarships to students of all ages, establish a center for women's leadership and provide other new educational programs, such as on business ethics.

"For the Barat legacy to continue on, we're thrilled," said Michelle Burgis, a trustee with the foundation.

Peoria Journal Star, January 26, 2006

IVCC trustees adopt series of expansion projects

BY ERINN DESHINSKY
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

OGLESBY - Illinois Valley Community College may see some big changes on campus within the next few years.

The board of trustees adopted a multimillion dollar master plan Wednesday for future construction, including a \$17 million technology and work force development center and an \$18.5 million community instructional center.

Jerry Corcoran, vice president for business services and finance, said the goal is to bring all of the educational facilities together and move away from the temporary buildings on the east campus.

The master plan is amended every five years, Corcoran said, although he is unsure when each project will begin. Most of the projects depend on state and local funding, but Corcoran said he is optimistic the college will receive the proper funding for each project in time.

Corcoran said the state will normally fund about 75 percent of the costs of such projects, and he expects the school to make up the other 25 percent.

The first project, Corcoran said, likely will be a 65,000-square-foot technology and work force development center east of the main building on campus. This building will hold many of the classes now temporarily run at the east campus, such as welding, auto technology, day care, massage therapy, drafting and computer design.

The 140,000-square-foot community instructional center has been on the waiting list for state funding for years. It will hold offices for administrative and financial aid offices for registering students as well as a dining center and recreational space for students.

"In a perfect world, the technology center would get funded first," Corcoran said. "It might be to our advantage to have a one- or two- or three- year gap, but in order to get what we need, if we get all the funding at once, we'd figure out how to do it."

The school just received approval for state funding for a \$1 million roadway project. Corcoran said the school budgeted for fixing the entrance road and practice runway for the truck-driving class and will release the project for bids in March. He said he hopes it will be done before the summer session starts.

Corcoran said the board of trustees and the community have supported the plans.

"That's why I feel so good about the process. We didn't just have a couple of administrators making the plans. We had faculty, staff, students and the community providing feedback about what's wrong with what we have and what they would like to see," Corcoran said. "It's been time well spent. We are addressing one of the big concerns."

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Springfield State Journal-Register, January 26, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

LLCC approves new policies

Measures discourage relationships, familial ties between certain status levels

By DANIEL PIKE
STAFF WRITER

Lincoln Land Community College adopted Wednesday night its first campuswide policies discouraging fraternization and nepotism despite objections from the school's faculty association.

The board of trustees unanimously OK'd the measures, which have been discussed publicly for about a year.

Ron Seney, president of the Lincoln Land Faculty Association, said before the vote that board approval of the policies could prompt the teachers' union to file an unfair labor practices complaint. Seney argued that the procedures attached to the policies should be negotiated with the union because they deal with hiring and firing practices.

Seney said the association does not necessarily object to the content of the policies, which in most cases prohibit personal relationships or familial ties "in positions in which one individual has a power or status advantage over the other." Included are relationships between employees and between faculty members and students.

Interim LLCC president Mike Murphy said the board feels the union's potential labor filing would be "without merit."

"I disagree with college policy being negotiated with a certain constituency then applied to the entire college," Murphy said.

With collective bargaining expected to begin in the coming months at Lincoln Land, Seney asked why the board wanted to push these policies through now.

In response, board chairman Kent Gray said the faculty association had been given opportunities to influence the policies and that the board took much longer to pass the measures than some trustees would have liked.

The policy procedures, which detail the college's possible responses to violations of the new rules, will be finalized by administrators and are not subject to board approval. Drafts of the procedures were made public several months ago.

Murphy said it's unclear when the policies will be implemented.

Public acknowledgement of the fraternization and nepotism policies began last January, about the same time rumors surfaced of then-president Jack Daniels' personal relationship with a subordinate employee. Both Daniels and the employee have since resigned, though the affair has never been cited by the college as the reason for the resignations or for development of the policies.

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Meanwhile, Murphy said after the meeting that discussions are continuing with two still-unnamed presidential finalists. Lincoln Land should know by Friday whether one of the candidates will remain in the running - if not, Murphy said, the search might have to be extended.

The first presidential finalist, David Sam of Houston, will visit the campus today. Open forums for college employees and the public are scheduled for 10 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. in the Stephens Room at Menard Hall.

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The Chicago Sun-Times, January 26, 2006

SIU shows minority fellowship plan to faculty

January 26, 2006

BY DAVE NEWBART Staff Reporter

Officials at Southern Illinois University presented a proposed consent decree to faculty and student leaders Wednesday, seeking to ward off a proposed federal lawsuit that would charge the school with discriminating against whites and others.

Officials would not say just what was being proposed in the consent decree, which came after two months of negotiations with the U.S. Justice Department. The department had threatened to sue the school on grounds that three of its minority fellowship programs discriminated against whites, males and non-preferred minorities.

However, changes in the descriptions of those fellowships had been removed from the school's Web site Wednesday.

The changes omitted any reference to "minorities" in describing who could apply for the fellowships. The site noted that applications to two of the fellowships "have been extensively revised."

But Wednesday, the Web site reverted back to the original language describing the programs.

SIU spokesman David Gross said the school's lawyers recommended the site be changed back until negotiations had concluded.

The school's meetings Wednesday with faculty and student leaders were "positive and informative," Gross said.

"The general consensus is a negotiated settlement would be in the best interest of the university," Gross said.

A 'reasonable compromise'

Robert Benford, president of the faculty senate and a fellowship supporter, met with the administration Wednesday but said he could not discuss them because they were confidential. Earlier, Benford had said the new descriptions were a "reasonable compromise."

Professor Jonathan Bean, a critic of the programs, also liked the language that was temporarily online. "That is the type of language that I and others recommended two and a half years ago," he said.

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SIUC groups read DOJ decree

BY CALEB HALE
THE SOUTHERN

CARBONDALE - Southern Illinois University officials are giving Carbondale campus constituents their first look at what has been the subject of secret negotiations with the U.S. Department of Justice since November.

SIU President Glenn Poshard, legal counsel Jerry Blakemore and SIUC Chancellor Walter Wendler conducted private meetings Wednesday in the Stone Center with various groups, showing them the terms of a consent decree justice department lawyers delivered to them last week over three graduate fellowship programs the agency claims have been discriminatory against whites and non-preferred minorities.

The meetings continue today. Groups included in the discussion are executive administrators, the Graduate Council, the Faculty Senate, the Graduate and Professional Student Council, department chairs, as well as African-American and Hispanic faculty members.

Blakemore reports the discussions with constituents so far have been positive and that people seem to agree a compromise is in the university's best interest.

SIU has spent the last two months in talks with justice department representatives, attempting to avoid a lawsuit the agency initially threatened if the fellowships weren't eliminated.

University spokesman David Gross said officials are now looking for feedback from campus leaders. He said SIU and the justice department haven't come to a final agreement yet. A resolution may still be a couple of weeks away, depending on what officials learn from the constituency meetings, Gross added.

"I know there's been significant discussion between our legal counsel and the government, and I know there has been a lot of progress made to get the justice department to understand what these programs are about," Gross said.

Talk of compromise, however, has some state officials worried about what SIU is compromising and how it might affect similar fellowship programs in other Illinois universities. State Sen. Miguel del Valle, who late last year urged SIU to fight the justice department's assertions, is one such official.

"I think any actions that Carbondale takes that basically ends up giving these folks who triggered this complaint a victory will lead to more challenges," del Valle said. The initial complaint to SIU was lodged by the Virginia-based think tank Center for Equal Opportunity and forwarded to the justice department a year later.

Poshard, Blakemore and Gross met with del Valle in Springfield several weeks ago to explain their wishes to avoid expensive litigation. The senator said dodging court costs seems to be the prominent goal of the university, rather than standing up for minority students who have benefited from the fellowships.

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"Their only concern is the cost of litigation," del Valle said. "Glenn Poshard doesn't seem to get it; Jerry Blakemore doesn't seem to get it. I'm really not happy with this situation."

While Poshard is sworn to silence by the justice department until negotiations are complete, he has stated the university is working to make sure all its programs are open to all students.

Such ideas have apparently been reflected - albeit prematurely, officials say - on the SIU Web applications for two of the fellowships in question. Language in the program descriptions no longer mentioned minorities as it once did. The change prompted the campus community to ask whether action on a justice department settlement was already in motion.

For the moment the answer is no, Gross said, noting the changes made to the Web site were not authorized by legal counsel. The language has been changed back for the time being.

"It was an assumption by administrators over in the diversity office. It was not accurate," he said.

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The Chronicle of Higher Education, January 26, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Southern Illinois U. is poised to settle dispute with Justice Department over minority fellowships

By PETER SCHMIDT

The Southern Illinois University system has reached a tentative agreement with the U.S. Justice Department to alter fellowship programs that the department had challenged as discriminatory because they are reserved for women or members of minority groups.

Officials of the university system and the Justice Department refused on Wednesday to comment publicly on the details of the accord, which the federal agency proposed after two months of negotiations with system officials. But a source close to the discussions said that the proposal, to be the basis of a court settlement known as a consent decree, calls for the system to open up the programs to students of any race or gender. And, in a move that system officials described as unauthorized and premature, and that they subsequently reversed, the university's Web site was temporarily changed this month to indicate that the programs were no longer restricted to women or members of minority groups.

The dispute stems from a complaint filed by an advocacy group, the Center for Equal Opportunity, and appears to be the first in which the Justice Department has been enlisted in a legal challenge against a race-exclusive college program (*The Chronicle*, November 25). Many other colleges around the nation have been opening minority programs up to other students in the face of pressure from conservative advocacy groups and the Education Department's Office for Civil Rights, and in response to arguments that the Supreme Court's reasoning in two 2003 rulings involving race-conscious college admissions made it harder for colleges to legally justify operating race-exclusive programs (see accompanying article).

In a November 4 letter to system officials, Bradley J. Schlozman, then the acting assistant attorney general in charge of the Justice Department's civil-rights division, said that the agency planned to file a lawsuit against the system's Board of Trustees and administration over three fellowship programs administered by the Carbondale campus.

The letter alleged that an agency investigation of the fellowship programs determined that the system had "engaged in a pattern or practice of intentional discrimination against whites, nonpreferred minorities, and males," and that the eligibility criteria for the programs violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits employment discrimination. Officials of the university system persuaded the federal agency to postpone litigation while the two sides tried to negotiate a settlement.

Meanwhile, supporters of affirmative action have rallied behind the university system. Among those who issued statements of support for the minority fellowships were several civil-rights organizations and prominent Illinois politicians, including the two U.S. senators, Richard J. Durbin and Barack Obama, both Democrats. Last month, the Faculty Senate on the Carbondale campus adopted a statement urging administrators there to preserve the three fellowship programs: Bridge to the Doctorate, the Graduate Dean's Fellowship, and Proactive Recruitment of Multicultural Professionals for Tomorrow, known as Prompt.

Jerry D. Blakemore, the university system's general counsel, this week characterized the settlement proposed by the Justice Department as "a breakthrough." On Wednesday, the system held meetings on the tentative agreement with the Carbondale campus's student and faculty leaders, all of whom were asked to keep its terms in confidence.

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In the coming weeks, system officials plan to discuss the proposal with student and faculty leaders on the system's Edwardsville campus and with the black and Hispanic caucuses of the Illinois legislature.

Jon L. Pressley, president of the Carbondale campus's Graduate and Professional Student Council, said he was part of the group of campus leaders who had heard administrators summarize the proposed consent decree. "I am not sure exactly how I feel," he said. "I want to see more of what the actual plans are, so I am going to reserve judgment for now."

Sometime this month, the university's Web site was altered to delete the terms "minority" and "women" from the eligibility criteria for the Graduate Dean's and Prompt fellowship programs. A notice on the site said: "The Prompt and Graduate Dean's fellowship applications have been extensively revised and are now open to individuals whose personal or family background, life, cultural, and/or ethnic experiences could contribute to a more reflective, responsive environment in the program, the institution, and the larger academic community."

The notice added that the application deadline for the two programs had been extended "to allow interested students to apply under the new guidelines."

On Wednesday, following newspaper reports of the changes, the Web site was updated again to restore the old wording. David M. Gross, a spokesman for the university system, said that "some administrator in the organization made presumptions that were premature," and that the earlier changes to the site had not been authorized by the system's top officials.

It was unclear on Wednesday whether the proposed consent decree would cover the Bridge to the Doctorate program, which is administered by a consortium of colleges and research organizations and is financially supported by the National Science Foundation.

The Southern Illinoisan, January 27, 2006

Connerly speaks to SIU about anti-affirmative action views

*BY CALEB HALE
THE SOUTHERN*

CARBONDALE - Noted civil liberties advocate Ward Connerly says the argument of affirmative action in higher education is really the argument over how many blacks make it into the Ivy League schools.

Connerly, a controversial opponent of affirmative action and a former board regent of the University of California, spoke at Southern Illinois University Carbondale Thursday night, the end of activities for the campus' first "Conservative Coming Out" week.

Connerly kept his own comments short and spent most of the night fielding a variety of questions, mostly from young black students perplexed how Connerly, being black and subjected to racism pre-Civil Rights Act, has come to stand against the idea of affirmative action.

But Connerly gave his answer to the question early in the night:

"It's because of that I've learned ... we should never ... use the attributes of race to define a person's station in life."

Connerly gave his brand of thought on the issue of racial preferences in the U.S., although he admitted he is aware his views aren't universally popular.

"We cannot sustain for infinity this system of classifying people into essentially five food groups," he said.

It happens often at universities, Connerly noted. SIU is currently under question from the U.S. Department of Justice for possible discriminatory practices involving three graduate fellowships. Officials are currently mulling the terms of a consent decree from the government before reaching a final settlement.

Connerly said universities often illegally choose their students based on the notion of diversity.

"We try to justify racial discrimination on the grounds of leveling the playing field," Connerly said.

However, he added, striving for diversity shows that basically society is made up of inherently good people trying to bring opportunity to as many people as possible.

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The Champaign-Urbana News-Gazette, January 26, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Formal dedication of new center held; NCSA marking 20 years

By GREG KLINE
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As National Science Foundation Director Arden Bement sees it, common sense isn't what's going to help the nation, its economy and people cope with rapid changes in science and technology that only promise to come even faster.

It is, Bement said at the University of Illinois on Wednesday, uncommon sense that the nation needs to maintain its pre-eminent leadership role in scientific and technological developments, especially when computer and communications technologies are gradually leveling the playing field internationally.

That means, among other things, looking not only across disciplines for collaborators on the next big thing, but also across borders in a world where information technology and communications systems are making it possible for breakthroughs to break out anywhere.

Being first with the most may no longer be the key factor in leading the pack, Bement said.

"Today, collaboration is the only game in town," he said.

Bement was the featured speaker at the dedication of the new National Center for Supercomputing Applications Building at the UI.

The supercomputing center, largely funded by the National Science Foundation, actually moved in last fall, but the formal dedication kicks off a celebration of its 20th birthday this year.

The event drew a crowd and plenty of local leaders, including UI President B. Joseph White and Chancellor Richard Herman, U.S. Rep. Tim Johnson, R-Urbana, and Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White.

Also on hand was Larry Smarr, who needed supercomputing power for his research as a cosmology professor, helped spearhead the NCSA's founding at the UI and ended up as its first director. He now lives in California.

People at the dedication, Bement among them, got to see some of the NCSA's and the UI's handiwork.

Harris Lewin, who heads the UI's new Institute for Genomic Biology, showed Bement some of the capabilities of "Evolution Highway," an NCSA-developed computer program to visualize the genomes of different species side by side to look for similarities and differences, some of which may be, for instance, at the root of cancer.

Another demonstration outlined an idea for using sound sensors to record and analyze populations of birds and other wildlife in the field.

Thom Dunning, the NCSA's current director, said putting most of the center's personnel under one roof for the first time – the NCSA was scattered at a half dozen sites around campus – will help in continuing its record of innovation, which includes Mosaic, the first popular graphical Web browser and a milestone in the Internet revolution.

"It really is a tremendous boost to have everybody down the corridor from one another or one floor up," Dunning said.

UI President White, who called the NCSA one of the UI's "spires of excellence," said it has been his experience that when smart people with common interests are put in proximity to each other, good things happen.

In remarks at the dedication ceremony before his speech, Bement said the building is more than just a new workplace, however. It helps fulfill a national goal of adding infrastructure that will speed the development of computer technology and engineering innovation.

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Bement highlighted the NCSA's leadership in creating tools to enable virtual collaboration almost as good as being in the same room and to allow nontraditional users such as social scientists to take advantage of high-performance computing.

Tools like those and others, to help us make sense of the masses of data and information available digitally with modeling and visualization, will be increasingly important, he said.

Computer and information technologies "have raised the level of complexity that we can understand and harness," Bement said, and they're likely to keep doing so.

The Southern Illinoisan, January 27, 2006

SIUC opens state-of-the-art library annex

*BY CALEB HALE
THE SOUTHERN*

CARBONDALE - How much room is needed to store seven floors worth of books in a single story? Try 60,000 square feet - and you still have to be a little creative with space.

But Southern Illinois University Carbondale officials say they've not only been creative, they've been progressive in designing a state-of-the-art annex to house the more than two million volumes displaced in the Morris Library renovation project.

Thursday they christened the building with a small ceremony and a ribbon "snapping" done with one of the McLafferty Annex's secrets to condensed storage, a mobile shelving unit.

A temporary home for books now and future site for the Carbondale campus' physical plant operations, the annex represents much of what the future holds for SIUC, Chancellor Walter Wendler said.

"We like to say that all of these improvements are part of the University of the Future, but that our future is now," he said. "In every corner of the campus, we are enhancing the learning and living environments for our current students and future generations of students."

The multi-million-dollar facility was the first step in the overall \$48 million revamping project taking place in Morris Library at the center of campus, Wendler said. But the project's implications go much further, he added. Once the new library is complete, the books will be removed from the annex and physical plant operations will move from their current location at the front of campus to the back, clearing a path for what is envisioned for the Saluki Way project Wendler revealed last year.

"This project is one of a number of projects helping us make changes for the 21st century," Wendler said.

SIUC Dean of Library Affairs David Carlson noted the annex's amenities give students a taste of some of the technology in store for them with the completion of the Morris Library project.

"All of the shelving and books you see here will be moving back, with the shelving going in the basement of the new Morris," Carlson said.

Aside from the mobile book shelves, which compact or extend with the push of a button, Carlson said the other major innovation for the building comes from its geothermal heating and air conditioning system. The system is the largest in the region and is expected to net the university roughly \$21,000 a year in energy savings compared to conventional climate controls.

Of course, access is still vital to the functioning of the annex. The building is open to students from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. However, students can have books from the annex delivered to the circulation desk of Morris Library by specific request. Library staff says they will make books requested available in the center of campus within two hours.

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The Chicago Tribune, January 23, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

City schools plan deep cuts

System's budget woes could affect class size, special ed programs

By Tracy Dell'Angela
Tribune staff reporter

Facing a \$325 million deficit, Chicago Public School officials are proposing deep classroom cuts next school year, which could mean larger high school classes, less support for special education students and fewer new schools.

Schools Chief Arne Duncan is expected to outline the school district's cost-cutting proposals in a speech to business leaders Monday at the City Club. It will be the first time in Duncan's five-year tenure that he has opened the door to scaling back core reforms, from literacy coaches in elementary schools to the re-creation of failing schools under the district's Renaissance 2010 plan.

The district is targeting \$150 million in districtwide cuts, and nearly every program and service is on the table. Students at magnet schools could lose busing. The district could stop paying for full-day kindergarten in some schools. A special education school and a few more early childhood centers might close. After-school programs and vocational education are up for grabs.

Even before the cuts, Budget Director Pedro Martinez said the district will eliminate 600 teaching jobs next school year because of enrollment declines. In the last two years, the system has lost 20,000 students and expects to lose 7,000 more next year.

"People need to understand that if we don't get more money, kids will get hurt," Duncan said. "We've made a lot of progress, and we don't want to take a step backwards. But we can't begin to assume that all of this will just go away."

The district is proposing to save \$25 million by increasing high school class sizes to 31 from 28, a move that seems to fly in the face of the district's push to reform these schools and prepare more teenagers for college.

Duncan called bigger classes a last resort.

The teachers union president said she will fight any increase in class sizes, but she isn't convinced the cuts will materialize.

"At this time, it's only speculation, and all of this could change like the weather," Marilyn Stewart said. "It would be inconceivable to raise class size when they are worried about test scores. We're going to do what we have to do when the time comes."

Officials pledged to cut the deficit by slicing \$25 million in central office jobs and administrative expenses, a promise that left some school leaders skeptical. Last year, for example, the district announced that it was slashing the staff at area offices, but area offices actually are spending \$1 million more this year than in 2004-05.

"I would start emptying out [administrative offices at] 125 Clark St. before I start upping class size and getting rid of teachers," said James Lalley, principal at Northside College Preparatory High School and

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one of 14 principals on a budget advisory committee asked to review the proposals. "Central office is like a balloon: You squeeze it in one place, and it expands in another."

Still, the deficit projections could change depending on what happens in Springfield and on whether Mayor Richard Daley gives his blessing to another school property tax increase, which could raise as much as \$55 million. That would allow the district to keep the current high school class size and not cut special education.

Officials blame the projected budget hole on declining enrollment, increasing salaries and benefits, new pension costs and debt payments. Federal revenue is expected to be flat this year. The district is hoping for an extra \$100 million in state aid, but it's not banking on the amount.

In fact, state board officials suggested Thursday that the increase might be closer to \$70 million. Duncan also has asked the state for a pension rules change, a break that would plug a \$70 million hole but is considered a long-shot, officials said.

Duncan sounded the same alarm last year. The district pledged to cut \$50 million in operation and administrative costs, and it begged the state to help the district close the remaining \$175 million deficit. The state delivered about \$92 million, and the district came up with another \$66 million by increasing property taxes and dipping into cash reserves. The district still was able to find tens of millions of dollars for new and expanded programs.

What's different this year is that the hole is larger, and the projections already assume the district will have to spend down cash reserves by \$75 million.

In meetings during the last few months, district administrators have offered up programs and positions that could be vulnerable. After hiring 71 new reading coaches this year, the district now faces the prospect of cutting those jobs.

Class sizes might increase in high school academy programs for older teens who have not passed 8th grade. A teen pregnancy program is on the block, as is a vocational program that paid the tuition of juniors and seniors taking college courses. After-school programs could be cut by 10 percent or more.

The district had planned to spend \$17 million extra on new schools next year, but some of that money might disappear. In the past few years, the district has created more schools than it has closed at a time when enrollment is declining.

Otis Elementary School Principal James Cosme questioned how the district can justify money for new schools when it can't pay for existing ones.

He suggested that millions could be cut from pet academic programs without schools feeling pain: training meetings in hotel ballrooms, high school fairs and hundreds of teacher coaches. Cosme is skeptical, however, that the cuts will target superfluous programs.

"They've got money problems, all right, but I'm just not sure they are going to be willing to make the cuts," he said.

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The Chicago Tribune, January 24, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Chicago schools find news not all bad

State may hike aid, civic leaders kick in

By David Mendell and Tracy Dell'Angela

Tribune staff reporters
Published January 24, 2006

As Chicago Public Schools Chief Arne Duncan on Monday publicly unveiled the most dire budget prospects for the school system in a decade, two bright spots appeared on the horizon that could help Duncan take baby steps toward closing a yawning \$328 million deficit.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich said he would propose in his annual budget next month that the Chicago system receive the full increase in funding that Duncan has requested from the state--\$100 million. Chicago school officials had expected Blagojevich's budget to include a \$70 million increase for the district.

If the Illinois legislature would approve the governor's funding increase, the deficit would fall to \$228 million, which officials noted still leaves a huge budget hole.

"That's a very encouraging step in the right direction, but it is still very early and we want to make sure that these proposals become reality," Duncan said.

In addition, a group of civic leaders, who are raising private money for the district's Renaissance 2010 initiative to reform the district's underperforming schools, said they had local commitments of about \$30 million for the ambitious effort. So far, \$7 million has come in, and nearly all of it was spent last year or is pledged to schools this year.

School officials are proposing deep academic cuts next school year, including enlarging high school classes, cutting support for special education programs, furloughing teachers and opening fewer new schools.

Duncan formally outlined the budget woes at a City Club luncheon speech Monday. He emphasized that "there is a lot of uncertainty" about exactly how many cuts ultimately would have to be made.

School officials said a variety of factors have placed the system in a severe financial bind, including ballooning pension costs, increasing teacher salaries and a drop in enrollment of nearly 7,000 students, which translates into a \$20 million revenue loss.

School districts throughout Illinois are seeing enrollments decline as children from a mid-1980s baby boomlet pass through high school.

"Everyone is trying, but the blunt fact of the matter is it's not enough," Duncan said. "... Under any circumstances, we'll have to keep cutting."

Those interests facing the budget ax, however, decried the proposed cuts. Marilyn Stewart, president of the Chicago Teachers Union, said teachers' pensions should not be a place to cut. She said she has not been approached by district officials about supporting a change in state law that would lower the district's funding liability to the teachers' pension fund.

If the fund falls below a 90 percent funded level, the district is required to fill the gap. That happened in 2005 and would cost the district nearly \$70 million in 2007. Duncan said he would like the teachers union to support dropping that level to 80 percent, which would save that money.

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Stewart said the union would accept no such thing.

"People have worked 25 years in the system, and they should be guaranteed their pensions,' Stewart said. "They have been attacking pension systems all over this nation, and for them to come after us is outrageous."

A slight influx of money will come from the business leaders raising money for new schools between now and 2010. On Tuesday, leaders for the Renaissance Schools Fund are expected to announce that corporations and charitable foundations have donated \$40 million to assist in the creation of 100 new city schools.

Local business donations total \$30 million, pledged money that will come in over the next few years and will cover start-up costs and special initiatives at targeted schools. Another \$10 million will come from national foundations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Despite the business support, the reform is still costing the school district millions of new dollars every year--about \$14 million extra projected for next school year alone.

About 12 of the 59 donors did not give money directly to the Renaissance Fund, opting to partner with specific schools.

Enrollment, salaries strain school budget

Chicago Public Schools officials partially blame a projected \$328 million budget hole on teacher salaries and declining enrollment.

DISTRICT ENROLLMENT

Scale in thousands

2000: 426,814

'05: 410,874

AVERAGE TEACHER SALARIES

Scale in thousands

2000: \$50,411

'05: \$61,178

Source: Illinois State Board of Education

Chicago Tribune

The Chicago Tribune, January 25, 2006

Schools might need tax hike, Daley says

By Gary Washburn and David Mendell
Tribune staff reporters

Mayor Richard Daley on Tuesday applauded Gov. Rod Blagojevich's effort to provide \$100 million in additional funding to the Chicago Public Schools, but he said that more money is needed to avert cuts.

And Daley did not rule out a local property tax increase if sufficient state funding does not materialize.

Referring to the possibility of deep cuts to academic programs, Daley said that school officials "are laying out their plan. They are telling the people the truth: 'Here is what is going to happen.'

"If you don't tell them (and adequate money does not materialize), you can't do it at the last minute. ... You have to live in the real world."

On Monday, schools chief Arne Duncan outlined the bleakest budget forecast for the district in a decade, saying the system faced a \$328 million deficit in the 2005-06 fiscal year because of a variety of rising costs, particularly skyrocketing pension fund obligations. That deficit quickly fell to \$228 million after Blagojevich aides announced he would contribute the full \$100 million that Duncan had requested from the state.

School officials are proposing deep academic cuts next school year, including enlarging high school classes, cutting support for special education, furloughing hundreds of teachers and opening fewer new schools

City and school officials plan to push hard on Springfield lawmakers for more money. Duncan contended Tuesday that the state is allocating far less than required by law to supplement the Chicago district for pension fund requirements.

Duncan explained that the state distributed more than \$1 billion to shore up depleted pension funds in districts around the state. He said state law requires that Chicago receive 20 percent to 30 percent of that money, yet the district received just \$75 million last year.

"We have to get Springfield to step up," Duncan said. "This is not a problem that can be solved by local property-tax payers. Springfield has to meet us more than halfway."

As for the possibility of another to-the-limit property tax increase by the Board of Education, Daley said that school officials "will make decisions once the General Assembly and the governor present their budget and complete their budget."

Meanwhile, Duncan said that Blagojevich's decision to back away from his controversial keno gambling proposal likely would cost the school system \$100 million in state grant money for construction projects and capital improvements. The district has been pushing the state to restore construction grants.

In a district of more than 600 schools, Duncan estimated unmet capital needs at more than \$1 billion.

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The Chicago Sun-Times, January 25, 2006

Virtual Academy idea may become reality

BY MAUDLYNE IHEJIRIKA Staff Reporter

Up to 600 Chicago Public Schools elementary students would spend school days glued to a computer at home -- in pajamas should they choose -- under a proposal for the state's first virtual public school expected to be approved today by the Chicago Board of Education.

The board had shelved the Chicago Virtual Academy proposal after questions arose about whether students would receive 300 minutes a day of verifiable instruction, as required for the school district to be reimbursed by the state. CPS officials opted to await a ruling from the state Board of Education on the school proposed to open next year.

But on Tuesday, officials at CPS and the school's manager, K12 Inc., said they felt confident issues raised last fall have been addressed, even though the state board said it hadn't received any proposal nor issued any ruling. Also, the Chicago Teachers Union continues to question whether the new school model essentially amounts to home schooling.

Many students served

"Students will have 300 minutes a day of instruction. It's not an issue anymore. We have determined that there is a way to verify attendance," said CPS spokesman Maylon Edwards.

The Chicago Virtual Academy would serve students in kindergarten through eighth grade. They would receive a computer on loan, free Internet access and about 70 pounds of books and supplies to take online courses.

According to the proposal, students will range "from the academically challenged to the academically gifted, including difficult to reach populations such as expelled and homebound students. . . Parents or other responsible adults will guide students through their daily coursework in their own home or other small group setting."

Union challenges plan

"The Chicago Teachers Union is not in favor," CTU spokeswoman Rosemaria Genova said. "We are closely examining the cost factor and the issue of whether or not this violates the school code with respect to home-based schooling."

Proposed under Renaissance 2010, the school would cost \$5,075 per pupil, said CPS spokesman Peter Cunningham.

State board spokeswoman Meta Minton cautioned, "While discussions continue with the district, we have not received any formal proposal, and at this point, we don't have anything to sign off on." She said it was a first for public schools.

K12 Inc. maintains it has resolved the issue of how to count student attendance in virtual schools it operates in 13 other states, and believes it will be resolved satisfactorily here as well.

"The one difference between Chicago and the other states is Chicago is a densely populated area, so there will also be a facility where the students can come in at least once a week for instruction," said Peter Stewart, K12's vice president for school development.

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The New York Times, January 22, 2006 (Page 1 of 4)

College aid plan widens U.S. role in high schools

By SAM DILLON
Correction Appended

When Republican senators quietly tucked a major new student aid program into the 774-page budget bill last month, they not only approved a five-year, \$3.75 billion initiative. They also set up what could be an important shift in American education: for the first time the federal government will rate the academic rigor of the nation's 18,000 high schools.

The measure, backed by the Bush administration and expected to pass the House when it returns next month, would provide \$750 to \$1,300 grants to low-income college freshmen and sophomores who have completed "a rigorous secondary school program of study" and larger amounts to juniors and seniors majoring in math, science and other critical fields.

It leaves it to the secretary of education to define rigorous, giving her a new foothold in matters of high school curriculums.

Mindful of the delicate politics at play when Washington expands its educational role into matters zealously guarded as local prerogatives, senior Department of Education officials said they would consult with governors and other groups in determining which high school programs would allow students to qualify for grants.

"I do not see this, at all, as an expansion of the federal role," Sally L. Stroup, an assistant secretary of education, said in an interview. Washington, she said, would not impose a curriculum, just judge programs of study outlined by states. "Our job is to make sure that those are valid standards and valid programs," she said. Furthermore, states and communities can decide on their own whether their students will compete for the grants. "We don't force people to do anything," Ms. Stroup said.

But Terry W. Hartle, a senior vice president at the American Council on Education, the nation's largest association of colleges and universities, said the new program "involves the federal government in curricular matters in a way that opens a new chapter in educational history."

"I'm very sympathetic to the goal of getting more students to take more math and science courses, but this particular plan has the potential to turn the Department of Education into a national school board," Mr. Hartle said.

Ms. Stroup and other department officials said they had not yet figured out how, if the program is approved, they would go about identifying which students to qualify from which high schools. The department would have \$790 million in new grant money to distribute to college-bound students by this fall, a tight timeline that Ms. Stroup said would force the department to postpone the rule-making process that usually accompanies new programs. Susan Aspey, a department spokeswoman, estimated that more than 500,000 students would receive grants.

Several prominent educators said they expected the legislation to unleash a scramble by high schools to gain recognition of their curricula as rigorous.

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The Constitution outlines no role for the federal government in education, and local control of schools is a cornerstone of the American system. But Washington's role has grown since Congress began financing college studies for World War II veterans. Several laws increased federal aid to education, including the landmark National Defense Act of 1958, but specifically prohibited federal officials from assuming supervision or control over programs of instruction. And while President Bush's education law, No Child Left Behind, imposed mandatory testing, it allowed the states to choose their own tests.

Like the No Child Left Behind law, the new grants are largely an effort to take a Texas idea nationwide. The legislation is modeled on the Texas Scholars program, begun during Mr. Bush's governorship, which enlisted certain Texas high schools and encouraged their students to take a "rigorous course of study," defined to include four years of English; three and a half years of social studies; two years of foreign language; and a year each of algebra, geometry, advanced algebra, biology, chemistry and physics.

After Mr. Bush became president, his administration financed a Center for State Scholars, based in Austin, to spread a curriculum modeled on Texas Scholars nationwide. In the 2006 budget, he proposed supplemental Pell Grants for college freshmen and sophomores who had completed the "rigorous" curriculum outlined in the State Scholars initiative, in which some 300 school districts in 15 states are participating. A House bill closely reflected that administration proposal.

But the legislation evolved. Senator [Bill Frist](#) of Tennessee, the majority leader, responding to rising anxiety over America's economic competitiveness, sponsored legislation establishing new grants to college juniors and seniors majoring in math, science or engineering. In December, Republican lawmakers working with the administration grafted the House and Senate bills together, adding language requiring the secretary to recognize at least one rigorous high school program in each state. Democratic lawmakers said they were barely consulted.

"We were shut almost completely out of the process," said Representative George Miller of California, the ranking minority member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

The new one-year grants, designed to supplement the broader, \$13 billion Pell Grant program, range from \$750 for low-income college freshmen and \$1,300 for sophomores to \$4,000 for juniors and seniors who are pursuing majors in the physical, life or computer sciences, mathematics, technology, engineering or certain foreign languages. Applicants must have a 3.0 grade point average to be eligible as sophomores, juniors and seniors.

The administration's original proposal would have been simple to administer. But under the proposal approved by the Senate, Department of Education officials would need to scrutinize high school courses of study and discuss curricular matters with local officials to a degree that Washington officials never have.

"We haven't actually sat down yet and decided how we're going to go about it," Ms. Stroup said.

Pell Grants have been based on financial need, but eligibility for the new grants is more complicated, with requirements changing twice as students advance through college. The requirement that students maintain a B average, for instance, will force the department to decide how to handle applicants attending institutions like Hampshire College and Sarah Lawrence College, which do not give letter or numeric grades. With little time before crucial decisions must be made, some educators said they were expecting considerable confusion.

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"This will be like trying to land a 747 on an airstrip built for a single-engine plane," said Barmak Nassirian, associate executive director of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. "And we're all going to have to fly in by the seat of our pants."

The department's most politically ticklish determinations, however, appear to be those involving which high school programs are rigorous.

Department officials said that in the 35 states that do not participate in the State Scholars initiative they hoped to find that governors or other authorities had established programs recognizing rigorous courses of study. The National Governors Association last year issued an "Action Agenda" that urged the authorities in every state to define a rigorous curriculum as a requisite for high school graduation, but their model included no recommendations for science or foreign languages. Dane Linn, director of the association's education division, said it was not clear whether states had moved to enact the agenda.

Some have developed home-grown programs that the department could easily recognize as rigorous. Indiana, for instance, has designated a challenging curriculum it calls the Core 40, and more than a dozen states, including New York, extend higher-rated diplomas to students who complete more difficult coursework. Virginia awards an "advanced studies high school diploma" to students who complete four years of English, math, science and history, three years of foreign language, and other requirements.

But perhaps 20 states do not participate in State Scholars, have not recognized any similarly rigorous curriculum and do not offer more than a basic diploma. In such states, Ms. Stroup said, the department may consider recognizing some combination of Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses as a rigorous program of study.

"We're going to have to go out and just talk to schools," Ms. Stroup said.

Even in states like New Jersey and Connecticut, where the State Scholars program is operating, however, it may be politically awkward for federal officials to declare programs of study at a few high schools to be rigorous while withholding that designation from others, educators said. In New Jersey, for instance, just 35 of 300 high schools participate in State Scholars. In Connecticut, 4 of 180 public high schools participate.

Another problem is that private school operators believe that the legislation renders their graduates ineligible by saying applicants must have completed a "program of study established by a state or local educational agency and recognized by the secretary." The bill "would inadvertently exclude over 5.3 million private K-12 school students," the National Association of Independent Schools, which represents some 1,200 private schools, said in a letter to senators last month. The same legislative language may also exclude parochial and home-schooled students.

Conservative groups that have protested the No Child Left Behind law are also grumbling. Michael D. Ostrolenk, education policy director of the Eagle Forum, called the proposal "more meddling" by Washington.

"If people in Congress really want to improve the educational system in the United States, they should start by abolishing the federal Department of Education," Mr. Ostrolenk said.

Several Colorado schools have turned down some federal funds because they dislike No Child Left Behind's extension of federal influence into schools, and some Colorado educators expressed similar reservations about the new grants.

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"The president said he would like to extend N.C.L.B. into the high schools, and this is just the precursor for a new federal invasion," said Gerald Keefe, chairman of the Colorado Rural Schools Caucus.

Ms. Stroup shrugged off such criticism.

"We believe high school reform is important to the country; so do the governors," she said. "So I don't think we're out in left field talking about trying to use incentives to get kids to take good programs."

Correction: Jan. 25, 2006

A front-page article on Sunday about new federal grants for education, which require most applicants to have earned a B average, referred imprecisely to Sarah Lawrence's policy on grades. While the school relies primarily on a system of evaluations written by faculty, it does record grades on transcripts for purposes such as graduate school admissions. It is not among institutions that forgo letter or numeric grades completely.

The Chicago Tribune, January 23, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

More colleges join an elite rank

By Justin Pope
Associated Press

The number of U.S. colleges with endowments topping \$1 billion has jumped to 56, a new study says, with nine schools joining the elite club in what was an average year for university investments overall.

Harvard remained the richest, with \$25.5 billion, followed by Yale with \$15.2 billion.

The wealthiest per student was Rockefeller University in New York, which has no undergraduates, followed by Olin College, a small engineering school in Massachusetts that opened in 2002 and pays all tuition costs.

The National Association of College and University Business Officers surveyed 746 institutions. It found that those institutions earned an average of 9.3 percent on their investments in the year ending June 30, compared to 15.1 percent in fiscal 2004 and 3 percent in 2003.

Colleges typically spend about 5 percent of their endowment per year to support everything from scholarships to landscaping. Accounting for inflation and management fees, the investments generally need to earn about 9 percent to preserve their spending power.

The NACUBO survey follows the release last week of a similar survey by the Commonfund Institute. That survey, which tracks endowments at 729 schools and educational foundations, reported average returns of 9.7 percent.

Endowments with more than \$1 billion earned 13.8 percent last year, NACUBO found, while those with under \$100 million earned less than 9 percent.

The reason is that richer colleges can afford more sophisticated financial advice, and to make riskier bets.

The University of Toronto became the first Canadian institution to amass \$1 billion in American dollars. The other eight universities passing the \$1 billion mark were: University of Wisconsin Foundation; University of Nebraska and Foundation; University of Delaware; University of Cincinnati; Amherst College; Smith College; Southern Methodist University; and Baylor College of Medicine.

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Top 10 coffers

Where the elite in college endowments are in the ranking:

1. Harvard, \$25.47 billion
2. Yale, \$15.22 billion
3. Stanford, \$12.21 billion
4. University of Texas system, \$11.61 billion

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5. Princeton, \$11.21 billion
6. Massachusetts Institute of Technology \$6.71 billion
7. University of California, \$5.22 billion*
8. Columbia, \$5.19 billion
9. Texas A&M System and Foundations, \$4.96 billion
10. University of Michigan \$4.93 billion

* The University of California's general endowment pool supports multiple campuses; campuses may have additional endowments.

Source: National Association of College and University Business Officers

EDUCATION WEEK, January 25, 2006 (Page 1 of 3)

Advocates urge Bush to boost federal role in math and science

By Sean Cavanagh and Christina A. Samuels

A consensus is growing among members of Congress, educators, and corporate leaders in favor of a stronger federal effort to bolster mathematics and science education from the earliest grades through college.

Some of the ideas under discussion on Capitol Hill include improving teacher preparation, promoting effective instructional strategies, and increasing financial aid to encourage promising students to become math and science teachers.

Business leaders and lawmakers from both parties have called on President Bush in recent weeks to pledge stronger federal support for mathematics and science education in his State of the Union Address, scheduled for Jan. 31. Congress is also moving on the issue, by introducing several bills to upgrade K-12 science and math instruction.

Business leaders and federal officials are driven by oft-cited worries about the United States' future economic standing. The ability of nations such as China and India, in particular, to use an increasingly skilled, relatively low-paid workforce to lure jobs away from the United States—and churn out students with superior skills in science and engineering fields—has major economic implications here, they say.

The recent focus on the issue is “a confluence of a large number of things,” said Norman R. Augustine, the retired chairman and chief executive of the aerospace and technology giant Lockheed Martin Corp. “The public pays attention when mixed groups come together and say, ‘We can agree on this.’ ”

Mr. Augustine chaired a committee made up of corporate, higher education, and science leaders that in October produced a report that made 10 recommendations to federal lawmakers for strengthening science and technology innovation. The report, “Rising Above the Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future,” was published by the National Academies, an independent research entity chartered by Congress.

The report's suggestions include recruiting 10,000 new math and science teachers annually, luring them with four-year college scholarships if they agree to teach five years in K-12 public schools. It also recommends vastly increasing professional-development programs for math and science teachers, offering incentives for students to take advanced courses, and encouraging the development of a rigorous, but voluntary, national curriculum. ("**Panel Urges U.S. Push to Raise Math, Science Achievement,**" Oct. 19, 2005.)

Master teachers

A bill sponsored by Rep. Bart Gordon, D-Tenn., the ranking minority member of the House Science Committee, cites the report and seeks to implement several of its recommendations, including expanding federal funding for the professional development of math and science instructors and cultivating master teachers to mentor their peers in those subjects.

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Last week, several members of the Senate, including Sens. Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn., and Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M.—who commissioned the National Academies' report—said they would introduce legislation crafted largely on the “Gathering Storm” conclusions.

In addition, the Senate in December approved a bill that would authorize a five-year, \$3.75 billion program to give students from low-income households as much as \$4,000 in federal college aid if they major in mathematics, science, technology, engineering, or foreign languages. The measure awaits action in the House.

Boost from business?

Math and science organizations have been advocating stronger teacher training for years, noted Jodi Peterson, the legislative director of the National Science Teachers Association, in Arlington, Va. But that message carries more power, she said, when delivered by the business community.

“They’ve been the drivers of a lot of this work,” Ms. Peterson said.

General concerns about the quality of math and science education have more recently “morphed into a discussion of more and better jobs,” Rep. Gordon said in an interview explaining the legislation he introduced. “That’s a stronger universal message.”

Other observers, however, caution against overstating the crisis in math and science education.

Vivek Wadhwa is the co-author of a Duke University study that says U.S. executives are scaring students away from math and science careers because of their gloom-and-doom scenarios in which many American jobs will be outsourced to foreign workers. China and India, two countries often cited as producing tens of thousands of engineers, include less-highly-trained workers in their own counts than the United States does, Mr. Wadhwa said. (“**Study: U.S.-Asian Engineering Gap Overstated**,” Jan. 4, 2006.)

Still, Mr. Wadhwa, an adjunct professor at Duke’s school of engineering, agreed that the United States needs to improve its pre-collegiate education system so that more of its top math and science students are homegrown.

“If you look at the enrollment [of engineering schools], they’re increasingly dependent on foreign students,” he said in an interview.

Mr. Augustine, the former Lockheed Martin chief, and others acknowledge that hurdles in implementing major nationwide changes to math and science instruction must still be overcome. His panel’s suggestions carry an estimated annual price tag of \$10 billion. Moreover, Mr. Augustine said, there has not yet been a “Sputnik moment”—a single galvanizing event that illustrates what the lack of math and science preparedness in the country could mean to average citizens. The launch of that satellite by the Soviet Union in 1957 led to a major campaign to boost education in the United States.

“There’s been no wake-up call,” Mr. Augustine said.

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White House view

The White House isn't saying whether President Bush will address math and science in his State of the Union Address.

But White House Chief of Staff Andrew H. Card Jr., in a Jan. 11 speech before the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, cited the "Gathering Storm" report in detail, calling its findings "dramatic." He acknowledged, however, that budget decisions would also be a factor as the administration weighed its recommendations. The president's fiscal 2007 federal budget request is expected to be released soon after the State of the Union speech.

"On the physical-sciences side, there is a dearth of students, and there is a dearth of teachers," Mr. Card told the business audience, "and there is a dearth of scholarships and opportunities at some of our major institutions."

Inside Higher Ed, January 26, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Seeking big bucks for science education

Where's Sputnik when you need it?

"This is not a Sputnik we are faced with," said Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), referring to the reason there has been a lack of urgency about promoting science and math education in America. "Rather, it's a series of trends that are against us."

Bingaman and three other senators said Wednesday that they are feeling urgency as they introduced the PACE (Protecting America's Competitive Edge) Act.

Faced with a flat world – the salary of one engineer in the United States will get you 11 in India – and alarming educational statistics – as of 1999, 41 percent of U.S. 8th graders, as opposed to 71 percent internationally, received instruction from a teacher specializing in math – the act is a three bill package that authorizes \$8.95 billion in the first year, and more each year through 2013, to bring America up to speed. Separate appropriations bills would have to provide the actual funds.

Some details, most importantly procuring the billions, are not yet worked out, but experts lauded the initiative as a strong, bipartisan and much needed message. The act embraces 20 recommendations – some focused on higher education – made in the "Rising Above the Gathering Storm" report issued by the National Academies.

For higher education, the act asks for 30,000 merit-based scholarships yearly; 25,000 scholarships – up to \$20,000 per year – for high school graduates studying science, engineering, or math, and 5,000 research fellowships for graduate students that would cover education costs and provide a stipend.

One of the problems "Gathering Storm" identified was the lack of well-trained science and math teachers to groom a generation of students. To that end, the bill also calls for the creation of 10,000 competitive scholarships – up to \$20,000 a year – each year for undergraduate students studying math or science who agree to concurrently work on their teacher certification and to teach for at least four years after graduation.

Nils Hasselmo, president of the Association of American Universities, said that, though details need to be worked out, "we are very pleased that there is political traction for the idea. Nineteen senators, 10 Republicans and 9 Democrats, have agreed to co-sponsor the bill, and Sen. Pete Domenici (R-NM), one of those who introduced the bill, said President Bush may mention it in his State of the Union Address next week.

Paying for the bill is of course the challenge. "There are resource issues, but the fact this is being placed so strongly is important," Hasselmo said. Added Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN), one of the senators introducing the act: "If we only spend money on war ... hurricanes, welfare, debt ... we will lose our standard of living." The fact that Senators Domenici and Mikulski are on the Senate Appropriations Committee could help the effort.

If the bill moves forward as is, universities should indirectly benefit from an outlined 10 percent increase per year over seven years in spending caps for basic research budgets in key federal agencies.

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The bill also says that colleges should get grants in the interest of promoting “summer academies,” one-to-two week crash courses for science and math teachers that would seek to push them farther toward the cutting edge.

Kathy Norman, professor of science education at the California State University at San Marcos, and president of the Association for Science Teacher Education, said that resources are scarce when it comes to educating and recruiting top science teachers. In terms of math and science education, “we are in very serious trouble in this country, k-to-college,” Norman said. She commended the push to identify potential science teachers when they are undergraduate science students, and added that she hopes the merit scholarships will “pay attention to attracting people from diverse backgrounds.”

— David Epstein

Stateline.org, January 26, 2006 (Page 1 of 4)

State of education: Who makes the grade?

By Kavan Peterson, Stateline.org Staff Writer

Schools spend fewer dollars per student in Utah than in any other state, but more fourth-graders there improved reading and math scores over the past decade than in more than half of the states.

Maine, for example, spends nearly twice as much on a comparable student population -- \$9,300 a student vs. \$4,800 in Utah. But fewer Maine fourth-graders improved their math scores -- and their reading scores actually declined in the past decade.

Both states ranked just above the national average on 2005 national reading and math tests, known as the National Assessment of Education Progress, or NAEP. But Utah stands out for its success in boosting the number of students to pass the tests since 1992, the first year of state-by-state NAEP testing, despite ranking dead last for spending.

Because of lackluster academic gains for the nation as a whole, education analysts increasingly are focusing attention on standout states where test scores show more students passing than a decade ago. The most recent NAEP scores released in October showed that despite strong gains in fourth-grade mathematics since 1992, students aren't reading much better than a decade ago. Nearly two-thirds of fourth- and eighth-graders nationwide still score below grade level -- called "proficient" by NAEP -- in both math and reading.

In Utah, only 19 percent of fourth-graders scored proficient or better on math in 1992, but nearly twice as many -- 38 percent -- passed in 2005.

Utah students' academic success is due in part to the state's lower-than-average population of minority and non-English-speaking students, who historically score lower. But state education officials also credit their efforts to raise state academic standards, such as by aligning classroom curricula with standardized tests and holding schools accountable for student performance.

"Our state has really been paying attention to national experts who over the past 10 years have said that focusing on aligning standards and strengthening accountability is every bit as important as new money," said Utah Superintendent of Education Patti Harrington.

It's difficult to prove what actually makes one state outperform another. Key factors such as per-pupil spending and student demographics vary widely, even among top-performing states.

North Carolina, for instance, which ranks 40th in the nation in per-pupil spending, had the largest percentage point increase in the nation in fourth- and eighth-graders to pass the math tests between 1992 and 2005.

Delaware, which ranks eighth-highest in the nation on spending, increased the percentage of students who can read at grade level more than any other state and was the only state to make better-than-average gains in both fourth- and eighth-grade reading and math. While nationally the number of fourth-graders who can read at grade level increased by fewer than 3 percentage points since 1992, Delaware increased its percentage of passing fourth-graders by 10 percentage points. National reading scores for

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eighth-graders dropped slightly since 1992, but the number of Delaware eighth-graders who were rated proficient in reading increased nearly 7 percentage points.

A report by the magazine *Education Week* released this month found that states that made the largest gains on the NAEP -- including Delaware, Massachusetts, North Carolina and Texas -- were also the most fervent and longest supporters of standards-based education reforms. Since the early 1990s, the standards-based reform movement has emphasized raising statewide academic content standards, testing students in core subject areas such as math and reading and holding schools accountable for raising student test scores.

The report, "Quality Counts 2006," found that factors such as per-pupil spending and student demographics had less of an impact on student achievement than a state's history of raising expectations and standards.

"After more than a decade, it's fair to be asking whether the standards-based approach to education reform works. We're seeing pretty strong evidence that it does," said Education Week Research Director Christopher Swanson.

Education finance expert James W. Guthrie, director of the Center for Education Policy at Vanderbilt's Peabody College of Education, said that the amount of money states spend on education "clearly matters." But measuring the impact of dollars on student achievement is difficult because most states do not account for how education money is spent at the individual school level.

"Until we are able to get spending data down to the school and even classroom level, the huge differences in inefficiency from school to school and state to state create such a fog that it's difficult to measure their consequences on achievement," Guthrie said.

To get a better idea of how states compare based on their overall improvement on NAEP, *Stateline.org* has compiled a list of the top 10 best and worst performers based on the percentage point change in fourth- and eighth-grade math and fourth-grade reading tests between 1992 and 2005, plus the change in eighth-grade reading between 1998 and 2005. These lists look at how much states' test scores have improved and differ from rankings of states by highest and lowest score, in which students in Northeastern states such as Massachusetts consistently outscore the rest of the nation.

(Up to 14 states that did not participate in one or more of the NAEP exams until 2005 were not included in this analysis. Click here to download complete NAEP scores for all 50 states and detailed information on state per-pupil spending and levels of student poverty in Excel spreadsheet format.)

Fourth-grade math top 10:

- Leading the nation in fourth-grade math improvement was North Carolina, where the portion of students passing more than tripled from 13 percent scoring proficient in 1992 to 40 percent passing in 2005. Following North Carolina, the states with the biggest gains in percentage of students passing the math tests were: Ohio, Massachusetts, Texas, Idaho, Arkansas, Wyoming, Florida, South Carolina and Indiana.

Fourth-grade math bottom 10:

- Even the worst-performing states in fourth-grade math nearly doubled the percentage of students who passed since 1992. Still, the District of Columbia and New Mexico came in last, behind Alabama, Iowa, Maine, Hawaii, Missouri, West Virginia, Mississippi, Kentucky and Georgia.

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Fourth-grade reading top 10:

- Improvements in reading scores, although modest nationwide, were significant at the fourth-grade level in several states. Colorado and Delaware went from only one-quarter of students reading at grade level in 1992 to 37 percent and 34 percent respectively in 2005. The next states to make the most percentage point gains were: Florida, Maryland, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Ohio, Arkansas, New York and Minnesota.

Fourth-grade reading bottom 10:

- The worst-performing states in fourth-grade reading posted negative gains between 1992 and 2005. The number of students who passed in Oklahoma dropped by 4 points, in Iowa by 3 points, in New Mexico by 2 points and in Maine by 1 percentage point. The number of passing scores in reading in Wisconsin, Indiana, West Virginia, New Hampshire, North Dakota and Georgia rose by less than 1 percentage point.

Eighth-grade reading top 10:

- Delaware, the only state in the nation to post better-than-average gains in fourth- and eighth-grade reading and math, showed the largest increase in the nation in the percentage of eighth-graders to pass the reading test between 1992 and 2005. Massachusetts and Wyoming were the only other states to show significant improvement in passing rates by eighth-graders -- 7 points and 5 points respectively -- followed by 3 percentage point gains in Missouri, South Carolina, Louisiana, Washington, Florida, Arkansas and Virginia.

Eighth-grade reading bottom 10:

- Eighth-graders performed worse in 2005 than in 1992 in 20 states. Connecticut posted the most significant losses, dropping from 40 percent of students testing at grade-level in 1992 to 34 percent passing in 2005, behind: West Virginia, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona, Montana, Maine, North Carolina, Rhode Island and Oregon.

Eighth-grade math top 10:

- North Carolina, which posted the largest percentage point gains in fourth-grade math, also led the nation in improving eighth-grade math. The percentage of students passing nearly tripled from just 12 percent scoring at grade level in 1992 to 32 percent in 2005. The next states showing the most percentage gains were: Massachusetts, South Carolina, Ohio, Delaware, Virginia, Texas, New Jersey, Arkansas and Minnesota.

Eighth-grade math bottom 10:

- Iowa and Washington, D.C., made the smallest gains in eighth-grade math -- less than 2 percentage points -- between 1992 and 2005. They were behind New Mexico, Oklahoma, Maine, Hawaii, Alabama, North Dakota, California, Missouri and Mississippi.

Customized NAEP data also can be downloaded from the Internet using the National Center for Education Statistics' recently launched NAEP Data Explorer. State-by-state profiles are available in

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"Quality Counts 2006", which grades states on the strength of their education standards, spending, teacher quality and school climate.

NAEP exams are separate from state standardized tests that are mandated by the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) education law, which requires all states to bring student performance up to grade level by 2014. Because NCLB allows states to adopt different tests and standards, NAEP exams are the only benchmark available to track student progress nationally.

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Student loan interest rates on the way up

Carolyn Bigda

Federal student loans are about to receive a makeover, and at first blush the changes don't look good.

The Senate approved \$12.7 billion in cuts to student aid at the end of 2005, as part of broader legislation to rein in federal spending. If passed by the House, as expected, the tightening would take effect as early as July.

There's no reason to think, though, that your financial aid will dry up next year. The days of rock-bottom interest rates are over, but the new proposals could broaden your funding options.

Where you'll pay

When the variable interest rate on Stafford loans hit 3.37 percent in 2004, the federal government had to bridge lenders' guaranteed yields, as high as 9.5 percent. As a result, the pending bill reduces lender subsidies and upholds a scheduled change to fixed rates: 6.8 percent for Stafford loans and 8.5 percent for PLUS loans (borrowed by parents). The new rates would apply only to loans made on or after July 1, when rates traditionally are reset.

With variable rates on the rise, the fixed rate could be competitive. Sallie Mae, a major student lender, projects Stafford loans will be reset to 6.55 percent this summer, up from 5.3 percent now (variable rates are capped at 8.25 percent).

But should variable rates eventually decline, fixed-rate borrowers could be left paying thousands of dollars more in interest.

Another change: The fixed rate applies while you're in school, the six-month grace period and deferment. Currently, Stafford borrowers enjoy a 60-basis point reduction at those times.

Then there's consolidation loans. While hordes of borrowers rushed to lock in low rates with consolidation loans in recent years, the fixed rate would eliminate that advantage for new borrowers.

Existing borrowers take note: The interest rate on consolidation loans still would be calculated by taking the weighted average of all your loans' interest rates, rounding up to the nearest one-eighth percentage point. Thus, if you have variable-rate loans, you wouldn't necessarily lock in the 6.8 percent rate.

Also, the bill does away with consolidation between spouses, as well as consolidation while you're in school.

"If students have a large enough balance to consolidate now, then they might want to do so," said Cheryl Watson, a representative for Nelnet Inc., a student loan lender. "But they do give up their grace period."

Where you'll benefit

Other proposals would have more definite benefits for borrowers:

The Chicago Tribune, January 22, 2006 (Page 2 of 2)

- Reduced fees. Origination fees that typically are deducted when loans are disbursed would drop this year to 2 percent from 3 percent and gradually phase out by 2010 (a 1 percent guarantee fee would remain).

- Meatier loans. To keep pace with escalating tuition costs, annual limits on some loans would increase starting July 2007. First-year loans (both subsidized and unsubsidized) would jump to \$3,500 from \$2,625, and second-year loans to \$4,500 from \$3,500.

Subsidized loans for graduate students also would receive a boost, going to \$12,000 from \$10,000 a year.

- More funding options. After maximizing federal aid, grad students often turn to private loans to cover any outstanding costs. The bill would provide an alternative: the option to take out PLUS loans, typically limited to parents.

PLUS loans may be borrowed up to the total cost of education (minus other aid). And as a federal loan, it offers more appealing terms than private lending, such as no credit checks and the option to extend repayment.

Beyond loans, students studying math, science or certain foreign languages and who qualify for Pell grants also will be eligible for new SMART grants, up to an additional \$4,000 per year.

Looking ahead

In addition to subsidy cuts, the guaranteed reimbursement rate to lenders on unpaid loans will be lowered. As a result, industry experts say, some lenders may be pushed out of the market or forced to scale back borrower benefits, such as interest rate cuts when you pay on time.

But right now that's all speculation. Instead, fill out your financial aid form and focus on how you'll stretch your student loan dollars.

E-mail Carolyn Bigda at yourmoney@tribune.com.

Daily Southtown, January 23, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Can state afford college tax credit?

Blagojevich's plan creates questions and enthusiasm

By The Associated Press

SPRINGFIELD — Eastern Illinois University freshman Tori Frazier gets good grades. Next year, those grades could help her family pay for her education.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich has proposed a tax credit of up to \$1,000 to help families send their children to college here. Illinois freshmen or sophomores would be eligible — if they maintain at least a "B" average.

"My family has a difficult time paying for my school and raising two noncollege-age children," Frazier said. "The money they would get back from (the tax credit) would help ease the financial constraints that they have to put up with."

The idea is generating questions as well as enthusiasm, however. Some experts wonder whether the state can afford it or why it should be available to rich families. Even the grade limit has some doubters.

And Republican lawmakers argue the tax credit wouldn't be needed if schools hadn't been forced to raise tuition because of inadequate funding from Blagojevich.

The Blagojevich administration says the credit, which would be offered to part-time and full-time students, would cost the state \$90 million a year. Roughly 150,000 families would benefit.

"Some have raised the question of whether or not we can afford it," Blagojevich said Sunday at Chicago's Loyola University where he called for lawmakers to pass the proposal. "It's generous because we want it to be meaningful ... \$1,000 means a lot to working families."

Carlos Acevedo, 24, a sophomore at Columbia College Chicago, spoke at Sunday's event, organized by the governor's office to promote the tax credit.

"A lot of people live paycheck to paycheck," Acevedo said in English and then in Spanish. "Some parents are not able to help assist their kids in going to school. Sometimes books and lab fees can get very expensive."

Families at any income level could be awarded the credit, which would be limited to the amount they pay in tuition and fees. So a family still paying \$750 in tuition after all other financial aid could get \$750 knocked off their tax bill.

But the credit is refundable, meaning some families might get money back from the state. If a family owed \$500 in taxes and got the full \$1,000 credit, the state would pay them \$500.

"For many families, this is a tax credit that can help make the dream of college affordable and the dream of college a reality," Blagojevich said in his State of the State address Wednesday.

At least three states offer some form of tax credit for tuition paid, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

The Democratic governor will provide details about paying for the program when he proposes a new state budget next month, but aides note that state income is climbing. "Revenue is way up and we've cut costs in other areas, so we're in a good position to do these things," spokeswoman Abby Ottenhoff said.

Daily Southtown, January 23, 2006 (Page 2 of 2)

Southern Illinois University President Glenn Poshard sees the tax credit aiding families and helping Illinois keep more of its students from going to college in other states. SIU, he pointed out, must compete with schools in three other nearby states.

"Any benefits to parents here certainly goes a long way to stemming the brain drain," Poshard said.

Tax expert Ralph Martire fears the price tag is too steep for a state struggling with massive budget deficits, however.

"You can't question the intent of the policy, but you can question the revenue structure that doesn't allow the state to support it," said Martire, executive director of the Chicago-based Center for Tax and Budget Accountability.

Martire also said the state should tailor the tax credit to those who need it most.

"I'm for anything that helps lower- to middle-income families from a tax point, but it has to be targeted at the income level to know that you're really hitting lower- to middle-income families," he said.

The B-average requirement might prompt students to take easier or fewer courses, said Paul Lingenfelter, president of the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association.

"Basing aid on a B average is the wrong kind of incentive, but basing aid on a rigorous curriculum is a better kind of incentive," Lingenfelter said.

Republican lawmakers argue the governor is responding to a problem he helped create by shortchanging universities in past state budgets.

"This is a governor that has strangled our schools of higher learning and have forced them to increase tuition," said state Rep. Mike Bost, R-Murphysboro, the top-ranking Republican on the House Higher Education Committee.

"If you want to really help, instead of offering the tax credit, invest in higher education," Bost said.

Appropriations for higher education operations and grants have fallen \$399.5 million, or 14.9 percent, during the past four fiscal years, according to the Board of Higher Education. In fiscal 2002, state funding was nearly \$2.7 billion; in fiscal 2006, it is less than \$2.3 billion.

"The consequence of that has been an increase in tuition," said the board's spokesman, Don Sevener. Still, he said, other state programs have been cut even further as Blagojevich coped with budget shortfalls.

Becky Carroll, spokeswoman for the governor's budget office, said higher education has "fared very well" considering the state's financial problems.

Poshard didn't criticize the state's higher education budget but made it clear he welcomes any new resources.

"It's a good investment no matter if it directly goes to the parent or directly to the university, as long as it's used to help families better afford a college education for their students," Poshard said.

Peoria Journal Star, January 23, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

WIU arts center funding tied up

Officials say entire region would benefit, but project currently at standstill

BY JODI POSPESCHIL
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

MACOMB - As support grows for construction of a performing arts center on the campus of Western Illinois University, officials say it's clear the entire region would benefit financially and culturally from the project.

School officials said the proposed \$45.7 million center would be the first state-funded project to be constructed on campus since the school's library was completed in the mid-1970s.

About \$4 million in planning money for the project was announced several years ago but has yet to be released.

The new 114,560-square-foot center would be constructed next to Browne Hall and create an "Arts Quadrangle" on the southern part of campus. The center would also include a 1,900-seat main theater, a 300-seat theater and a 150-seat studio theater.

The main theater would have 1,000 seats on the main floor and more seats in two balconies.

In addition to the planning money, the Illinois Board of Higher Education recommended \$22.5 million in partial funding for the project in fiscal year 2004. The board recommended allocating the remainder of the center's cost in a future budget.

None of that money has yet been received by the school.

WIU President Al Goldfarb said he's pleased with the IBHE's recommendations.

"We continue to lobby and campaign for the release of the planning funds," Goldfarb said. "We're thrilled the IBHE ranked this project high on their priority list. A performing arts center makes great sense in a community this size."

Goldfarb also is grateful for the community support for the project. He said the community and the school both realize the center would affect the area's cultural and economic development.

A committee made up of community and campus leaders meets weekly to discuss the project and look for ways to promote the release of the state money.

One of the members of that committee, Macomb Area Economic Development Corporation Director Kim Pierce, said the committee has been meeting with both local and regional legislators to promote the project. She said the hope is to meet with Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan, D-Chicago, in February.

Peoria Journal Star, January 23, 2006 (Page 2 of 2)

The committee also held a campaign recently during which postcards were distributed promoting the center. The holders of those postcards were then encouraged to mail them to Gov. Rod Blagojevich.

"We definitely have (the state's) attention," Pierce said. "But we have to keep the momentum going."

When Blagojevich was in Macomb promoting his capital project bill, his response to questions about the performing arts center was "stay tuned."

On Friday, Blagojevich spokesman Andrew Ross said the status of the funding has not changed.

"We're still looking at ways to move the project forward," he said.

Jodi Pospeschil can be reached at 686-3041 or state@pjstar.com.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, January 24, 2006

Area educators laud governor's plan, say tuition tax credits would ease college cost

By Kavita Kumar
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH
01/24/2006

EDWARDSVILLE

Southern Illinois University President Glenn Poshard said Monday that Gov. Rod Blagojevich's tuition tax credit proposal is an important step in making higher education more affordable for Illinois students.

Poshard was joined by Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Chancellor Vaughn Vandegrift and Edwardsville schools Superintendent Ed Hightower, also an SIU trustee, at a news conference to voice their support for the plan.

In his "State of the State" address last week, Blagojevich outlined a plan in which freshmen and sophomores attending any Illinois university could receive a \$1,000 tax credit if they maintain at least a 3.0 grade-point average. Legislators have questioned how Blagojevich intends to fund the tax credit.

It's no secret that tuition has increased in recent years, Poshard said. This proposal would directly help families so they can see a difference in their bottom line, he said. He added that he would also like to see an extension in state programs specifically geared toward helping low-income students.

Poshard said Blagojevich has assured him that this proposal should not adversely affect funding for higher education, which has been decreasing.

The university officials also said they hoped the proposal, if approved, would help keep more Illinois students going to school within state borders.

"We've been a net exporter of students for many years," Poshard said. Some schools in neighboring states offer Illinois students in-state tuition rates in the increasingly competitive market for students, he said.

One area up for possible discussion is the B-average requirement, the officials said. While it could be a good incentive for students, there might be some discussion down the road about where to set that bar, Poshard said.

"If we only took B students, I don't know if I would have made it," Poshard said, laughing.

The Quincy Herald-Whig, January 24, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

College tax credit plan stirs debate

Tuesday, January 24, 2006

By Holly Wagner
Herald-Whig Staff Writer

Mark Clynes, vice president for enrollment management at Quincy University, says Gov. Rod Blagojevich's proposal to offer a tax credit of up to \$1,000 to help families send their children to college seems like a step in the right direction.

However, Clynes also said the schools involved in a conference call explaining the program last week "had concerns about it."

"Everybody's waiting for more details," he said.

Under the proposal, families of Illinois freshmen or sophomores would be eligible for the tax credit if their students maintain at least a "B" average.

"For many families, this is a tax credit that can help make the dream of college affordable and the dream of college a reality," Blagojevich said in his State of the State address Wednesday.

The tax credit, which would be offered to part- and full-time students without regard to financial need, would be limited to the amount they pay in tuition and fees. It also is refundable, so if a family owed \$500 in taxes and got the full \$1,000 credit, the state would pay them \$500.

The Blagojevich administration says the tax credit would cost the state \$90 million a year. Roughly 150,000 families would benefit.

"That's a lot of money," said Sen. John Sullivan, D-47, Rushville. "I'm obviously in support of a proposal to try to make education more affordable, but at a time when the state is facing some pretty difficult times, I have some concerns about it."

"Most scholarships for higher education have been merit-based or financial-need based. This is neither."

The Democratic governor will provide details about paying for the program when he proposes a new state budget next month, but aides note that state income is climbing.

"Revenue is way up and we've cut costs in other areas, so we're in a good position to do these things," spokeswoman Abby Ottenhoff said.

Republican lawmakers argue the tax credit wouldn't be needed if schools hadn't been forced to raise tuition because of inadequate funding from Blagojevich.

"The state could do better to fund community colleges at a higher rate and we wouldn't have to charge as much for tuition," said Bill Simpson, president of John Wood Community College. "Things that encourage people to go to college would be helpful, but we're not sure how much that's going to help community college students."

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Simpson said most low-income students already receive some kind of assistance, or their income is so low they're not paying income tax anyway.

Clynes wondered if the program would affect existing need-based aid, like the Illinois' Monetary Award Program (MAP) grant, which does not need to be repaid. He also said the law needs to address what defines a sophomore and what happens when a student's status changes mid-year.

"This really still does not help families at the time they need the funds to pay the bills," he said. "It's a back-end credit. It doesn't help pay the bills when they're due in August."

Rep. Art Tenhouse, R-93, Liberty, wondered how students' GPAs will be verified when, under current law, students are not required to show their grades to parents. He's also concerned about students enrolled in out-of-state schools.

"If we're going to be providing Illinois tax relief for sending our students out of state, that's going to be kind of counter-productive," Tenhouse said.

Southern Illinois University President Glenn Poshard sees the tax credit helping Illinois keep more students from going to out-of-state colleges. SIU, he pointed out, must compete with schools in three other nearby states.

"Any benefits to parents here certainly goes a long way to stemming the brain drain," Poshard said.

Appropriations for higher education operations and grants have fallen \$399.5 million, or 14.9 percent, during the past four fiscal years, according to the Board of Higher Education. In fiscal 2002, state funding was nearly \$2.7 billion; in fiscal 2006, it is less than \$2.3 billion.

"The consequence of that has been an increase in tuition," said the board's spokesman, Don Sevens. Still, he said, other state programs have been cut even further as Blagojevich coped with budget shortfalls.

"This is not the most effective way to use the state's resources," Tenhouse said.

At least three states offer some form of tax credit for tuition paid, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Tax expert Ralph Martire fears the price tag is too steep for a state struggling with massive budget deficits, however.

"You can't question the intent of the policy, but you can question the revenue structure that doesn't allow the state to support it," said Martire, executive director of the Chicago-based Center for Tax and Budget Accountability.

Information for this story was provided by the Associated Press.

The Belleville News-Democrat, January 24, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

School funding now negotiable

But governor won't budge on transit, job growth goals

BY WILL BUSS
News-Democrat

COLLINSVILLE - Gov. Rod Blagojevich is open to legislators' ideas to funding new schools in Illinois by means other than keno, but won't compromise his job growth and transportation improvement goals.

"If they have a problem with keno and they have another idea, I'm happy to hear what they have to say," he said. "If they have a problem in the way we want to fund our road projects, and they've got some other ideas, we'd be eager to hear their ideas. In short, we're going to compromise and work with them."

This response was a result of the governor's recent proposal to install keno gaming inside state restaurants and bars to fund \$45 million for new state schools.

On Monday, Blagojevich faced chilly temperatures inside the backdrop of expansion under construction at the Gateway Center as he discussed his \$3.2 billion capital bill with business and labor leaders as well as local elected officials.

Blagojevich said his plan would create 230,000 new jobs, including 18,000 in the metro-east area, but partisanship will not work in attaining his goal of job growth, and highway, road and bridge construction.

"So I want to urge those on the other side of the aisle to join us and work in a constructive and a bipartisan way," Blagojevich said. "But unfortunately so far, I don't believe we have heard a lot of cooperation. In fact, right now what we're hearing are excuses and reasons why we shouldn't do it. Again, let me be clear, we want to work with them. We will be flexible and listen to their ideas and work with their ideas in terms of getting to the end result."

The governor's proposal includes 14 projects to improve highways, roads and bridges throughout Southwestern Illinois, build schools in East St. Louis, Bethalto and Central School District 104 in St. Clair County and make improvements to public transit that could include new buses in the metro-east and possible MetroLink extension.

Blagojevich has proposed borrowing \$2.3 billion for road projects, \$425 million for mass transit and \$500 million for school construction. His plan calls for repaying the loan with \$200 million a year from the state's road-building fund and \$35 million from increased tax revenue.

Republican leaders argue the governor's proposal lacks detail. Patty Schuh, a spokesman for Illinois Senate Republican Leader Frank Watson's office, said the plan doesn't include a revenue stream to pay for the programs.

"The governor proposes massive borrowing and revenue sources to pay for that borrowing and that's simply not how you pass off a responsible plan," Schuh said. "This governor has doubled state bond indebtedness."

Among the proposed transportation proposals is a \$23.4 million project to reconstruct the existing interchange carrying Illinois 162 over Interstate 55-70.

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Rep. Ron Stephens, R-Greenville, said he pitched the same project seven years ago and had a revenue stream created for it under then-Gov. George Ryan's Illinois First program. He said that when Blagojevich took office just over three years ago, the governor took the plan off-line and has since claimed it as his own.

Stephens isn't concerned with credit over the project. But he wants to ask the governor why the \$1.9 billion in bond proceeds remaining in the bank from the initial plan have not been mentioned. Stephens accused the governor of "playing politics."

"It wasn't to his political advantage, and now he wants to come in and tell you it's going to make it worse if you won't vote for my next spending program and you won't get what you already paid for," Stephens said. "It's ludicrous."

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The gift colleges don't want

It is supposed to be a boon for colleges and students, the one major provision in federal legislation to reduce the budget deficit that makes it easier for higher education to swallow the unpalatable parts of the bill that cut benefits to students. After all, the proposed program would provide \$3.75 billion in grant aid for students, a rare injection of new federal funds into higher education at a time of fiscal austerity and budget slashing.

Most higher education officials very much applaud and appreciate the basic idea behind the Academic Competitiveness Grants program, which is aimed at enticing more students from low income families into science, math, engineering and high-demand language fields.

But they overwhelmingly believe that the program is fatally flawed in conception and design, in part because elements of the program were crafted in mere days without any meaningful involvement from experts in the field.

Among the perceived problems in the program, which still awaits final passage, as part of the larger budget measure, when the House of Representatives returns at the end of this month:

- Requiring recipients to meet a minimum grade-point average to get and keep the awards would fundamentally alter the federal government's historical approach to need-based financial aid.
- Restricting access to full-time students would make it available only to a narrow slice of all students from low-income families.
- Limiting the awards to students who have taken a high school curriculum deemed "rigorous" by the U.S. secretary of education would greatly (and inappropriately, critics say) expand the federal role in high school policy making.

"In concept, it's a great idea," says Claude Pressnell, president of the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association, in the home state of the legislation's primary sponsor and cheerleader, U.S. Sen. Bill Frist (R-Tenn.), the majority leader. "But by tying it so closely to the Pell Grant Program in name and structure, it has the very serious potential of compromising what is now a very successful program."

Adds David Baime, vice president for government relations at the American Association of Community Colleges: "The flaws in the competitiveness grants vividly demonstrate the perils of closed door, back room policy making. If this had been public for a day or two, we might have had a chance to help make a program that actually achieved its purposes."

The science gap

The United States without doubt has a problem in science, math and related disciplines, as a slew of recent reports have pointed out: The country's international standing is slipping in a range of technological indicators, the American education system is producing too few students in high skill fields, and as a result, the economy is perceived as being overly dependent on foreign engineers and scientists. The issue is high on the agenda of the Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education, and the Association of American Universities plans to release a report this week with some possible prescriptions to the problems.

Senators looking for ways to deal with that problem saw an opportunity in Congress's every-five-year review of the Higher Education Act, and in the "budget reconciliation" legislation (designed to carve

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savings out of federal mandatory spending programs) with which the Higher Ed Act renewal became entangled.

Frist and his fellow Tennessee Republican, Sen. Lamar Alexander, both sit on the Senate's education committee, and in early September, they worked with the panel's chairman, Michael B. Enzi (R-Wyo.), to incorporate into the panel's bipartisan Higher Education Act bill a provision to create the Science and Math Access to Retain Talent (SMART) program, designed to provide \$1 billion over five years for grants to third- and fourth-year students to study the sciences.

But that sum was dwarfed by the \$4.5 billion that Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and others worked to include in the bill for another new (and temporary) program, known as the Provisional Grant Assistance Program (or ProGAP), that was designed to supplement Pell Grant aid for needy students. Democrats and Republicans both got things they badly wanted, and there were smiles all around.

College leaders liked the SMART program just fine, but they loved ProGAP. New funds for Pell Grants have been hard to come by in recent years, and the idea of using savings squeezed from the federal student loan programs to help low-income students appealed to many (especially in comparison to a competing plan in the House to use almost all of the savings from the loan programs to reduce the budget deficit).

As the legislative process unfolded, however, the proposal mutated. In mid-October, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee stitched its Higher Ed Act bill into the budget reconciliation legislation. That freed up another \$2.5 billion for the senators to use for new grant funds, which they planned to divide between the PROGap and SMART programs. So far, so good, for both programs.

Behind the scenes, though, conservative Republicans in both the Senate and the House were objecting to the ProGAP program, which they viewed as creating another "entitlement" program that could drain the federal budget. Although both ProGAP and SMART were designed to "sunset" after five years, members of the Republican Study Group feared that the program would be hard to eliminate, and that billions more would pour out of the federal treasury. In addition, House Republican leaders wanted the budget reconciliation measure to cut more money generally, intensifying the budget pressure.

So in December, after the Senate had passed its budget reconciliation bill creating SMART and ProGAP, and the House had approved its legislation containing neither, members of the House and Senate gathered behind closed doors to work out a compromise version. With Republican Congressional leaders (who were skeptical of the ProGAP program, and pushing hard for budget savings) and White House officials involved in the discussions, but Kennedy and other Democrats (who had advocated for ProGAP) shut out of the talks, the compromise version of the budget measure emerged, on the fly and just hours before the House passed it early one morning, with a radically restructured version of the grant program.

First, the legislation set aside \$3.75 billion over all for the two-part "Academic Competitiveness" program, as it was now called. The "SMART" portion of the program remained roughly similar: Juniors and seniors in college who major in science, math and engineering fields or in foreign languages deemed critical to national security, could receive grants of up to \$4,000 in those years, if they maintained a 3.0 grade point average in college.

But in lieu of ProGAP, which would have been widely available to otherwise eligible Pell Grant recipients, the newly conceived "Academic Competitiveness Grants" for first- and second-year college students would be available only to Pell-eligible students who attend college full time, who are American citizens, and who have attended a high school recognized by the U.S. education secretary as having a "rigorous curriculum." Grants would be \$750 in the first year and \$1,300 in the second; to keep the grant for a second year, a recipient would need to maintain a 3.0 GPA.

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"These grants will help sustain America's global legacy as a land of innovation, imagination, and initiative," Frist said of the revamped program, adding that the funds "will incentivize more students to major in these time-intensive studies and help America produce the workforce it needs to compete in today's global economy." The statement from Frist (who is widely believed to fancy a run for the presidency) referred to the SMART grants as the program "I created," but credited Rep. John Boehner (R-Ohio), chairman of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, and President Bush for the Academic Competitiveness grants.

Indeed, the provision in that measure about the "rigorous" curriculum bore a strong resemblance to the Bush administration's proposed State Scholars program, which the president included in his 2006 budget plan. The House's Higher Education Act legislation contained a provision, modeled on the White House proposal, that would have given additional Pell Grant funds to students who have participated in State Scholars, a privately run program aimed at encouraging high school students to take more rigorous courses.

College officials objected to the hastily reconceived Academic Competitiveness program on multiple fronts. Most fundamentally, they are troubled by the idea of, for the first time, making receipt of federal need-based aid contingent on a student's academic performance or any other merit-based measure. (Previous attempts to do this — like President Clinton's initial effort to attach a GPA requirement to his Hope Scholarship tax credit, as well as the State Scholars program — have been rebuffed over the years.)

"The primary philosophy of the Pell program is making higher education more affordable for low- and moderate-income students, and it works extremely well," says Pressnell of the Tennessee private-college group. "If you need to do something more narrowly focused on math or science, or want to have a blend of merit and need, fine, but let's not confuse our need-based structure. We should be careful as we address certain weaknesses that we don't in the process weaken our current strengths."

The new grants further exclude significant numbers of low-income students — especially at community colleges and urban four-year institutions — by requiring recipients to attend college full time. Baime of the community college association calls the exclusive focus on full time students "offensive," and Edward M. Elmendorf, senior vice president for government relations at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, says that the program's design "turns it into more of a merit-based program aimed at the people who are already destined" to go to college than one aimed at "truly bringing people who are have-nots into scientific and other fields in a way that's meaningful." (Baime calls it "a final kick in the shins" that the program would also exclude non-U.S. citizens.)

Adds Senator Kennedy: "The small student aid program in the bill will help only a fraction of those needing assistance and abandons the federal commitment to prioritize the neediest students."

Supporters of the new program, including House and Senate staff members, acknowledge that the program's reach is somewhat limited in scope, but say they aim to solve a pressing problem in a targeted, cost effective way.

"It's a question of how you use the certain amount of money that was available to to dedicate toward education spending in the most efficient way to really make a difference," said one Congressional aide. "These are hard decisions to make, but in the end, we felt very strongly that we should be targeting these dollars, not just spreading them so thin that they're not helping anybody."

Critics like Kennedy say the Academic Competitiveness Grants program will also exclude many would-be recipients by requiring them to have undertaken a curriculum "established by a state or local educational agency and recognized by the secretary" of education.

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That provision not only concerns liberal lawmakers and college officials worried about students in second-rate schools who don't have access to high-quality curriculums, but it also troubles advocates for home-schooled and private school students, who worry about those students' exclusion from the program, but also conservative groups that tend to be troubled by signs of creeping federal intervention into local affairs.

The budget reconciliation legislation that contains the Academic Competitiveness program still needs to be approved by the House of Representatives to become law, and while college officials hold out some faint hope that the overall legislation will be defeated, few political observers see that as likely.

Shaping the exact details of the program, then, will fall to Education Department staff members, who have said that they will seek advice with state and college officials.

But given where the process stands, it's probably too late to do anything really significant to change the underlying flaws in the program, which might have been avoided if lawmakers hadn't done their work so secretly in the final days of the legislative session, several lobbyists say.

As Baime of the community college association put it: "It's just hard to imagine this would have come out this way if it had just had a little bit of sunlight on it."

— Doug Lederman

The News Sun, January 24, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

University Center seeks \$3.4M from state

2007 operations: Increase of \$400,000

**By A. J. Goldsmith
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS SUN**

GRAYSLAKE — The University Center of Lake County is seeking \$3.4 million from the State of Illinois for its operations in 2007, according to Dean Gary Grace, which would be an increase of \$400,000 over 2006.

Grace recently returned from Springfield where he met with Judy Erwin, the new executive director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the agency through which funds are disbursed by the state.

According to Grace, IBHE was waiting to hear from Gov. Rod Blagojevich's office with regard to his funding program.

Meanwhile, Grace indicated, the UCLC governing board is seeking to launch its own fund-raising program as it believes that its financial needs will soon exceed funding the state is able to provide.

In his State of the State address, Blagojevich proposed a \$1,000 tax credit to parents of first- and second-year Illinois college students.

When asked about the governor's proposal, Grace indicated that, as yet, he hadn't read about it. However, College of Lake County Chairman William Griffin said that he found the proposal "interesting."

In a wide-ranging discussion with Grace, he said that finishing college in four years has become an impossibility for many students because of rapidly increasing tuition costs.

"Five-year plans are de facto. We find that students are taking fewer courses because they are working more hours to pay for their education," he said. "Thirty hours of work per week is not exceptional."

He says that it is not unusual for students to graduate with bachelor degrees owing \$28,000 to \$44,000.

"This impacts working families harder as they have a more difficult time handling tuition increases," he added.

Grace believes that tuition increases have put college out of the reach of many "students of color."

"Even where financial aid is available, the offerer looks closely for self support," he said.

Recently, Congress markedly cut the amount of money available for student loans and raised interest rates on loans taken by parents for education.

Looking back, Grace cites the G.I. Bill passed after World War II to fund college for returning veterans.

"At that time the thinking in Washington was that investing in education benefits the individual, benefits society and benefits the government in providing more tax revenue as people with higher education earn more," he said.

"Somewhere in the 1980s the philosophy was turned on its ear with the individual expected to pay a greater percentage of educational costs as federal investments were lowered."

The News Sun, January 24, 2006 (Page 2 of 2)

Grace points to China where the colleges of engineering and technology are not placed under China's department of education, but instead are located under the government's commerce department.

UCLC is the only such institution in the state of Illinois. Seventeen Illinois colleges and universities are members of the UCLC consortium and are offering 171 courses in the current spring semester as compared to 163 last spring.

The 17 schools are: Chicago School of Professional Psychology, Concordia University, DePaul University, Dominican University, Governors State University, Illinois State University, Kendall College, National-Louis University, North Park University, Northeastern Illinois University, Northern Illinois University, Roosevelt University, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, Saint Xavier University and University of Illinois (Chicago, Springfield, Urbana-Champaign).

Carbondale the Southern Illinoisan, January 25, 2006

SIUC to use \$1.3 million on housing

*BY CALEB HALE
THE SOUTHERN*

CARBONDALE - Southern Illinois University Carbondale plans to invest more than a million dollars, originally slated for debt service, into non-traditional student housing units on campus, thanks to a move by legislators that's left the university free and clear.

U.S. Rep. Jerry Costello announced Tuesday he, along with U.S. Sens. Dick Durbin and Barack Obama, have convinced the Department of Housing and Urban Development, based off the terms of a contract, financial assistance given to the university in 1988 for the Evergreen Terrace was written as a grant, not a loan. HUD had been asking SIUC to repay roughly \$1.3 million for the mortgage and interest.

Costello said convincing HUD took about a year, but persistence paid off. University officials say they can use the money for improvements to the 571 units in Evergreen Terrace and cushion some rental rate increases in the short term.

SIU President Glenn Poshard and SIUC Chancellor Walter Wendler joined Costello in making the announcement Tuesday.

"\$1.3 million is a lot of money right now for us to reinvest in our infrastructure," Poshard said.

He added finding the money to put into Evergreen Terrace has been tough. HUD's forgiveness on a repayment plan, Poshard said, is a first step forward in its future.

Wendler said the facility is important to many students, who either have families or are single parents, since it offers some of the lowest rent housing options in Carbondale. He said the \$1.3 million will help renovate the apartments and set up programs to aid in the care of the children.

"What's amazing about this one, it's not a new source of funding," Wendler said. "It's a kind of efficiency and an attention to detail for how the organization of state and federal government works."

Wendler lauded Costello and the senators for giving the project careful attention.

Costello said he was pleased they were able to change HUD's mind. "Often in situations such as this it is nearly impossible to convince the agency that it is in error, particularly when the money was provided almost two decades ago," he said. "It took a diligent effort on all of our parts and we were successful, and that means a substantial savings to SIU and the potential for even more improvements at Evergreen Terrace."

Crain's Chicago Business, January 26, 2006

DeVry 2Q profit more than doubles on surge in enrollment

(AP) — DeVry Inc. reported Thursday fiscal second-quarter profit more than doubled as the for-profit education company realized a surge in enrollment.

Profit rose to \$10.8 million, or 15 cents per share, compared with \$4.7 million, or 7 cents per share, on a restated basis, a year earlier. The restatement included new accounting rules for stock-based compensation.

Revenue rose to \$209.9 million from \$194.5 million a year earlier. Results surpassed Wall Street projections for profit of 13 cents per share on revenue of \$202.5 million, according to analysts polled by Thomson Financial.

“Revenues, earnings and operating margins in the second quarter improved significantly over last year, and we are happy that we are on course to produce improved financial results for the year,” said Chief Executive Ronald L. Taylor in a statement.

Shares rose 96 cents, or 4.9 percent, to close at \$20.76 on the New York Stock Exchange.

The Chicago Tribune, January 26, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

U. of C. kids hospital gets \$42 million

By Jodi S. Cohen

Tribune higher education reporter
Published January 26, 2006

University of Chicago announced Wednesday the largest gift in its history--a \$42 million donation to help expand the children's hospital.

The donation, from Land's End founder Gary Comer and his wife, Frances, will create the Comer Center for Children and Specialty Care, a four-story building adjacent to the hospital that will serve children needing advanced care for cancer, heart disease and other conditions.

The hospital will receive half the funding this year, followed by \$2 million a year for the next 10 years, said University of Chicago Hospitals CEO Michael Riordan.

The Comer family has donated more than \$84 million to support pediatric medicine and other children's services at the University of Chicago. The family previously donated \$21 million to defray the cost of the children's hospital, which opened in February, and \$20 million for a pediatric emergency room expected to open in October.

The new facility, which will occupy three floors above the emergency room, will open in stages during the next few years.

Comer said he decided to help build a new hospital years ago after touring the former neonatal care facilities. "I decided they really did need a hospital here," he said.

The donation announced Wednesday, he said, is intended to give the hospital more space and help physicians improve care for the sickest children. It will include oncology, gastroenterology, neonatology, minimally invasive surgery, and transplantations.

"I saw the opportunity to take this wonderful hospital, wonderful staff and wonderful programs and put them all together and give them the space to expand," said Comer, 78, who was born and raised on Chicago's South Side. His foundation has poured millions more into school, housing and community projects in Chicago, mostly on the South Side.

"Chicago can become the world center for pediatric excellence, and we are on the way to doing it," he said.

With the new center announced Tuesday, all of the children's services will be located in one building instead of being spread among three buildings. The center will include an emergency room on the first floor and inpatient rooms, operating facilities and outpatient care on the upper floors. The center will double the number of pediatric operating rooms to 10, and it could add 20 to 25 beds to the 155 now available, officials said.

The Hyde Park hospital, named after Comer, is located on South Maryland Avenue, between 57th and 58th Streets. The new center will be to the east.

"This gift will bring world-class specialty care to children on the South Side of Chicago, across the nation and around the globe and keep us at the forefront of medicine," Riordan said.

The total cost of the pediatric hospital facilities is \$250 million, he said.

The Chicago Tribune, January 26, 2006 (Page 2 of 2)

Steve Goldstein, chairman of the department of pediatrics, said the new wing will help the university's 80 pediatric physicians and scientists stay updated on the latest care. The Comer gift includes \$8 million to recruit doctors and scientists.

Ally Bain, 16, who recently spent nearly month in the hospital from complications with Crohn's disease, an inflammatory bowel disease, said the brightly-painted walls, big screen TV, and children's artwork made her stay more enjoyable. She had a private room with a sleeping area for her parents, and the medical equipment was covered by artwork.

"It didn't feel like a month because it didn't feel like a hospital," said Bain of Vernon Hills. "When I got to my room, I knew I was in good care."

She presented Comer with a painting that included an original poem and a self-portrait with her favorite nurse. The poem, "I'll Remember," included the line: "The happiness masks the pain one's feeling."

Marion Rush, who was at the hospital Wednesday with her 7-year-old daughter Jameson, a leukemia patient, said the new wing will help children with cancer.

"Kids' cancer is so rare and to be able to have a place like this is so important," said Rush of Antioch. "I don't know how to word it. It's phenomenal."

Bloomington, The Pantagraph, OPINION, January 21, 2006

Heartland should not add a sports program

Heartland Community College should stick to its core mission of providing access to higher education and not try to score points by adding intercollegiate athletics.

The addition of sports was discussed at a recent work session of Heartland administrators and board members. It could be acted on next month, although no specific proposal is in place.

President Jon Astroth said, "Student-life expansions - including any sports - would be fee supported, not tax supported."

That statement is small consolation to those who remember when the school was opened in 1991 with an expectation that it would use existing facilities rather than invest in bricks and mortar.

The permanent campus opened less than 10 years later in Normal.

The "fee supported" pledge is also small consolation to students struggling to meet college expenses.

The idea floating at this point is a \$5 per credit hour fee. The activity fee could be used for more than just sports.

Five dollars doesn't sound like much, but it adds up with most classes being three credit hours and full-time students taking 12 to 15 credit hours each semester. Tuition for this academic year is \$63 per credit hour, so the \$5 would amount to an 8 percent increase.

Plus, that fee level would be for a bare-bones program. It might start with only soccer, softball and golf to use existing facilities. But the college also started with leased space in Towanda Plaza and elsewhere.

We wonder how long it would be before a sports program would expand. If athletics facilities are needed, student fees are unlikely to cover the whole cost. However, student fees would be likely to increase - hurting affordability - and taxpayers could be on the hook through state or local support for construction costs.

Nearby community colleges offer eight to 10 sports.

That's the point, say proponents. Every public community college in Illinois has an athletics program except Heartland and Richland Community College in Decatur.

But "everyone else has it" is not adequate justification. Richland has been in operation 20 years longer than Heartland and has done well without intercollegiate athletics.

There is no shortage of spectator sports in Bloomington-Normal. As for participation, more students could be involved in a well-run intramural sports program than in a limited intercollegiate athletics program.

Heartland doesn't need intercollegiate sports to forge an identity or attract students.

It can do both best by continuing the excellent job of providing quality instruction for students seeking education beyond high school and meeting community educational needs, including workforce training.

Bloomington, The Pantagraph, OPINION, January 21, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Illinois State has student editors' ideal situation

College newspapers across the country want the U.S. Supreme Court to give student editors the editorial freedom from public university administrator scrutiny that most have enjoyed for years.

They are gambling. They want the Supreme Court to say they should not be subjected to university administration oversight. However, their appeal of a federal appellate court decision could open the door for university administrators to reverse course and bring student newspapers under closer scrutiny.

Instead of taking a chance at the Supreme Court level, the best course for student newspapers would be to follow the precedent-setting move at Illinois State University.

Last fall, ISU President Al Bowman signed a letter declaring The Daily Vidette at ISU a "designated public forum." The letter states that ISU will not engage in prior review or censorship. Bowman was the first university president to sign such a statement, according to Rick Jones, general manager of the Vidette. Jones said very few student newspapers have similar statements.

The Daily Vidette uses ISU facilities and Jones teaches a journalism class, but is a paid member of the Vidette staff. He takes care of budgeting, but only advises the editor on newspaper content.

The ultimate decisions today rest with Editor-in-Chief Suzanne Bell, an ISU junior.

The "public forum" designation is what student newspaper editors want from the Supreme Court.

The designation says student editors alone are responsible for the content of their newspapers.

Student editors at Governors State University, just south of Chicago, filed suit because a university dean insisted in 2000 that a GSU official read and approve the student newspaper's stories and editorials - some of which earlier had been critical of GSU - prior to publication.

Student publications across the nation have since joined forces and are being represented by the Student Press Law Center, which serves as legal advisers to such newspapers.

The issue is whether the student newspapers are a "public forum" or a "non-public forum." Even without written policies from university officials such as the one Bowman gave to The Daily Vidette, college newspapers have generally been considered public forums, according to Mike Hiestand, attorney and legal counsel for the Student Press Law Center. But a precedent-setting case at a Missouri high school in 1988 ruled that student newspapers that are part of a school's curriculum and subsidized by the school are "non-public forums."

Last spring, three members of the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals sided with the college students' original lawsuit, saying GSU officials were interfering with the student newspaper's First Amendment rights and the dean responsible could be held financially liable.

Last fall, the full 11-member appeals court overturned the three-judge- panel decision and ruled 7-4 that there should not have been restrictions, but that the dean shouldn't be held financially liable.

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However, they based their decision on the assumption that Governors State's newspaper is a public forum and shouldn't be treated the same as the Missouri high school.

Judges had earlier ruled that the high school was a non-public forum because the newspaper was part of the school curriculum and was used as a teaching tool.

Because the high school precedent and the Governors State cases were lumped together without the judges ruling on a distinction between the two, Hiestand said it may mean there would need to be an analysis to determine if a college is a "public" or "non-public" forum.

That is what student newspaper groups should not want because it could lead to various interpretations by university administrations and a reversal of what has been practiced, even without legal documentation.

The Peoria Journal Star, LETTER TO THE EDITOR, January 21, 2006

Release money to build WIU performing arts center

Saturday, January 21, 2006

I read with interest about Gov. Rod Blagojevich's first trip to Macomb since being elected, flying in to announce funding for highway projects and the expansion of the Western Illinois University campus in Rock Island.

As an alumnus, I would like to know the status of funding already approved - but never released by Blagojevich - for the WIU Performing Arts Center in Macomb. Such construction would generate well-paying union jobs, boost university arts programming and enhance the quality of life for west-central Illinois.

In 2002, the General Assembly and Gov. George Ryan approved using \$4 million in capital funds for the planning of a multi-purpose facility with a performing arts center at WIU. Once in office, Gov. Blagojevich froze these funds and has refused to release them.

I find it troubling that the governor can find money for hundreds of new projects around the state while continuing to freeze funding for WIU's Performing Arts Center.

Blagojevich has approved tens of millions of dollars for new buildings at Chicago State University. After being asked about the arts center funding, his only response was, "Stay tuned, a lot of people are talking about it."

Well, governor, we are tired of the talk and we want action. I encourage concerned citizens, officials and WIU alumni to write the governor and ask for the release of these funds. Tell him that, unbelievably, Western has not had a new, state-funded building in over 30 years.

Kirk W. Dillard

Illinois State Senator, WIU Class of 1977

Naperville

Carbondale, The Southern Illinoisan, OPINION, January 24, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Governor's plans sound good, but how will they be funded?

By: Voice Of The Southern

Gov. Rod Blagojevich delivered a basket full of promises in his State of the State speech, but just as significantly, he threw down the gauntlet to Republicans who oppose his agenda for 2006.

The Democratic governor was short on how he would pay for an expanding list of priorities, including a \$1,000-per-child tax credit for parents with freshmen and sophomores in state colleges and universities. But he took Republicans to task in this election year, challenging them to deliver on his \$3.2 billion road-and-schools public works project and health care for veterans or face the wrath of voters in November.

The campaign-style speech set the stage for a shaky legislative session that could jeopardize \$500 million in school construction projects, many in Southern Illinois. The make-or-break part of Blagojevich's fourth year as governor will be his road-and-school bond program. He says it will create 230,000 jobs.

"Many of the skeptics here in Illinois may disagree with our priorities," he said. "But ask them this: What child's education would they cut? What working family would they raise taxes on? What child do they say should go without health care?"

Republicans, whose votes are needed to reach the three-fifths majority to issue bonds, are skeptical of how the governor wants to pay for it. And some legislators say they want to know in writing if their local projects will be funded.

"This is pre-election pandering, nothing more," Illinois Treasurer Judy Baar Topinka, also a Republican candidate for governor, said. "I can't go into the basement and print money for him."

Much to Southern Illinoisans' dismay, the \$500 million school-construction component is in some limbo. The governor wants to retire the school-construction portion of the bonds by authorizing keno in state bars and restaurants. The state could clear \$40 million to \$80 million on keno per year, according to the governor's estimates.

Southern Illinois has a long list of communities waiting for schools to be built, including Benton, Carterville, Du Quoin, Johnston City and Marion. State schools superintendent Randy Dunn was in Du Quoin on Friday, pushing for bonds to fund school construction.

Unfortunately, the state funding mechanism continues to be debatable, keno or no keno. The governor did not mention keno in his speech but would like to start the game this summer. Blagojevich has said he does not consider keno to be an extension of gambling, indicating he could institute the game himself through the state lottery and without the legislature.

Even members of his own party have doubts.

"Many local projects, including school construction plans, have been on hold for years, so I'm glad to see that we are moving forward on this and that Southern Illinois is included in the plan," Rep. John Bradley, D-Marion, said. "While it's important that the state fund these projects, I have concerns about how such initiatives will be paid for."

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Meanwhile, paying for higher education remains a prime focus in Southern Illinois. With SIUC and four quality community colleges in our backyard, John A. Logan, Rend Lake, Southeastern and Shawnee, the cost of education is a major issue every year. The tuition tax credit proposed by the governor would help parents balance costs, but it would cost the state an estimated \$90 million a year in revenue.

"For many families, this is a tax credit that can help make the dream of college affordable and the dream of college a reality," Blagojevich said.

SIU president Glenn Poshard agreed, but the former U.S. representative said financial aid packages should be an equal priority.

"If we can see the tuition tax credit and the broadening of financial aid, then we would see the best of both worlds," Poshard said. "They both are necessary."

The governor seemingly was as obsessed with Washington as Illinois in his speech. He mentioned Washington and sideswiped the Bush administration more than 20 times.

"There is perhaps no starker difference in our values and those of the current administration in Washington than when it comes to making health care accessible and affordable to working people," said Blagojevich, adding later, "This administration in Washington has been equally hostile when it comes to women's health care and their reproductive rights."

Voters can indulge the governor for his political rhetoric because the State of the State was, in essence, the kickoff of his re-election bid.

What we'd like to see is more emphasis in the next 30 days on how he intends to fund the capital bill and where the money will go.

The eyes of Southern Illinois will be on the governor Feb. 15, when he delivers his budget speech.

Frankly, we're waiting to see how he's going to deliver the school construction, the tax cut and health care with controversial funding sources and without causing the state long-term harm.

Carbondale, The Southern Illinoisan, OPINION, January 25, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

Forget political motives, pass capital bill

Gov. Rod Blagojevich visited Southern Illinois on Monday to promote his \$3.2 billion capital bill, with the promise it will include \$500 million for school construction and the projection that it will create 230,000 jobs in the state.

The Democratic governor made it clear that he wants it passed by the Legislature, knowing he will need four Republicans to cross the aisle in the Senate to give him the three-fifths majority to authorize bond spending.

Blagojevich, who soon will announce he's seeking re-election this year, came with an olive branch. He said he's willing to sign any pledge or binding agreement necessary requested by Republicans to guarantee where the money will go. Many Republicans have expressed skepticism over the capital bill, saying they're uneasy giving the governor the money without exact details and without a funding mechanism.

"I want to take that away as an excuse from the opposition," the governor told The Southern on Monday, "so let me make it clear. I will sign anything, anywhere, any time to guarantee where the money will go. I don't think I can be clearer than that."

Significantly, the governor extended another peace offering Tuesday. He took keno, a controversial funding mechanism for the \$500 million in school construction, off the table. He said he would not try to establish the state-run electronic games in restaurants and bars over the Legislature's objections.

The governor was willing to take the political heat for keno, a game of chance in which gamblers try to match numbers picked by a computer and displayed on television screens or an electronic board, because it could bring in \$40-\$80 million a year to Illinois. But it was fiercely opposed by Republicans and became a distraction. He was wise in abandoning it.

"You cannot argue that keno is not an expansion of gambling," Sen. Dave Luechtefeld, R-Okawville, said. "It's obvious the governor needs a revenue stream to pay for projects, but gambling is a lousy way to pay for government. It's an even worse way to pay for schools."

However, while the GOP was quick to criticize keno as a funding source for school construction, the party has not offered its own proposal for generating new revenue to pay for it.

Luechtefeld is one of the Republicans the governor will be trying to persuade in the months to come. He lives in a region that stands to gain more than \$140 million in projects. His views on keno surely influenced the governor, who said that funding will not include a tax increase. And Luechtefeld is running unopposed for re-election.

"I am not going to propose a tax increase," the governor said. "The worst thing we could do would be to raise taxes on Illinoisans."

Regardless, the governor has started the debate to pass the public works bond initiative, and he has taken keno out of the equation. It's a good start in framing the discussion.

Whatever happens certainly will include fireworks in the Legislature. In this political year, it will not be easy to convince the Republicans to go along.

But Republicans also face the voters this year for re-election, and many of the capital projects are within their districts, making their opposition difficult to explain.

Carbondale, The Southern Illinoisan, OPINION, January 25, 2006 (Page 2 of 2)

The tone and rhetoric will be harsh from Republicans and Democrats until the Legislature adjourns, likely in April.

With keno off the table, leaders will grapple with ways to fund the capital bill. Hopefully, they will keep the future of the region and state in the forefront, not just their political agendas and ambitions.

Illinois - and Southern Illinois in particular - desperately needs the capital bill passed in this legislative session.

Given the projects in the bill that would benefit this region, we encourage our entire delegation-- Democrats and Republicans--to put aside political motives and to help get a capital bill passed. It will benefit the voters who sent them to Springfield, as well as the region they represent.

Inside Higher Ed, OPINION, January 26, 2006

Why we need the SMART Program

BY BILL FRIST

For the first 20 years of my adult life I served on research universities' faculties, worked with medical students, and wrote peer-reviewed papers. As a medical doctor, a scientist, and a professor, I had enormous pride in the strength of America's scientific establishment. The United States trains the world's best scientists, runs the best research universities, and attracts the brightest minds from all over the world. Year after year, we take the lion's share of Nobel Prizes.

I proposed the SMART Grant Program to make sure that we retain our global leadership in the sciences. The program will provide grants up to \$4,000 on top of Pell Grants (a total of \$8,050 in assistance per year) to help bright, hard-working, full time students of modest means pursue degrees in math, science, and strategic foreign languages. Between now and 2010, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that almost 600,000 students will benefit from the program. These students, I am sure, will go on to teach at our leading research universities, run our top medical research labs, and administer our national science establishment. For them, the program will help a lot: at most land grant universities, in-state students receiving the maximum Pell Grant and a SMART Grant will pay no tuition for their last two years of college. Much of the money to finance SMART Grants comes from revisions to student loan formulas that ask private banks to accept reduced profits.

The SMART Grant program will also help America's research universities retain their global preeminence. Today, India and China together graduate more than twice as many engineers as the United States. Both nations will continue to increase their ranks of scientists and engineers rapidly in the coming years. Meanwhile, many American employers have a difficult time finding qualified scientists and engineers. Since 85 percent of growth in U.S. income comes from technological change, we need to do everything we can to encourage our best and brightest to enter key scientific fields.

I designed the program with the needs of students and research universities in mind. College presidents, families, and students told me that financial pressures turned many bright students away from pursuing math, science, engineering, and languages. Friends of mine like James Wingate, the president of LeMoyne-Owen College, and Gordon Gee, chancellor of Vanderbilt University, knew about the program from its origins and joined me in praising SMART Grants after the Senate passed the legislation.

I know that some college officials have expressed doubts about the way the program shifts away from the traditional practice of awarding federal aid to undergraduates based primarily on economic need rather than merit. But while I believe that the federal government should provide generous financial assistance to students with a wide range of abilities, I see no reason to apologize for creating a program targeted towards the very type of bright, motivated students nearly all colleges seek to recruit. I'm shocked that some of SMART Grants' critics appear to believe that low-income students can't earn good grades. While they use the same financial eligibility criteria, the SMART and Pell Grant programs will remain distinct; one won't impact the other. The program also limits itself to full time students because they pay the most tuition and have the greatest financial need. Although fiscal considerations will play a role in future action, I am open to proposals that would expand SMART Grants to cover needy part-time students who meet similar academic criteria.

I helped create SMART Grants to help bright students from all backgrounds to learn the skills most vital to our country. The future of our nation's global leadership depends on America's ability to produce more graduates with degrees in science and engineering. Once they understand it, I believe that America's great colleges and universities will welcome the SMART Grant program with open arms.

Sen. Bill Frist, a former assistant professor of surgery at Vanderbilt University Medical School, is majority leader of the United States Senate.

Rockford Register Star, EDITORIAL, January 27, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

RVC strengthens focus on helping students succeed

Fourteen months into his job as Rock Valley College president, Jack Becherer's initial vision of the college's potential for greatness has not dimmed.

His months on the job have put the flesh of reality on the vision, however, and that's a good thing.

Becherer knows now what he's dealing with. He still has confidence that our good community college can be great. He now has enough information to conclude that the vision can be accomplished with the cards he's been dealt at RVC. He has a plan.

It was a wiser but still-enthusiastic Becherer who sat down with the Editorial Board this week to report on where he wants the college to be in five years and how he hopes to lead it toward the goal of greatness. He speaks now with the voice of authority earned by climbing a steep learning curve over the past year.

A year ago, shortly after he went on the job, he told the board: "We have to get stable and then we can talk about the future."

Under Becherer's calm, collaborative, listening style of leadership, the college has moved miles down the road toward stability. Becherer said he's spent a lot of time in the past year doing "repair" work, rebuilding trust with staff, establishing relationships and "preparing a climate where people were willing to work toward goals."

As the year progressed, Becherer got a handle on RVC's strengths and weaknesses. When he talks now about a specific goal, he backs it up with particulars about how it will be accomplished.

In his first year, he has been true to three goals he set for himself in the beginning.

They were to focus on the college's core educational function; make a commitment to quality; and provide transparent leadership in order to re-establish trust.

Now, it's time to talk about the future, and Becherer poses the question: "By 2009, how does the college need to look different?" Becherer asked. Some key elements in the transformation:

RVC must have a better student success model. By next fall, Becherer wants the college to offer a freshman seminar in which incoming students set goals and develop plans to reach them. He believes the school needs to know more about why students choose RVC, how well they do once they're on campus and what they do afterward. He wants to develop an honors program so that some of the region's best and brightest students seek out RVC. In addition, he said, RVC should be recruiting at-risk students and offering them support to keep them in school and help them succeed.

"We have to operate under the mode that the student who needs help the most is the least likely to ask for it," he said.

RVC must do better at collecting data and documenting success and failure. "We haven't been a data-driven institution," Becherer said. "We haven't used the information a lot of colleges do to make decisions."

Rockford Register Star, EDITORIAL, January 27, 2006 (Page 2 of 2)

This need touches several areas, he said. For instance, the college needs to improve the way it evaluates programs to measure whether or not they accomplish the desired goals.

The college needs to revise the manufacturing curriculum to prepare students better for the work force. In addition, Becherer wants to develop a pilot program to train certified manufacturer's assistants that would allow high school students in Rockford and Belvidere to earn dual high school/college credits.

He recognizes that the college has too-few seats in basic courses students need to fulfill before transferring to four-year institutions. RVC simply needs more teachers, he said, in order to meet the need, but there isn't money to hire them.

He also realizes that there still is some grumbling on campus that not all of the right people are in the right jobs. Everything can't be accomplished in a year. College campuses are intensely political places. Presidents, especially new ones, tread carefully and avoid making decisions based on hearsay.

Becherer: "We have to get our house in order, know where the talent lies and make decisions based on sound information."

As a backdrop to it all is declining state aid. To fund new programs, hard decisions have to be made about which old programs are less important.

"It's not so hard to figure out where you're going to go," he said. "It's harder to get people to a position of figuring out what they're going to give up."

By re-establishing communication and earning trust on campus, Becherer has made a good start in that direction.

The Herald News, OPINION, January 27, 2006

Time to put differences aside at JJC

The issue: The JJC board has selected a new president.

We say: It's time to put differences aside and get behind Eugenia Proulx ... assuming she accepts the position.

After a sometimes contentious process, Joliet Junior College trustees have chosen the college's next president.

By a 5-2 vote, the board Wednesday selected Eugenia Proulx, vice chancellor of The Community College of Baltimore as the person to succeed JJC President J.D. Ross. She would be the first woman president in the junior college's long history.

Proulx, if she accepts the job, would start July 1 following the retirement of Ross.

During his tenure, Ross earned wide respect for his leadership. He will be missed. Proulx has big shoes to fill, but an open-minded board can help make it a good fit.

JJC trustees had been expected to select a new president Jan. 31. Earlier this week, board Chairman Jim McFarland sought to move up the process, saying the college needed to act now to secure its top choice — Proulx.

Two trustees, Dave Cryer and Susan Block, had been backing the lone remaining internal candidate, Al Hardersen, JJC's vice president of student affairs.

After Wednesday's vote, Cryer said it was time to put differences behind them and work together for the good of the community college. We agree.

JJC has about 13,000 students. Some students attend to earn their two-year degree, while others use the junior college as a springboard before attending a four-year college. Either way, Joliet Junior College, the nation's oldest, is a vital part of this area's higher education network.

JJC faces many challenges — a deteriorating downtown campus, increased needs throughout a sprawling district, to name a few — and we wish Proulx success in meeting those challenges.

Trustees called her the most well-rounded and experienced of the five finalists. At Baltimore, Proulx oversees a \$135 million budget and a campus of 70,000 students.

Proulx was one of five finalists selected by a 19-member panel of community members after a nationwide search. Two of those five — Tony Uremovic, a Joliet City Councilman and chairman of JJC's Business Department, and Gayle Saunders, president of Decatur's Richland Community College — withdrew.

Longtime area residents certainly are aware JJC presidents have had their challenges. Only Ross, a respected member of the junior college and the community-at-large before being named president, seemed to rise above the fray.

Should Proulx accept the job, we urge her, trustees and faculty to work together to make Joliet Junior College the best it can be.

The selection process was long and arduous. But the real work is just beginning.

Champaign, The News-Gazette, January 21, 2006

Molecule may unlock blood secret

By GREG KLINE © 2006 THE NEWS-GAZETTE Published Online January 21, 2006

A chainlike ancient molecule scientists believe is an evolutionary leftover from before advanced life took hold on Earth may be useful in new treatments for promoting blood clotting.

"It's very common in bacteria and other unicellular organisms," University of Illinois Professor Jim Morrissey said recently of the polyphosphate molecule.

In bacteria, the material plays a role in the virulence of the organisms, their ability to do damage to a host, and in bacterial defense against stress, such as in periods of nutrient starvation, said Morrissey, a biochemist in the UI College of Medicine.

In humans, polyphosphate has generally been viewed as little more than a molecular fossil we carry around.

But in looking for targeted approaches to killing disease-causing bacteria and other pathogens, former UI Professor Roberto Docampo, now at the University of Georgia, discovered that tiny subcellular pouches in human platelets held polyphosphates and released them when stimulated.

Platelets are blood-clotting agents in the body that, for example, gather at the site of the wound when you cut your finger chopping onions.

When he found platelets releasing polyphosphates, Docampo immediately thought about a potential role in coagulation, and he contacted Morrissey, an expert in blood clotting.

Morrissey's lab studies the biochemistry of clotting, including proteins that trigger it normally and the process as it occurs in thrombotic diseases – those related to blood clots. The leading cause of death in the U.S., thrombotic diseases include heart attacks and strokes.

But blood failing to clot, leading to uncontrolled bleeding, can be a killer as well, notably in the case of diseases involving hemophilia and for trauma and surgery patients.

Stephanie Smith and Nicola Mutch, post-doctoral researchers in Morrissey's lab, began testing polyphosphates in platelet-poor plasma, the liquid part of blood. Peter Rohloff, a UI medical and doctoral student, and graduate student Deepak Baskar also worked on the study.

They found that the introduction of polyphosphates caused blood clotting to accelerate and made clots last longer by resisting agents that promote their breakup, the latter a function important in preventing renewed bleeding.

The results of the study, funded by the National Institutes of Health, were reported last week in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Morrissey said polyphosphates appear to affect at least a couple of things in blood clotting.

For one, they stimulate a protein in blood, called a contact-activation pathway, that promotes clotting when your blood ends up on a surface outside your body, like that piece of tissue paper you stick on your face after you nick yourself shaving.

In addition, polyphosphates appear to accelerate the activation of another protein, called factor V, which forms thrombin, a catalyst in the production of fibrin, a base material of blood clots.

"Of the two, I think that's probably the more important," Morrissey said.

Scientists have known for years that platelets release factor V, and in a form much more active than the version of the protein found normally in the blood.

The UI results showing that platelets also release polyphosphates, and that polyphosphates accelerate the protein's effect on clotting, may help explain one of blood clotting's basic mechanisms.

Meanwhile, a \$300,000 grant from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust has allowed Morrissey to establish a Center for Hemostasis Research (hemostasis is the process of halting bleeding) and start work on potential treatments for uncontrolled bleeding, in collaboration with UI colleagues Stephen Sligar and Lawrence Schook and Carle trauma surgeon Uretz Oliphant.

Morrissey said the center will examine the use of polyphosphates as well as natural proteins in body tissue that promote coagulation. Eventually, materials developed could end up in salves, compresses and injections used by emergency medical personnel, including physicians and military medics.

The Chicago Tribune, January 23, 2006 (Page 1 of 2)

More undergrads playing hooky when class notes go online

Some profs pulling materials from Web

By Stuart Silverstein
Tribune Newspapers: Los Angeles Times

Americ Azevedo taught an Introduction to Computers class at the University of California, Berkeley, last semester that featured some of the hotter options in educational technology.

By visiting the course's Web sites, the 200 students could download audio recordings or watch digital videos of the lectures, as well as read the instructor's detailed lecture notes and participate in online discussions.

But there was one big problem: So many of the undergraduates relied on the technology that, at times, only 20 or so actually showed up for class.

"It was demoralizing," Azevedo said. "Getting students out of their media bubble to be here is getting progressively harder."

Skipping classes, particularly big lectures where an absence is likely to go undetected, is a time-honored tradition among college undergraduates.

These days, however, some professors are witnessing a spurt in absenteeism after adopting technologies that were envisioned as learning aids.

As many academics embrace the electronic innovations, others are pushing back. To deter no-shows, they are reverting to lower-tech tactics such as giving more pop quizzes or slashing online offerings.

"Too much online instruction is a bad thing," said Terre Allen, a communication studies scholar and director of a center that provides teaching advice to professors at California State University Long Beach.

This last term, Allen experimented with posting extensive lecture notes online for her undergraduate course, Language and Behavior. One goal was to relieve students of the burden of furiously scribbling notes, freeing them to focus on the lectures' substance.

Yet the result, Allen said, was that only about one-third of her 154 students showed up for most of the lectures. In the past, when Allen put less material online, 60 to 70 percent of students typically would attend.

This term, Allen won't put her lecture notes online.

If other teachers follow suit, that might make a difference to students such as Julia Bui, 23, a single mother on track to graduate from Cal State Long Beach this spring. This last semester, for the first time in her college career, Bui frequently skipped one of her lecture classes.

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Bui ditched for the kinds of reasons that many undergraduates say they do: She found the course boring, and she had other demands on her time. Perhaps the clincher in her decision was that her professor posted his lecture notes online.

"All you have to do is just look over the presentations for 15 minutes, and you can learn the material that way instead of coming to class," Bui said.

Kelly Rocca, an assistant professor of communication at St. John's University in New York who has studied college absenteeism, said she suspects that skipping has reached an all-time high largely because of students' off-campus jobs and reliance on academic technology.

To combat ditching in her own classes, Rocca refuses to post notes online. With undergraduates, she said, "the more reasons you give them not to come to class, the less likely they are to come."

Statistics on class-skipping are scarce. But a UCLA survey of freshmen at 142 schools found that 33 percent said they skipped at least occasionally. The survey, conducted last fall, also found that 43 percent frequently were bored and 58 percent had fallen asleep in class.

UCLA researchers hastened to add that their figures were only rough measures because of limitations in their survey.

Teaching experts say Internet-era instructors have to change tactics to combat absenteeism. Azevedo is working to enliven his lectures with material and interaction that students can't get on the audio or video "coursecasts"; he wants to foster more discussion, while using technology to relay more of the basic information.

"There are a lot of pluses here," he said. "We just haven't adapted to it yet."

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Lèse-Majesté

In April, Columbia College Chicago became something of a hero to those who care about artistic and academic freedom when officials there defended a campus museum exhibit that included work highly critical of President Bush — and one work that attracted the attention of the U.S. Secret Service.

The defense was very much in keeping with the college's reputation as a cutting-edge arts institution where dissent is valued. But perhaps not all forms of dissent are equally valued.

Many faculty members and students are angry over the firing last month of one of the creators of Wacky Warrick, a Web site devoted to animated cartoons that mock Warrick L. Carter, the college's president. The president's character in some of the features on the Web site can be seen shirtless or in a bathrobe, enjoying the presidential home, and generally making light of student concerns about tuition costs or spending priorities at the college. The Web site also pokes fun at missteps by the president, such as the time in 2001 when he accidentally sent an e-mail with details about his personal finances — intended for a bank — to all students and faculty members.

The Web site — extremely popular with Columbia students — was produced anonymously. But college officials fired one of the creators, Mark Phillips, shortly after identifying him, apparently as a result of a midnight raid on the laboratory where he works for Zafra M. Lerman, an award-winning scientist and human-rights activist. Security is high in her laboratory because it contains not only chemicals but records related to her work on behalf of scientists facing government repression abroad. She said that the college never should have turned off security to try to hunt down the site's creator.

Lerman actually isn't a fan of the Wacky Warrick Web site. She said that she tells everyone who works for her that if they want to criticize anything or anyone to do so openly — and she'll back them up. But she said that she also tells people that if they want to do things anonymously, they should do so on their own time and with their own computers. And since she said that Phillips and his colleagues, who still have not been identified, didn't use the college's facilities, it was not the college's business to seek them out to fire them.

"This was a violation of rights — both civil rights and human rights — of my rights, my students' rights and my fellow faculty's rights," she said. Lerman said that for a true security threat, she would not object to campus officials coming to her lab at any hour — with or without her advance knowledge. But to investigate a Web site mocking the president? She said it was "really appalling that the college ignored me completely and disrespected my lab."

Many faculty members agree and a committee is being created to study the issue. The firing took place shortly before Christmas vacation and the issue is now getting renewed attention because of articles this week in the student newspaper and in the *Chicago Reader*.

Mark Lloyd, a spokesman for the college, said that Columbia is in a difficult position because state law bars the institution — as an employer — from discussing why someone was dismissed, even if "factual errors" are being quoted about the event. However, he added that "generally speaking, it's our position that this is not an issue of free speech, but really a personnel issue and the institution not only has an obligation to act to insure that its equipment and facilities are used appropriately with the mission of the institution, but it has an obligation to act when there is an abuse of the college's resources that may involve harassment or the demeaning of individuals."

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Asked if all Columbia employees who use their college computers for non-college work face investigations, Lloyd said, "We do not routinely inspect people's e-mails or computers or anything else if there is not reasonable grounds for misuse."

And Lloyd rejected the allegation that the college's actions in any way violated freedom of expression. He noted that the college has taken no action to try to shut the Web site down. As for the general impression given by the controversial Web site — that the president is out of touch with students — Lloyd said that Carter has emphasized the need for the institution to be "student centered," leading an effort to greatly expand the number of scholarships that are available for students and to plan for a student center.

The presidential home that is the focus of much of the satire was purchased by the college prior to Carter's arrival, Lloyd said.

Phillips, who graduated from the college last spring with a degree in film and video and was then hired by Lerman, said that his colleagues on the Web site include current and former students and alumni. He said that the Web site grew out of their frustrations at the college (frustrations that he said are with administrators, not faculty members). And he said that the criticisms made on the Web site "are all things that have been talked about on campus."

As for the idea that college resources were used, Phillips said, "we're very proud that we used our own computers." Currently, Phillips is looking for work. He also asked why the college considers criticism of President Bush to be protected, but not criticism of the college's own president.

Some students at Columbia are looking for middle ground — by criticizing the Web site and the college administration. In a column called "Wackygate" in the *Columbia Chronicle*, the student paper, Jeff Danna criticized the creators of the site for "anonymously taking jabs" at the president — rather than offering ideas on how to improve the college. But Danna also said that many students related to the criticisms on the Web site and that Phillips and his colleagues deserved to be listened to, not fired.

"The college community should be applauding Phillips and his still-anonymous colleagues. This is what students at Columbia are trained to do — take the skills they acquired in their courses and use them to do work that they believe is meaningful," he wrote. "Phillips also tried to demonstrate with Wacky Warrick that he is a risk-taker willing to question authority and not sit idle while his superiors act in a manner that he sees as unscrupulous. Yes, his method might have been misguided ... but the fact that he used his talents to attempt to bring about a large scale change is noble."

— Scott Jaschik

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Memo from the chairman

College officials and members of the public are watching with intense interest — and, in some quarters, trepidation — the proceedings of the U.S. Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education. Given that interest, the following is a memorandum that the panel's chairman, Charles Miller, wrote to its members offering his thinking about one of its thorniest subjects: accountability. As always on Inside Higher Ed, comments are welcomed below.

To: Members, The Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education

From: Charles Miller, Chairman

Dear Commission Members:

The following is a synopsis of several ongoing efforts, in support of the Commission, in one of our principal areas of focus, "Accountability." The statements and opinions presented in the memo are mine and are not intended to be final conclusions or recommendations, although there may be a developing consensus.

I would appreciate feedback, directly or through the staff, in any form that is most convenient. This memo will be made public in order to promote and continue an open dialogue on measuring institutional performance and student learning in higher education.

Overview

As a Commission, our discussions to date have shown a number of emerging demands on the higher education system, which require us to analyze, clarify and reframe the accountability discussion. Four key goals or guiding principles in this area are beginning to take shape.

First, more useful and relevant information is needed. The federal government currently collects a vast amount of information, but unfortunately policy makers, universities, students and taxpayers continue to lack key information to enable them to make informed decisions.

Second, we need to improve, and even fix, current accountability processes, such as accreditation, to ensure that our colleges and universities are providing the highest quality education to their students.

Third, we need to do a much better job of aligning our resources to our broad societal needs. In order to remain competitive, our system of higher education must provide a world-class education that prepares students to compete in a global knowledge economy.

And finally, we need to assure that the American public understand through access to sufficient information, particularly in the area of student learning, what they are getting for their investment in a college education.

Commission meeting (12/6/05)

At our Nashville meeting, the Commission heard three presentations from a panel on "Accountability." Panelists represented the national, state and institutional perspectives and in the subsequent discussion, an informal consensus developed that there is a critical need for improved public information systems to

measure and compare institutional performance and student learning in consumer-friendly formats, defining consumers broadly as students, families, taxpayers, policy makers and the general public.

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Needs for a modern university education

The college education needed for the competitive, global environment in the future is far more than specific, factual knowledge; it is about capability and capacity to think and develop and continue to learn. An insightful quote from an educator describes the situation well:

“We are attempting to educate and prepare students (hire people in the workforce) today so that they are ready to solve future problems, not yet identified, using technologies not yet invented, based on scientific knowledge not yet discovered.”

—Professor Joseph Lagowski, University of Texas at Austin

Trends in measuring student learning

There is gathering momentum for measuring through testing what students learn or what skills they acquire in college beyond a traditional certificate or degree.

Very recently, new testing instruments have been developed which measure an important set of skills to be acquired in college: critical thinking, analytic reasoning, problem solving, and written communications.

The Commission is reviewing promising new developments in the area of student testing, which indicate a significant improvement in measuring student learning and related institutional performance. Three independent efforts have shown promise:

- A multi-year trial by the Rand Corporation, which included 122 higher education institutions, led to the development of a test measuring critical thinking, analytic reasoning and other skills. As a result of these efforts, a new entity called Collegiate Learning Assessment has been formed by researchers involved and the tests will now be further developed and marketed widely.
- A new test measuring college level reading, mathematics, writing and critical thinking has been developed by the Educational Testing Service and will begin to be marketed in January 2006. This test is designed for colleges to assess their general education outcomes, so the results may be used to improve the quality of instruction and learning.
- The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education developed a new program of testing student learning in five states, which has provided highly promising results and which suggests expansion of such efforts would be clearly feasible.

An evaluation of these new testing regimes provides evidence of a significant advancement in measuring student learning — especially in measuring the attainment of skills most needed in the future.

Furthermore, new educational delivery models are being created, such as the Western Governors University, which uses a variety of built-in assessment techniques to determine the achievement of certain skills being taught, rather than hours-in-a-seat. These new models are valid alternatives to the older models of teaching and learning and may well prove to be superior for some teaching and learning objectives in terms of cost effectiveness.

Institutional leadership

There are constructive examples of leadership in higher education in addressing the issues of accountability and student learning, such as the excellent work by the Association of American Colleges and Universities.

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The AAC&U has developed a unique and significant approach to accountability and learning assessment, discussed in two recent reports, "Our Students' Best Work" (2004) and "Liberal Education Outcomes" (2005).

The AAC&U accountability model focuses on undergraduate liberal arts education and emphasizes learning outcomes. The primary purpose is to engage campuses in identifying the core elements of a quality liberal arts education experience and measuring students' experience in achieving these goals — core learning and skills that anyone with a liberal arts degree should have. AAC&U specifically does not endorse a single standardized test, but acknowledges that testing can be a useful part of the multiple measures recommended in their framework.

In this model, departments and faculty are expected to be given the primary responsibility to define and assess the outcomes of the liberal arts education experience.

Federal and state leadership

The federal government currently collects a great deal of information from the higher education system. It may be time to re-examine what the government collects to make sure that it's useful and helpful to the consumers of the system.

Many states are developing relevant state systems of accountability in order to measure the performance of public higher education institutions. In its recommendations about accountability in higher education, the State Higher Education Executive Officers group has endorsed a focus on learning assessment.

Institutional performance measurement

What is clearly lacking is a nationwide system for comparative performance purposes, using standard formats. Private ranking systems, such as the *U.S. News and World Report* "Best American Colleges" publications, use a limited set of data, which is not necessarily relevant for measuring institutional performance or providing the public with information needed to make critical decisions.

The Commission, with assistance of its staff and other advisors and consultants, is attempting to develop the framework for a viable database to measure institutional performance in a consumer-friendly, flexible format.

Accreditation

Historically, accreditation has been the nationally mandated mechanism to improve institutional quality and assure a basic level of accountability in higher education.

Accreditation and related issues of articulation are in need of serious reform in the view of many, especially the need for more outcomes-based approaches. Also in need of substantial improvement are the regional variability in standards, the independence of accreditation, its usefulness for consumers, and its response to new forms of delivery such as internet-based distance learning.

The Commission is reviewing the various practices of institutional and programmatic accreditation. A preliminary analysis will be presented and various possible policy recommendations will be developed.

— Charles Miller

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How productive is your program?

U.S. News and the National Research Council have some new competition in the rankings business — from a business that takes a very different approach to evaluating universities.

In recent weeks, a company called Academic Analytics has started selling its research to universities as a tool for evaluating graduate programs. More than 10 universities have already purchased the service, which promises a better way to analyze how productive departments are and how they compare to other departments. The new business is being talked about among graduate deans and institutional research leaders, but faculty members whose output is being analyzed are largely unaware of the tool.

Some experts believe that the company — which is based on a graduate dean's research — offers a much better way to measure program quality than anything that is out there now. The tool seems to be particularly popular among up-and-coming research universities that want to demonstrate their quality. But others who have been briefed about the new tool are skeptical or wonder why the information should be kept secret except for those willing to buy it.

The rankings provided by Academic Analytics come from the Faculty Scholarly Productivity Index, which was developed by Lawrence Martin, dean of the graduate school at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. The index analyzes a series of measures of faculty productivity:

- Journal publication per capita.
- Book publication with university presses, per capita.
- A combined book and journal publication index.
- Journal citations.
- Grant dollars per faculty member.
- Percentage of faculty members in a department receiving grants.
- A "Faculty Funding Index" based on the various grant measures.
- Awards and honors per faculty member, gathered from a long list of groups issuing such commendations.

The company has gathered information on departments, faculty member by faculty member, for universities considered "research extensive" or "research intensive" under the categories developed by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Combined, those categories cover most institutions offering any significant graduate education.

"What our system does is to look at the major areas of scholarly activity," said Martin. While some of the measures are used in other rankings, this system combines them and is also set up for regular updates and a broad range of disciplines (85 in all), allowing universities to track changes from year to year and see long-term patterns. In contrast, the National Research Council's departmental rankings are currently being revised for the first time since 1995.

Many universities are frustrated not only with the time between NRC rankings, but the generally cautious approach of the council in adding fields. Academic Analytics takes a more inclusive approach. "If you can get a Ph.D. in it, we measure it," Martin said.

Universities that buy the service will receive reports that compare their departments to those of 10 other universities, selected by the purchasing institution. Universities can select 10 comparison institutions for all disciplines or (for an extra fee) vary the comparison institutions by discipline. The databases that produce these reports are proprietary and will not be published.

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The fee structure is based on how many programs a university wants evaluated. Martin said that an institution with the broadest range of programs might spend \$30,000 a year on the service while a place like Stony Brook would be able to have its departments evaluated for about \$10,000.

"The only university that doesn't need this report is the institution where every program is wonderful and equally at the top of the pack," Martin said, adding that he thought the reports would be a great tool for deans seeking to figure out which departments could improve, which needed more resources and attention, and so forth.

He declined to release the names of those that have already purchased the service, but officials of the State University of New York at Albany and the University of Cincinnati confirmed that they are among them. Generally, Martin said, the universities buying have been those on the rise rather than those that have been known for decades for their top research departments.

Opinions about the service and its use vary among those who have been discussing it. Several university administrators said that they were intrigued by the idea, but didn't think their faculty members would like it and that they wanted to wait a bit before signing on.

Susan Herbst, provost at Albany, said that the Academic Analytics system is "not perfect," but that the breadth of its rankings across disciplines was much better than what the NRC offers. She also said that the service provided by the new company was superior, and that she also planned to make use of rankings from The Center, a University of Florida program that evaluates research universities.

Herbst said that having multiple evaluations is a good thing. "Since we are moving this university ahead dramatically, we'll take all the data we can get and then triangulate," she said. "The more independent bodies that can help us assess quality, the better. It's nearly impossible for senior faculty, or even a stellar graduate dean, to judge where their programs sit on the national scene."

Robert Frank, dean of the graduate school at Cincinnati, said that the NRC rankings are "a bit old," and that state officials are pushing hard for measures of the quality of programs, making the new service attractive. "I like having these sorts of data available when we come to the table."

David Hardesty, president of West Virginia University, said he hasn't been approached about using the service, but that he could see why it would be popular with administrators. "In the private sector, data comparisons like this are common," he said. "Higher education needs to be more data driven" in discussions about faculty productivity, he added.

Some are waiting before deciding whether to use the service and are attending briefings about it. Officials from the company are soon meeting with the institutional research officials of members of the Association of American Universities.

Julie Carpenter-Hubin, director of institutional research and planning at Ohio State University, said she's interested in the project because "current data sources on faculty scholarship are limited" and there's a lot of interest in finding ways to make comparisons. "Academic Analytics is capturing that kind of information. A big part of what they are selling is the comparison," she said.

Carpenter-Hubin said she will be watching to see how the company's clients use the data, and whether they find it valid.

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Lydia Snover, assistant to the provost at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said that she was originally “quite negative” about the idea, but that after receiving a pitch, she believes that the concept “has some potential.” Snover said that people who lead universities very much want new measures of faculty productivity. But she said that the data may be of less value when a university knows that it has some departments that are already on top of any rankings.

There is also the issue of checking the accuracy of the data. Because the database is proprietary, universities won't generally see the information about their departments without making a purchase.

Elizabeth Capaldi, vice chancellor of the SUNY system, is also co-editor of the work of the Florida center on ranking research universities. That project is currently expanding to look at departments, not just entire universities. Capaldi noted that The Center's data are public — so any university can challenge the basis for rankings. “The data should be checkable,” she said. “It's very important to be able to correct errors, to understand the methodology.”

In response to such concerns, Academic Analytics has shared some of its data with some universities, but officials at some of those institutions have been trading e-mail messages asking one another why they should check the data to enable a business to make money.

John V. Lombardi, who founded the Florida center and is the other editor of its project, said that he has heard that many academics are “not entirely comfortable with the profit-making model” used by Academic Analytics. Lombardi, chancellor of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, is also a columnist for *Inside Higher Ed*.

In terms of methodology, Lombardi said that he was bothered by the lack of differentiation among journals (some of which are easy to publish in and others of which are quite difficult) and for a lack of precision about works with multiple authors. He said that there may be other flaws as well, but that he can't see all parts of the methodology as a non-subscriber to the service.

Still, he predicted that there would be demand for what the company is offering. “The desperation to prove institutional excellence will surely encourage some universities to subscribe just as most universities, whose administrators and faculty know better, nonetheless collaborate in helping *U.S. News* make a high profit on the dubious rankings they produce,” he said.

If the Academic Analytics project is raising both interest and eyebrows now, there is another wrinkle that could make the project even more controversial down the road. The data reported is by department, not individual. But all of the data is gathered faculty member by faculty member so the system could allow for comparisons of individual professors on all of the factors in the system.

Academic Analytics officials state that while they have “unit record data” (meaning data on individuals), only the departmental aggregate data will be sold. But when explaining this policy, Martin said the company is not going to use the individual data “for the moment.”

He said that he worried that data on individuals might not be good to use from any one single year and that his fear was that administrators with data on individuals “would hand out pink slips without thinking.”

Asked to define “for the moment,” he said that the company is in the process of creating an academic advisory board to see if it has made “good decisions” on many issues, including its non-release of individual records, and that the company “might think about” different approaches in the future. But he reiterated that there are no plans to sell individual data now.

— Scott Jaschik

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Aiding first-generation students

Students who are the first in their families to attend college differ from their peers in important ways. They are more likely to be from low-income backgrounds, for instance, and on average they got lower grades in high school.

Because of those and other factors, college administrators must think about first-generation students differently and consider alternative ways of ensuring their academic and social success, researchers responsible for an annual survey of freshmen said Wednesday in releasing this year's report.

"There is a unique set of concerns and expectations among first generation students," John Pryor, director of the Cooperative Institutional Research Program at the University of California at Los Angeles, said at a news conference unveiling the 2005 version of "The American Freshman." "Institutions need to understand and validate the needs and concerns of these students to help them transition to college and achieve their educational goals."

Past research has indicated that students whose parents have no education beyond high school are significantly less likely to graduate than peers whose parents have at least a bachelor's degree. This year's data, based on surveys of 263,710 freshman students at 385 4-year colleges nationwide last fall, offered many details on this segment of the population in 2005. About one in six freshmen were first-generation college students, including 14.7 percent of all male students and 16.9 percent of all female students. Almost 30 percent of first-generation students come from homes with annual family incomes under \$25,000, compared to 9.2 percent of non-first-generation students.

First-generation students also report receiving lower grades in high school; about 37 percent of them reported a cumulative high school grade point average of "A- or higher," while more than 48 percent of their peers reported that level of achievement.

According to the report, mentors and high school educators play an important role in helping a first-generation student decide whether to go to college. Researchers found that encouragement from a mentor account was a "very important reason" for going to college for such students (20.5 percent) as compared to their peers (14.9 percent). Advice from a teacher or high school counselor was also more important (40.9 percent and 44.2 percent) for them than for students whose parents attended college (33.7 percent and 36.4 percent).

Victor Saenz, director of followup surveys with the UCLA program, said Wednesday that more institutions are "being thoughtful on interviewing" first-generation students and trying to reach out to their high school counselors and teachers to help them realize that college is a possibility. "Colleges should be careful and mindful about how they communicate admissions information to their broader communities," he said. "People who live in rural, urban and poor areas need often need more education on this matter, so colleges in these areas should explore ways to increase outreach efforts."

The financial burdens faced by some first-generation students tend to impair their "engagement," academic and otherwise, once they get into college, said Pryor. Research has shown a correlation with one's level of engagement and his or her successful completion of a degree.

Because of their financial situation, "first-generation students are more likely than their peers to think that there is a very good chance that they will get a job to pay for college expenses (55.1 percent versus 45.2

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percent),” according to the report. They also expect that there is some or a very good chance that they will work full-time while attending college (36.7 percent versus 24.7 percent).

“With less time on campus working at a job,” said Pryor, “they tend to be less likely to be there when student organizations meet or when certain lectures take place.”

To account for that problem, Pryor said that campus administrators may want to review what events are offered at what times. “Do these things always have to be at night?” is one question they might consider, he said.

Saenz added that it would be a good idea for admissions counselors to advise such students on ways to get jobs on a university’s campus, as research assistants, or in other “engaging” positions.

Saenz said that a compelling critique of the UCLA report on the subject of first-generation students is that it does not analyze data on two-year institutions, where many of these students end up enrolling. Until 2000, the report had included such measurements, but the data was based on 15 to 20 institutions, so it was difficult to generalize, he said.

The Cooperative Institutional Research Program expects to release a detailed report on first-generation students in the fall.

Other highlights from the 2005 “American Freshman” report include:

- Two out of three (66.3 percent) entering freshmen believe it is essential or important “to help others who are in difficulty,” the highest this figure has been in the past 25 years, according to researchers.
- The survey revealed an all-time high in the percentage of students who believe there is a good or some chance that they will continue to volunteer in college, at 67.3 percent.
- In the year after the events of Sept. 11, 2001, 45.0 percent of American freshmen supported increased military spending; 34.2 percent express the same opinion in 2005.
- The percentage of entering college students who report that they frequently or occasionally drank beer as high school seniors dropped to an all-time low in 2005, declining 2.1 percentage points to 43.4 percent.
- Men are more likely than women to report that they are attending college to be able to make more money (73.5 percent versus 69.0 percent for women). Female students’ top reasons include “to learn more about things that interest me” (81.4 percent), followed by getting training for a specific career (73.1 percent).

— Rob Capriccioso

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As colleges open race-exclusive programs to all, some minority students may be left out in the cold

By PETER SCHMIDT
Piscataway, N.J.

Francesca P. Rothenbacher hesitates to even discuss the hot-button issue of affirmative action. She says she was not out to prove a point when she sought admission, as a white woman, to an on-campus summer enrichment program previously advertised as reserved for black, Hispanic, or American Indian students.

A biology major, Ms. Rothenbacher says she applied to the research in science and engineering program, jointly operated here each summer by Rutgers University and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, because "I just wanted to further my career. That is the most important thing to me."

Regardless of her intentions, Ms. Rothenbacher, a senior at Delaware State University, is one of many white or Asian-American students around the nation who are profoundly changing the complexion of college programs that had been established for members of other racial and ethnic groups.

Over the last three years, mainly in response to the two June 2003 landmark U.S. Supreme Court rulings defining the limits of affirmative action, colleges across the country have been concluding that they are in legal jeopardy if they continue to offer some services or benefits solely to minority students. As a result, the institutions have been abandoning the use of race-exclusive eligibility criteria in determining who can be awarded scholarships and fellowships or can participate in recruitment, orientation, and academic-enrichment programs (*The Chronicle*, March 19, 2004).

Just on Tuesday, the State University of New York System's Board of Trustees voted unanimously to expand the eligibility criteria for a \$6.2-million fellowship program and a \$649,000 scholarship program that previously had been restricted to black, Hispanic, and American Indian students. And on Wednesday officials of the Southern Illinois University system sought faculty input on a plan to change the eligibility criteria for three minority fellowship programs in response to the threat of a lawsuit by the U.S. Justice Department (see accompanying article).

Many of the programs have shifted their focus from increasing minority access to education to serving the broader and more abstract goal of promoting campus diversity. Many have taken in sizable numbers of white or Asian-American students without expanding in size over all. As a result, they are serving fewer students from the minority groups that they previously had sought to help -- a development that dismays some advocates for minority groups, as well as people engaged in efforts to diversify certain professional fields.

"You have to ask how effective the programs are for anybody at this point," argues Richard G. DiFeliciantonio, vice president for enrollment at Ursinus College, which has bucked the trend by choosing not to open a summer orientation program to white or Asian-American students. "I think damage has been done."

But Roger B. Clegg, general counsel for the Center for Equal Opportunity and the leader of a campaign to press colleges to abandon race-based eligibility criteria, disputes such assessments. He suggests that

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colleges are finding alternative ways to reach out to minority students, such as putting more money into programs that serve anyone with financial need.

"We are not trying to foreclose opportunities for anybody," says Mr. Clegg. "We are trying to open them up."

Altered, or ended?

Assessing the full impact of changes in race-exclusive programs is difficult. Many colleges contacted by *The Chronicle* were reluctant to discuss the subject. Some said it is too early to tell how the programs will be affected in the long run. Others refused to provide a numerical breakdown of which racial or ethnic groups are now being served by the programs, saying that doing so would violate students' privacy.

Virginia Tech officials reported that their institution had discontinued "a few" race-exclusive programs, including an internship program and a precollege summer program for minority students. It has opened up other such programs to any racial or ethnic group, while embarking on new efforts to reach minority students through programs geared toward the economically disadvantaged.

Neither supporters nor critics of affirmative action could cite other examples of programs that have been discontinued by colleges in recent years. But that does not mean that no other programs have been shut down, argues Daryl E. Chubin, who has worked extensively with colleges' minority programs as director of the Center for Advancing Science and Engineering Capacity at the American Association for the Advancement of Science. "No college that has had a program like this is going to advertise that it has abandoned it," he says.

Mr. Clegg says the Center for Equal Opportunity has not sought such outcomes. "In winning the debate in the court of public opinion, we don't want to be out there trying to end scholarship programs or end summer programs," he says. "We want to be in the position of supporting programs that also support the inclusion of all racial or ethnic backgrounds."

"Bureaucratically," he says, "it is easier to persuade a school to change a program than to end it."

In some cases, colleges have even overhauled their own administrative structures to avoid the appearance of providing certain services solely to minority groups. Officials at Cornell University, for example, reported that their institution had created new positions in its central administration charged with promoting diversity in a broadly defined sense. Meanwhile, the university's undergraduate schools and colleges have been renaming their various "minority" offices as "diversity" or "multicultural" offices to reflect the full range of students served.

Mr. Chubin says that many colleges are responding to fears of litigation by giving their general counsel's office much more say over the administration of programs that serve minority students. He argues that when control of such programs shifts from educators to lawyers, "essentially, the character is changed," and the programs become much less focused on the goals for which they were established.

Shirley M. Malcom, the head of the program in education and human resources at the American Association for the Advancement of Science, says she fears that such college programs are suffering from "benign neglect" as their administrators become more concerned with avoiding accusations of racial discrimination than with "trying to build the talent pool for the country."

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Redefining 'underrepresented'

Most colleges that have opened up race-exclusive programs to other groups have done so by expanding the eligibility criteria to include white and Asian-American students who are somehow disadvantaged.

Among them, Tufts University has altered the eligibility criteria for both a summer research program and an internship to essentially define the "economically disadvantaged" as a separate minority group that is underrepresented in the sciences.

The University of Delaware's provost, Daniel Rich, says that his institution has changed a scholarship program so that, rather than being reserved for members of racial or ethnic minority groups, it now is available to students who are part of the first generation of their family to attend college; who have been through "challenging social, economic, educational, cultural, or other life circumstances"; or who are deemed financially needy based on federal financial-aid criteria. Mr. Rich reports that about 30 percent of the students nominated for scholarships last year were white, and says "the new program is better because it attracts more nominations and supports more students from more diverse backgrounds."

Other institutions, such as Saint Louis University, have opened programs to white or Asian-American students who show a commitment to promoting diversity.

In some situations where such programs already had been accepting a few white students, colleges have removed words such as "minority" from their titles, to make it absolutely clear that no one will be turned away based on race or ethnicity. Colleges are often now promoting the programs more aggressively to populations that had not been sought out in the past.

In most cases, colleges have not changed the lessons or activities offered by the programs. There are exceptions, however. The Tri-Co Summer Institute, a one-week orientation program for incoming freshmen jointly offered by Bryn Mawr, Haverford, and Swarthmore Colleges, took in its first cohort of white students last summer. It not only expanded from about 65 students to about 85, but also ended up altering the activities related to its focus: discussing issues related to race, gender, and class.

"Definitely, we have to say that the character of the program changed," says Darryl M. Smaw, Swarthmore's associate dean for multicultural affairs.

Just as in past years, the program conducted workshops in which students broke off into small, segregated groups that discussed what their particular racial or ethnic identity meant to them, and then reported back to other participants. For the first time, however, there were white students on hand to break off and share their own experiences before joining the broader discussion.

"It was really interesting to watch the white group this year. A lot of people had never talked about 'whiteness,' or what that term means to them," says Deluwara Ahmed, a Bryn Mawr sophomore of Bangladeshi descent who took part in the program two summers ago and helped run it this last time around.

Ms. Ahmed says that all of the institute's participants benefited from such discussions because "whiteness is a culture that is completely denied, when it is obvious that there are many codes that do exist in the culture that are not talked about."

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Fairness and history

Issues of race were barely discussed by the students participating in the research in science and engineering program that operated here last summer, mainly at the Busch campus of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.

Of the 20 students in the program, 10 were Hispanic, with six coming from colleges in Puerto Rico and another having been born and raised in Peru. Five were black, with two having been born in Africa and two others being the children of Jamaican immigrants. The two Asian-American participants were a young man of Korean ancestry and a young woman who had immigrated from Vietnam. Of the three white participants, one was a young man who routinely identifies himself on applications as "African-American" because his father was raised in Egypt.

Although the students differed in their views of affirmative action, most preferred not to discuss issues of race and seemed much more preoccupied with the mathematics, science, engineering, and laboratory work that the program revolved around.

"Right now, I don't consider myself a minority," said Devin D. Downing, a junior from the University of Maryland-Baltimore County who is black. "I don't want to be defined by the color of my skin."

"I am an intelligent person, a person who exhibits such-and-such characteristics," Mr. Downing said. "I don't just want to be 'a black guy.'"

Samuel C. Dokko, a Korean-American junior from the University of California at Santa Cruz, said his involvement in the program "was not about race, but being part of a program that caters to an undergraduate who wants to get research experience."

The program, established in 2001, had initially billed itself on its Web site and brochures as being for minority populations that are underrepresented in engineering and the sciences, even though it has always accepted some white and Asian-American students who seemed unlikely to get access to such research opportunities at their own colleges. In 2003, the program revised its promotional materials to make clear that it was not race-exclusive. Its overall goal remains diversifying the ranks of people seeking advanced degrees in the fields it covers.

"I have two commitments, and I try to balance them" in deciding who participates, says Jerome A. Langer, the program's co-director. The first is trying to help remedy the effects of the nation's history of discrimination. The second is maintaining "an element of fairness for the kids who are living now."

Change agents

Many of the colleges that have opened up race-exclusive programs have done so in response to letters of complaint from the Center for Equal Opportunity and a second nonprofit advocacy group, the American Civil Rights Institute. "We are making a real effort to visit the Web site of every college and university in the country over the next year" to look for evidence of race-exclusive programs, says the center's Mr. Clegg.

When colleges have refused to open their programs to any race or ethnicity, the advocacy groups have routinely filed complaints with the U.S. Education Department's Office for Civil Rights. The complaints

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accuse the colleges of violating Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination in education. Based on those complaints, as well as similar ones filed by other affirmative-action critics, the civil-rights office has investigated more than a half-dozen colleges, several of which have opened up their programs in response.

The U.S. Justice Department got involved last year, threatening in November to sue the Southern Illinois University system in response to a Center for Equal Opportunity complaint about three fellowship programs on the system's Carbondale campus. The Justice Department sent a letter to the system alleging that it was violating Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits employment discrimination, by reserving the fellowships for women or members of minority groups.

Among the colleges investigated by the Education Department's civil-rights office was Washington University in St. Louis, which had been operating two race-exclusive scholarship programs. In a letter sent to that office in October, the university said that both programs had been opened up as of the current academic year, and that, as a result, white students had received 12 of 42 scholarships offered by one, and five of 20 scholarships offered by the other.

Not every college has backed down in response to such investigations. As of last week, both Pepperdine University, in California (*The Chronicle*, January 23, 2004), and the University of Wisconsin System (*The Chronicle*, April 13, 2005) were still in negotiations with the civil-rights office over financial-aid programs reserved exclusively for needy minority students.

Officials at a few other colleges, such as Ursinus, a small college outside Philadelphia, and Kettering University, a technical institution in Flint, Mich., said they were continuing to operate race-exclusive programs unchallenged, probably because their colleges had remained below the advocacy groups' radar screens. Programs that are financed and administered solely by outside entities, such as corporations and philanthropies, also have been left alone.

Many of the colleges that are opening up such programs say they are doing so in response to the Supreme Court's 2003 rulings in two cases involving the use of race-conscious admissions policies by the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Those rulings held that colleges could consider race in admissions, but they must treat applicants as individuals, and may not accept or reject them based solely on race (*The Chronicle*, July 4, 2003).

In a report issued last June, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund argued that the Supreme Court's rulings "did not address, much less prohibit, considerations of race outside the admissions context" (*The Chronicle*, June 23, 2005). But most colleges have concluded that changing the eligibility criteria for any race-exclusive program is the prudent course, and some philanthropies, such as the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and federal agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health, have decided to cease providing financial support to college programs with race-exclusive eligibility criteria (*The Chronicle*, March 11, 2005).

Mr. Clegg says that well over 100 of the colleges contacted by his organization have voluntarily abandoned race restrictions, and only a handful have refused to do so. He declines to name the colleges that have backed down, however, saying, "It makes it easier to persuade the schools if they know we are not going to do a little victory dance."

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5 programs that opened their doors to all races

Across the nation, higher-education programs restricted to certain minority groups have now opened their doors to students of any race or ethnicity. Following are five colleges or agencies that changed their programs' eligibility criteria, and summaries of the results:

California Institute of Technology

Caltech operates a three-day campus-visit program, called GradPreview@Caltech, for college seniors who, because of their backgrounds, have had little opportunity to learn of that institution's graduate offerings. The program had been restricted to black, Hispanic, and American Indian students until 2004, when it was opened to all racial and ethnic groups. Despite the change in eligibility criteria, the number of student participants has remained capped at 30 because Caltech says it cannot afford to cover the travel, hotel, and meal costs of more. Caltech officials will not specify how many white students or how many Asian-American students have participated in recent years, saying that to do so would jeopardize the students' right to privacy. But, officials say, both groups combined accounted for three of the 24 participants in the fall of 2004 and two of last fall's 28 participants. The basic activities offered by the program remain the same, with students meeting professors, touring laboratories, and learning how to navigate the admissions process. "We have not lost the flavor of the program," says Erica N. O'Neal, Caltech's assistant vice president for student affairs.

Carnegie Mellon University

Carnegie Mellon had been operating a Summer Academy for Minority Scholars to help black and Hispanic high-school students position themselves to pursue a degree in science or engineering at top colleges. In 2004 Carnegie renamed the program the Summer Academy for Mathematics and Science and opened it to students of any race or ethnicity, while retaining the goal of using it to promote diversity. The program's enrollment remained capped at 100. At last summer's camp, the first to operate under the new criteria, about 15 percent of the students were either white or Asian-American. William F. Elliott, the university's vice president for enrollment, says the program remains committed to diversifying the ranks of those entering science or engineering, but "all kids who need a shot in order to expand this pipeline are not necessarily a racial minority."

Harvard University

In an effort to diversify its enrollment, the Harvard Business School operates the Summer Venture in Management Program, which offers about 80 college juniors from populations that are underrepresented in business an opportunity to spend a week working with the school's faculty. As of the summer of 2003, the program was restricted to black, Hispanic, and American Indian students. Since then, its eligibility criteria have been broadened to include students who are the first members of their families to attend college, are from families with little or no business education or experience, or are from colleges whose graduates do not typically attend top-tier urban universities (*The Chronicle*, February 18, 2004). While the program has not expanded, the list of racial or ethnic groups served by it has. As of last summer, 8 percent of its participants were Asian-Americans, 4 percent were white, and 1 percent were classified as "other." A spokesman for the business school, David R. Lampe, says, "Our feeling is that we have retained the original objective, which is to attract people who would traditionally not attend business schools, and to attract the best students that we can."

Saint Louis University

In 2004, under pressure from the U.S. Education Department's Office for Civil Rights, administrators at Saint Louis University disbanded a program that had annually awarded 30 scholarships of \$11,000 a year solely to black students. They replaced it with a larger program that awards scholarships of \$8,000 per year to students of any race or ethnicity who demonstrate leadership potential and show a commitment to

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promoting the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision of a diverse but unified nation. John M. Baworowsky, the university's vice president for enrollment and academic services, says the program's administrators also consider whether applicants will help make the campus more diverse. Of the 77 sophomores who were selected for such scholarships as freshmen, one is American Indian, 16 are Asian-American, 32 are black, 10 are Hispanic, and 18 are white. Of the 159 members of the current freshman class who received scholarships, two are Alaska Natives, 19 are Asian-American, 57 are black, 29 are Hispanic, 45 are white, and seven are classified as "other." Mr. Baworowsky says the new scholarship program "has helped make our student body more national," taking in students from California, Hawaii, Texas, and other states that generally have not been represented in the student body. The share of the university's students coming from the St. Louis metropolitan area has dropped from about 60 percent to about 40 percent. For next year, the university plans to cap the number of new scholarships at 100 but increase the awards to \$13,000 each.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

From 1985 to 2004, Wisconsin's Minority Precollege Scholarship Program provided money for minority students in grades six through 12 to attend precollege courses at campuses across the state. Under pressure from the federal Office for Civil Rights, the State Department of Public Instruction altered the eligibility criteria to eliminate any consideration of ethnicity or race, and instead limited participation to students whose low family incomes qualified them for federal school-lunch subsidies. The overall size of the program remained the same. Of the 1,366 students who took part last summer, 65, or just under 5 percent, were white. Kevin Ingram, who directs the state agency's Educational Opportunity Programs, says that as a result of the changed eligibility criteria, the precollege program now serves "more kids who are more needy" and no longer enrolls young people from financially well-off families "who are participating just because they are minority students."

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Book by book, college libraries pool their collected wisdom

BY ERIC WILLS

Until recently, whenever a university press published a monograph, Mark R. Watson felt compelled to buy it. It seemed logical that an academic library should support research published by other universities, says Mr. Watson, associate librarian for collections and access at the University of Oregon.

It was an expensive habit in recent years, with some monographs costing more than \$100 and the university annually purchasing more than 20,000 of them. Even so, he explains, "in the past it would be real easy to say, 'University press, got to buy it.'"

Now, Mr. Watson says, when a monograph is published, he checks a catalog containing the combined holdings of 35 college libraries in Washington State and Oregon, including his own. All of them belong to a consortium called the Orbis Cascade Alliance.

If he finds that other colleges already have purchased the work, he may look for a book that no one else holds. For example, rather than add an eighth copy of a particular monograph to the consortium's catalog last year, he bought its first copy of Deon Meyer's novel *Dead at Day-break* (Little Brown, 2005). Because members of the consortium can share books with ease, he knows that students and faculty members who need the monograph can get it. And by buying something unique, he not only expands his library's collection but adds to the consortium's as well.

Such strategic purchasing is one way in which Orbis Cascade pursues what librarians call "collaborative collection development," an important tool in this era of tight budgets. To stretch their limited resources, alliance members also negotiate bulk deals on electronic resources such as journals and indexes.

"Participating libraries are able to use collection funding in a more efficient way," says John F. Helmer, the consortium's executive director. "The huge benefit is the increase in access to materials an institution can have at its fingertips."

Collaborative collection development, an idea born more than a century ago and pursued by libraries for decades, is undergoing a technology-aided renaissance. In the old days of interlibrary loans, for instance, librarians had to search for citations, taking time that cost money. Today it takes just a few seconds for students to find what they need in a catalog and make their requests.

In its scope and its diversity, Orbis Cascade is unusual among groups of colleges that collaboratively buy and share books. It was created in 2002, when a consortium of Oregon institutions merged with a counterpart in Washington. Now it comprises colleges as distant as 500 miles apart, on both sides of the Cascade Range. Its members include large state universities, private liberal-arts institutions, and community colleges.

Even so, it has been successful in pursuing its collaborative mission, says Camila Alire, dean of library services at the University of New Mexico and president of the Association of College and Research Libraries.

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To join Orbis Cascade, a college must pay a \$30,000 membership fee and make annual contributions, which are based largely on full-time enrollment. Fees this year ranged from about \$60,000 for the University of Washington to about \$7,800 for Marylhurst University.

But the returns are significant, particularly for smaller colleges. Lane Community College, which joined the consortium last year, owns just 65,000 titles. With a few clicks, though, a student can get access to about 27 million additional titles in Summit, the alliance's catalog. Mr. Helmer estimates that Lane and other colleges that have recently joined Orbis Cascade instantly gain access to electronic resources worth \$8-million.

"Our lives here would be impoverished without Summit," says Alexander Rolfe, a reference librarian at George Fox University, a small Quaker college in the consortium. "We benefit disproportionately."

The small-college members make their own contributions. George Fox, for example, has a large collection of Quaker materials not held by other members. And the community colleges carry titles outside the traditional liberal-arts or research curriculum — maybe a manual on how to fix your 1968 Camaro, says Oregon's Mr. Watson.

Orbis Cascade has developed a mathematical formula to ensure that members borrow and loan a relatively equal number of materials. If a number of colleges own a requested book, the smallest institution usually makes the loan. That way larger colleges, with more extensive collections, are not forced to fill an inordinate share of orders. As a result, the University of Oregon, despite having one of the largest collections in the alliance, borrows more materials than it lends.

The consortium relies heavily on its courier service. In 2004 a total of 305,000 books were shuttled among member institutions. Books are picked up daily, by van or car, from each library and usually delivered within 48 hours.

With its infrastructure in place, Orbis Cascade hopes to expand its collaborative efforts this year. Its system for purchasing books is still largely informal. Members can check usage statistics for books in the unified catalog or see what books students have requested that the consortium does not own. Each college then makes an independent decision about what to purchase.

Orbis Cascade is taking some of its cues from OhioLINK, a group of 85 college libraries in Ohio that recently purchased software called WorldCat from the Online Computer Library Center, a nonprofit group. The software enables the Ohio consortium to analyze its members' combined holdings and make better purchasing decisions.

OhioLINK also negotiated a contract for all its members with a book vendor, Yankee Book Peddler Library Services. When a librarian at a member college logs on to make a purchase, recent orders made by other members appear. There is no need to wait for an item to be listed in the unified catalog to see if another college has purchased it. At the end of each year, Yankee compiles a list of everything it offered that the consortium did not buy. Libraries can then see what gaps exist in the joint collection and decide whether to fill them.

For Orbis Cascade to advance its collaborative mission, says Deborah A. Carver, Oregon's librarian, members must change their outlook. "It requires a mind-set that we have one very large library instead of separate campus libraries that cooperate," she says. "We still build our collections from a local perspective, and I'm not sure that's really necessary when the delivery mechanisms are so efficient."

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Mr. Helmer, Orbis Cascade's executive director, says member libraries retain some autonomy. Those that join the alliance agree to continue building their core collections to support their academic missions, and to use the consortium to add depth. There are no plans to impose strict purchasing guidelines, Mr. Helmer says.

Encouragement comes from accrediting bodies and other organizations. The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, which accredits almost all of Orbis Cascade's members, is revising its standards on libraries to give credit to those that belong to a consortium and thereby gain access to additional materials. And the Association of Research Libraries, which publishes data on the number of volumes in library collections, is experimenting with statistics that would count the collective holdings to which an institution can gain access through a consortium.

Orbis Cascade's other collaborative plans include the construction of a shared storage facility. Because JSTOR, an online archive of scholarly journals, provides access to material dating from as far back as the 19th century, hard copies of those journals are now redundant. The alliance plans to store a few good copies jointly owned by all the members in the shared facility. Additional hard copies could be donated to other libraries or discarded, freeing up valuable shelf space.

The alliance also hopes to form a partnership with the Northwest Academic Computing Consortium, which comprises 30 colleges in five Northwestern states and Alaska, to digitize its print collections. Sharing materials would become easier and cheaper. "All of our efforts are pointed in directions that affect cooperative collection development," says Mr. Helmer.

Ms. Carver agrees: "It's a way for state like Oregon, which has seen diminished support for higher education, to extend its resources as much as possible."

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Penn's cost-saving efforts run hot and cold

BY LAWRENCE BIEMILLER

Philadelphia

The University of Pennsylvania saves more than \$5-million a year in energy costs by combining aggressive monitoring of electric usage with innovative operating procedures — and with tried-and-true practices like turning down thermostats and staying on top of maintenance.

The university enrolls more than 20,000 students and has over 150 buildings on its campus, in West Philadelphia. It buys about 400 million kilowatt-hours of electricity each year from the local utility, PECO Energy Company, a division of Exelon Corporation. The university's contract with PECO stipulates that in cooler months, no matter how little power Penn consumes, it gets billed for at least 80 percent of whatever its summer peak usage is. So the facilities-services office goes to great lengths to manage the campus electric load on hot days. "We're looking for anything and everything to keep costs down," says Thomas E. Truesdale, the university's air-conditioning foreman.

The hope is to keep the summer peak in the neighborhood of 60,000 kilowatts — a goal that is feasible only because of sophisticated controls installed all over the campus. The vigil is kept at a big, semicircular desk in the university's Operations Command Center, where a giant overhead monitor can display the real-time power usage as well as the indoor temperature in any one of thousands of campus locations. The command center's operator can control every air handler and valve in the system.

While some older structures still have window units or single-building systems, most campus buildings are connected to a campuswide chilled-water loop. The loop supplies cold water to buildings; air-handling units in the buildings blow air across metal coils filled with the 42-degree water before routing the cooled air throughout the buildings. The summer setting for thermostats is 78 degrees.

Electricity powers not only the fans in the buildings, but also 600-horsepower pumps that circulate the chilled water around the campus — the pipes in the loop hold a total of about six million gallons — and the chiller units that keep the water cold. The university has two main chiller plants, one hidden in a parking garage and the other sandwiched between a freeway exit and a baseball field. The latter plant is the larger, with four 5,000-ton chiller units and eight cooling towers that disperse heat by blowing outside air through curtains of falling water. (The cooling capacity of large air-conditioning systems is measured in tons, each equivalent to 12,000 BTU's.)

The chiller units rely on an environmentally friendly Freon called R134a to remove heat from the water in the loop and transfer it to water destined for the cooling towers. But the units' compressors and pumps are heavy users of electricity, as are the fans in the towers. The smaller of the two chiller plants includes an unusual money-saving feature: a pair of room-size ice tanks. At night, when electric use is lowest, three chiller units in the plant fill the tanks with stalactites and stalagmites of ice; during the day, when rates are high, water for the loop can be run through the ice tanks instead of being cooled by a chiller unit. A third chiller plant, mothballed since the largest plant was completed, is being brought back into service to provide additional cooling capacity for three new buildings.

On hot days, when usage closes in on 60,000 kilowatts, the command-center operator can let the temperature of the chilled-water loop rise as high as 50 degrees, so the chillers don't have to work as hard. The operator can "burn ice" in the two tanks and start a two-megawatt diesel generator that the

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university bought three years ago. He can also cycle off some air-handling units for half an hour at a time and send out a campuswide alert asking people to turn off unnecessary lights and equipment.

In extraordinary situations, the provost can send faculty and staff members home for the afternoon. In 2001, after the opening of the large chiller plant gave the facilities staff the flexibility it needed to begin its assault on the electric bills, overall electric use dropped by 5 percent and peak demand by 15 percent.

The university also buys steam, for heating and for appliances like autoclaves, from a plant just across the Schuylkill River that is operated by Trigen-Philadelphia Energy Corporation. Lowering winter temperatures to 68 degrees in campus buildings has helped save on steam costs, as has replacing some equipment in the steam-distribution system. But so far the university has been able to wring less in savings out of the steam system. "We have much more flexibility with chilled water because we generate it," says Michael J. Coleman, executive director of operations.

Routine maintenance is important to keeping costs down. The tubes in the chiller units that transfer heat from the loop water to the Freon are cleaned every winter, to help the units operate efficiently. And filters that clean the water used in the cooling towers are cleaned every few weeks, especially when nearby demolition and construction increase the amount of airborne dirt in the neighborhood. "We've really pinched the way we operate," says Mr. Coleman.

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New York moves to limit colleges that seek profit

By KAREN W. ARENSON

The New York State Board of Regents has imposed a moratorium on new commercial colleges in the state, in the face of explosive growth in their enrollments and increasing reports of problems.

The freeze comes as state education officials, the governor and lawmakers are examining ways to tighten regulations or financing of this fast-growing sector of higher education, which is consuming more than \$100 million in state aid.

This week, Gov. George E. Pataki proposed that the state withhold financial aid from college students who had not graduated from high school; many of them attend profit-making schools.

"This is a cottage industry that needs to be better regulated, and more attention must be paid to it," said Merryl H. Tisch, a regent.

New York is not alone in trying to clamp down. Commercial schools, which often advertise heavily, promising quick career training to poorly educated students, are booming around the country. Increasingly, they are drawing the attention of federal and state law enforcement officials.

Corinthian Colleges Inc. disclosed in November that the attorney general in Florida was investigating sales practices at some of its campuses there. Decker College in Kentucky, where William F. Weld, a candidate for governor in New York, was chief executive, went bankrupt in the fall after federal agents raided the campus and the federal government cut off its student aid.

California recently charged the Brooks Institute of Photography with misleading recruitment practices and made correcting the problems a condition of keeping its license. Brooks is contesting the action.

Robyn C. Smith, a deputy attorney general in California, said the commercial schools were "a current focus" for her office. She said the number of cases it reviewed in the past year had risen.

New York has also been investigating five commercial colleges and has taken actions against several.

"It is probably very good that the Regents are doing what they are doing," said David W. Breneman, the dean of the education school at the University of Virginia and an expert on profit-making higher education. "In my experience in this arena, the New York Regents are probably the toughest group the proprietaries face in any state."

The State Education Department recently ordered the Interboro Institute, based in New York City, to halve the number of new students it enrolls in the coming year. The department acted after finding that the commercial college, one of the fastest-growing in the state, was cheating in certifying student eligibility for aid and was not providing enough academic support for its students.

The department is also trying to close Taylor Business Institute, also in New York City, saying it has made "unsatisfactory movement" to improve academic quality. Donald Kinsella, a lawyer representing Taylor, said it had filed an appeal.

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Just this week, the New York State comptroller's office released an audit showing that nearly a fifth of the students it had scrutinized at the ASA Institute of Business and Computer Technology in New York City were accepted solely on the basis of their own notarized statements that they had graduated from high schools in other countries but had difficulties getting their records. The auditors found that some of the students who claimed to be high school graduates were not.

Alex Shchegol, ASA's president, said his school stopped using affidavits after receiving the audit results. "We are trying very hard to help people to change their lives," he said. "We cannot accept students who will not benefit from instruction."

The comptroller's office, which directed the school to repay more than \$500,000 in state aid, called on the Education Department to re-evaluate the use of affidavits.

There are 41 commercial degree-granting colleges in New York and about 400 commercial career schools that do not grant degrees. Many charge tuition of about \$9,000, the amount that can be covered by federal and state financial aid grants.

The flow of public money to such schools is one reason they are drawing scrutiny. A recurring question is whether some schools are enrolling students who have little hope of graduating simply to capture the financial aid. In New York, their students drew \$136 million in state tuition assistance grants in 2003-4 - 17 percent of the those grants - even though they accounted for about 7 percent of the undergraduates.

State officials said that the moratorium on approving new colleges, enacted last week, could last months and lead to tougher regulations. Officials said that six schools have applications pending that would be frozen by the moratorium, but declined to name them. The University of Phoenix, the industry giant, has been trying for years to enter New York.

Saul B. Cohen, a regent, said he would press to stiffen the regulations on a number of fronts. He wants the schools to raise admissions requirements and use outside testing companies to conduct the testing used for financial aid eligibility. He said he also wanted the state to impose penalties more severe than "an admonition" for school practices like changing students' test answers to make them eligible for financial aid.

And he called for forcing commercial schools to seek certification from other accrediting bodies, like the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, rather than from the Regents themselves. "Our process is not as thorough and tough as Middle States accreditation," he said, noting that the best commercial schools have outside accreditation now.

A critical issue, he said, is that the Education Department lacks the staff and money to carry out the kind of expanded oversight he seeks.

The department started trying to monitor the commercial colleges more closely about three years ago, and watches for signals like rapid expansion to flag potential problems. Last summer, it uncovered deceptions at Interboro when it sent undercover agents to the school, a technique it said it planned to use at other schools as well.

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Johanna Duncan-Poitier, deputy education commissioner for higher education and the professions in New York, said the department had encouraged the review of regulatory practices because the market was evolving. She said it would "probably be May" before the department made recommendations to the Regents, the 16-member panel elected by the State Legislature to oversee all education in New York.

The department faces pressure not only from the Regents, but from state lawmakers.

Senator Kenneth P. LaValle, a Long Island Republican and chairman of the Senate's Higher Education Committee, and Assemblyman Richard L. Brodsky, a Westchester County Democrat, say tougher oversight is necessary. "Whenever there is a lot of cash on the table, there will be people in the marketplace who will try and take advantage of the system for their own economic benefit," Senator LaValle said.

Another push this week came from Mr. Pataki, who proposed withholding financial aid from college students who had not graduated from high school. Students would become eligible for state aid after earning 24 college credits. The schools would be expected to provide aid themselves until the students became eligible. Then they would be repaid.

Not everyone is certain that commercial higher education needs broad fixing. Assemblyman Ron Canestrari, a Democrat from the Albany area who is chairman of the Assembly's Higher Education Committee, said, "If there are some problems, we should not leap to the conclusion that there are problems throughout the sector, because I don't believe there are."

Some commercial school leaders said that they welcomed the closer look at their institutions, but that it should not stop with the for-profit sector.

Bruce Leftwich, vice president for government relations at the Career College Association, an industry trade group based in Washington, said his group believed that if there are any institutions "defrauding the system, they should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law."

But, he said, "there is fraud and abuse in all sectors of higher education." He added, "If states are looking at proprietary schools and colleges, they should also be looking at all institutions."

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N.Y. reins in for-profit colleges

New York State has put a moratorium on the establishment of new programs by for-profit colleges while officials examine perceived abuses and the state's existing policies to combat them. The step is the latest in a string of actions suggesting that states and other regulators are ratcheting up their scrutiny of, and turning up the heat on, commercial colleges.

The decision by the New York State Board of Regents, which oversees education and accredits institutions to operate in the state, came at the regents' meeting this month during a discussion about a series of problems involving some of the 41 career colleges certified in New York. Last month, state officials imposed enrollment limits on Interboro Institute, which is under state investigation for its admissions practices. In his budget plan this month, Gov. George F. Pataki proposed a set of changes in the state's need-based financial aid program aimed at restricting for-profit colleges from receiving aid for students with insufficient academic preparation.

And last fall, the Queens district attorney charged two former business officers with embezzling more than \$800,000 from the Drake Business Schools, which closed in June 2004 amid of sea of regulatory and financial struggles.

(For-profit higher education has also been in the New York consciousness for another reason: the campaign of the state's Republican candidate for governor, William F. Weld, is being damaged by the travails of Decker College, a shuttered for-profit institution in Kentucky that Weld managed for a time. Kentucky officials have charged the college with "deceptive practices.")

Given the plethora of problems, the regents accepted a staff recommendation to freeze all new applications from for-profit colleges, deciding that "rather than continue to expand these programs, we ought to just plant ourselves in a way that we can assess truly what's going on," said Meryll H. Tisch, a regent. Tisch said the regents would await a review by the New York State Department of Education on proprietary colleges, to determine whether "these problems are widespread, or are these isolated incidents?"

New York certifies 41 for-profit colleges to offer degrees in the state, and in the fall of 2004, they enrolled nearly 50,000 students, according to the state education department. Students at the institutions receive more than \$100 million in funds from the state's Tuition Assistance Program — "not small change," said Saul B. Cohen, another regent.

Tisch said the career colleges are important to "thousands of people in this city who graduate high school and who for one reason or another don't go on to community colleges," and to "immigrants who need to have the ability to come to this city and get prepared for jobs."

"But we have to make sure that the public is protected and our standards are being upheld. We don't want this to become so scandal-ridden that people will become afraid to use these institutions. We owe it to the public to really evaluate what's going on in the field, so we can assure consumers that we are monitoring these institutions."

Cohen, president emeritus of the City University of New York's Queens College, agrees that "we have not paid adequate attention" to the 41 degree granting for-profit institutions in the state — and that doesn't

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even consider the hundreds of other commercial institutions that do not offer degrees. The Education Department is investigating several other institutions besides Interboro, Cohen said, but its small staff cannot possibly keep tabs on the institutions on a case by case basis.

So the state needs, he said, to ask a “much broader question, which is how do we go about monitoring colleges of that type?”

The New York action is the latest sign of what could be perceived as a shift in the wind for the for-profit higher education sector. Commercial colleges, as a group, have gained significant ground in the marketplace and cemented their reputation as a legitimate alternative, particularly for adult students, bringing them enhanced political support in Washington and boosting their profits on Wall Street.

But in the last year or so, state and federal regulators have examined a growing number of instances of alleged wrongdoing by career colleges. Career Education Corp., for example, has been the subject of a brutal “60 Minutes” episode and the target of investigations in multiple states, but it is not alone in facing closer regulatory examination.

Although officials of the colleges are quick to note that many of the investigations and inquiries have ended with no findings of wrongdoing — “more smoke than fire,” as one of them put it — the stepped-up scrutiny clearly concerns them.

Sharon Thomas Parrott is senior vice president for government and regulatory affairs and chief compliance officer at DeVry Inc., which operates the DeVry Institute of Technology in Long Island City, N.Y., and a Keller Graduate School of Management campus in Manhattan. New York is “one of the toughest states to operate in” because its standards are “more like an accrediting body than a licensing body.” State officials are asking “good questions,” she said about whether the problems they are apparently seeing with Interboro and other local institutions are “an isolated incident” or if there is “something in the way they regulate that causes or provides opportunity for this kind of thing.”

As for the larger political and regulatory climate, “there is always questioning about for-profit institutions by the larger educational industry, because there’s this not complete understanding about how one reconciles profit and education,” Parrott said. It’s too early to know, she added, whether this latest “flurry of activity” in New York and elsewhere will have an impact on for-profit colleges nationally.

— Doug Lederman

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Senators promote graduation rewards

Plan sponsors want rates tied to state-awarded incentives

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CLEVELAND - State lawmakers are looking at a plan to offer more state money to colleges based on how many students graduate.

It's another idea to make Ohio more competitive in today's economy, say its sponsors, state Sens. Randy Gardner of Bowling Green and Joy Padgett of Coshocton, both Republicans.

The details have yet to be worked out, but the two senators introduced the plan recently to the Inter-University Council of Ohio, a group of college presidents.

"Because of our long history of being a manufacturing state, there hasn't been much incentive to have a college degree," Gardner said. "But with the economy we're in now, we need more students and we need more graduates right now."

Roderick Chu, chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents, said the incentive money is a good idea. Universities would have to do more to help students who are destined to drop out, he said.

"Higher education has been sort of a sorting and filtering system, making sure only the best and brightest get through," Chu said. "The problem right now in the global economy is that is not the job we need done anymore."

House Speaker Jon Husted announced a plan last week to give tax breaks to students who earn degrees in math, science or engineering. But Ohio needs more graduates in all areas, Chu said.

The state funding system is based mostly on enrollment and not academic performance.

In the state budget last year, lawmakers capped tuition increases while the growth of state funding was slowed.

Padgett and Gardner see their plan as a way to get the state's colleges to help themselves.

"You don't just give the dollars anymore without expecting a return on that investment," said Padgett, chairwoman of the Senate Education Committee.

No campus would receive less money than it currently gets, but each would have to show performance gains to get the incentive.

Not every school enrolls comparable student bodies.

For example, Miami University is selective about enrollment and had an 80 percent graduation rate in 2003, the most recent figure available. Cleveland State University, which accepts more at-risk students, had a 27 percent graduation rate in the same year.

"Miami has always been very selective about students that they have taken in," said Cleveland State President Michael Schwartz. "Well, we haven't been. This has been a school of opportunity - come one, come all."

Schwartz cautioned against any plan driven by higher graduation figures.

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"If you're going to reward high graduation rates, you better be sure the standards that students have to reach are in order," he said. "If you start lowering standards to increase graduation rates, then what have you gained?"

The Higher Education Funding Study Council, a group of lawmakers, regents members and college representatives, has to decide by spring what to do with \$30 million set aside for higher education next year. The group is considering Gardner's and Padgett's ideas.

But Gardner said he hopes his proposal leads lawmakers to come up with new ideas for funding higher education long-term, starting with the next two-year budget beginning next year.

"The first priority is to make higher education a higher priority for families, for students and the state Legislature," Gardner said.

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In Oregon, colleges hope to care for themselves

BY JOHN L. PULLEY

A few years after taking on the management of Linfield College's health-care plan, Carl B. Vance was losing the battle. Pre-miums that had increased modestly one year rose wildly the next. Health-care providers were leaving the state, and Blue Cross discontinued a popular plan that Linfield had offered to its workers. Colleagues at other Oregon colleges told him that they were feeling defeated, too.

"It made planning for the continuity of health care very difficult," says Mr. Vance, Linfield's vice president for finance and administration since 1996. "Both the human-resources directors and the colleges' chief financial officers were very frustrated with the state of health care and the erratic pricing."

The time had come, decided the administrators of seven private colleges in the state, to try a form of group therapy. It was 2001, and over the next two years those administrators would band together, drop their health-plan providers, and create a consortium to self-insure their employees.

Cutting out the middlemen seemed like a no-brainer. A consortium would provide pooled resources, shared risks, greater institutional control, and collective buying power. Making it happen wouldn't be easy, though. A tangle of legal, regulatory, financial, and institutional concerns had to be overcome before the collective could cover so much as a paper cut.

Those challenges might explain why such consortia are rare in American higher education. There are similar trusts in Tennessee and Florida. Experts predict that financial pressures will nonetheless push more institutions to attempt the formation of health-insurance trusts. If the Oregon experience is a reliable guide, those institutions are in for a slog.

"It's been a difficult and complicated start-up project," Mr. Vance says, "far more complex than any of the participants had envisioned."

Forming a collective of colleges to self-insure the workers at member institutions goes against a major higher-education business trend of the past few decades: outsourcing. That popular practice involves contracting with outside firms to provide food service, personnel systems, groundskeeping, vehicle maintenance, and other services. In theory, outside firms can provide those functions more efficiently and at less cost than institutions can — and still turn a profit.

By *insourcing* health care, consortia bet that they can save money. Members of the would-be consortium in Oregon decided to create a legal entity known as a multiple-employer welfare arrangement. They considered inviting institutions in Washington State and California to join the group, but laws governing the formation of MEWA's in those states were incompatible with Oregon's regulations. (The Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 provides broad federal oversight of self-insured trusts, including MEWA's, but states impose a range of additional, often conflicting, regulations.) A group of institutions in Washington State subsequently tried to form its own trust, but that effort failed.

About a dozen members of the Oregon Independent Colleges Association showed initial interest in forming the trust, but several bailed out. Most of those were smaller institutions — Marylhurst University, Northwest Christian College, Pacific Northwest College of Art, Warner Pacific College, and Western

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Seminary. For the most part, they couldn't afford the type of coverage that the majority of members wanted. The University of Portland withdrew in order to retain a popular insurance plan managed by Kaiser Permanente.

The remaining seven institutions — George Fox, Pacific, and Willamette Universities, and Lewis and Clark, Linfield, Reed, and Western States Chiropractic Colleges — formed the Oregon Independent Colleges Employee Benefits Trust.

State officials reviewed the trust's contracts, plan documents, marketing, and compliance with all statutory benefits required by state law (Oregon, for example, limits to \$15 the co-pay that can be charged for gynecological examinations). A financial review examined the trust's solvency, its method for setting rates, and its requests for proposals for outside vendors. The trust had to hire people or organizations to provide certain services, including that of general counsel, auditor, accountant, and pharmacy-benefit manager.

The onerous review process burned through \$100,000 in start-up grants awarded to the trust by a pair of regional foundations.

The rigor of a state approval process isn't the only challenge for fledgling trusts. "The biggest challenge for institutions," says Rico A. Bocala, an executive vice president and leader of the health-and-welfare practice at USI North-west, an insurance-brokerage firm, "is relinquishing complete authority of their [health-care] programs and really working as part of a group."

Members of a trust have to make many collective decisions, including the protocol for making those choices. Should each institution have an equal say in making decisions, for example, or should colleges with more employees in the group plan have more clout? The Oregon trust opted for the more democratic approach, creating a Board of Trustees with one representative per institution.

Members must also make decisions about potentially controversial topics, such as whether a plan will pay for birth control. The Oregon trust decided to allow institutions to customize that aspect of the health plan. There were confidentiality issues to be sorted out, as well. "When trustees are meeting, how much do they need or want to know about particular cases?" asks Gary Andeen, executive director of the Oregon Independent Colleges Association. The trust hired USI, which had worked with several of the institutions, to shepherd it through the start-up phase and, later, to manage the trust.

"There is a lot of money moving around, and a lot of peoples' lives are at stake," says Mr. Andeen. "You have to have someone in the middle of this who has a lot of credibility with everybody involved."

The broker negotiated with health-care providers to create four networks of doctors. The start of operations also required participating institutions to contribute a total of \$1.25-million in reserve funds before the first premium was collected.

The consortium developed a health-care plan with preliminary costs, determined by an actuary, that all members accepted. The group received bids from companies called reinsurers that contract to cover claims in excess of \$125,000. Members went back to their campuses and presented the plan to their trustees for approval. Institutions also held campus information sessions for employees, who would

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ultimately approve or reject the consortium during institutions' open-enrollment periods. Although workers were generally supportive of the plan, they "were keenly concerned about the details," including whether they would have to change doctors, Mr. Vance says.

On May 1, 2003, two years after taking the first steps to create a self-insured trust, the Oregon consortium opened for business. The health-plan premium was comparable to or less than those that member institutions had been charged a year earlier, and the coverage was as good or better, officials say. The percentage of the monthly premium (about \$500 per person covered by the plan) paid by institutions on behalf of employees varies widely among the trust's members.

The trust needed 1,200 of 2,900 eligible employees of the seven colleges to enroll if the plan was to succeed. Almost 1,700 signed up, a number that has dropped slightly since then. To improve the trust's chances of survival, the founding institutions agreed to maintain their membership for five years.

There have been misfires. The trust underpriced its plan in the first year, when it expected to pay claims of \$9.7-million. Total claims of \$11.2-million required a year-end contribution from each institution and a 20-percent premium increase in the plan's second year. It was precisely the type of one-year spike that members had hoped to avoid.

The trust attributes those miscues to growing pains.

"Expecting to lower costs or to work smoothly from the get-go is asking a lot," says the trust's general counsel, Jeffrey G. Robertson, a lawyer with the firm of Bullivant Houser Bailey.

Nonetheless, the trust is doing well, he says. It is collecting annual premiums of more than \$13-million in the current plan year and disbursing that money to pay members' claims and to cover operating costs. The trust's expense ratio (the percentage of revenue used for operational costs) hovers around 11 percent, compared to ratios of 14 to 25 percent for insurance companies operating in Oregon, Mr. Robertson says. Claims are paid within 30 days, and reserve funds are solid, he says. The trust's premiums rose 12 percent in its third year.

The general counsel notes that customers are generally satisfied: "We have yet to have even the hint of someone suing us for what they feel is an unreasonable determination."

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State Digest: A proposal to toughen admission standards at Ohio Universities, and other news from the states

By KARIN FISCHER

TOUGHER STANDARDS: A high-school diploma would no longer be enough to gain admission to one of **Ohio's** four-year universities, if the Ohio General Assembly adopts rigorous standards proposed by Gov. Bob Taft, a Republican. In his State of the State address, Governor Taft laid out a tough new curriculum that would be a prerequisite for acceptance into a four-year institution, beginning with students now in the seventh grade. Most postsecondary remedial course offerings would be limited to less-expensive two-year colleges. Forty percent of Ohio college students currently require remedial course work, at a cost of \$29-million annually.

TAX CREDIT: Parents of **Illinois** college students would get a \$1,000 tuition tax credit under a proposal announced by Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich. The governor, a Democrat, included the plan, which would be open to families of in-state college freshmen or sophomores who earn a B average or better, in his budget proposal. An estimated 150,000 families would be eligible for the tax credit, at a cost of \$90-million. Critics question how the governor plans to pay for the new credit.

STIPEND CHANGES: Just one year after **Colorado** overhauled the way it supports public colleges, the chairwoman of the State Senate's Education Committee has called for reform, saying the current system of giving each full-time undergraduate a \$2,400 stipend fails to take into account the variation in costs between institutions (*The Chronicle*, July 15, 2005). State Sen. Sue Windels, a Democrat, is drafting a bill that would base the voucher amount on the actual cost of educating a student at each college. Supporters of Colorado's program, the first in the nation to provide a substantial share of public funds for higher education directly to students, say the proposed changes would merely increase state support at some colleges at the expense of others.

COMMISSIONER RESIGNS: The head of the **Colorado** Commission on Higher Education has announced he will step down in March to concentrate on a run for Congress. Gov. Bill Owens appointed Richard F. O'Donnell, who was previously his top policy adviser, to the position two years ago. Governor Owens, a Republican, has said he will announce Mr. O'Donnell's successor in a few weeks.

MERIT SCHOLARSHIP: Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm of **Michigan** has called for opening the state's merit-scholarship program to students who do not score well on high-school standardized tests but earn good grades in college. Governor Granholm, a Democrat, would allow students whose academic careers jump-start in college to receive the \$4,000 scholarships if they complete two years of college with a 2.5 grade-point average. The merit award is now available only to students who perform well on a statewide standardized test in high school.

LOAN-AGENCY SALE: **Missouri's** Republican governor, Matt Blunt, has proposed selling the state's student-loan agency and using the proceeds for university building projects. The plan, first reported by *The Kansas City Star*, would put the Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority, a \$5-billion loan program, up for public bid. Estimates suggest the sale of the agency could net \$375-million to \$425-million. The money would be used for college scholarships, endowed professorships, and new buildings on public-university campuses.

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ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS: Republican lawmakers in **Virginia** are pressing to make it the only state in the country to bar illegal immigrants from attending public colleges. The measure is one of 40 anti-immigrant bills introduced by legislators. Another proposal would prevent illegal immigrants who graduate from Virginia high schools from paying in-state tuition rates at public colleges.

STUDENT AID: Low-income junior-high-school students who promise to avoid drugs, tobacco, and crime could get help paying for college, according to a plan by Democrats in the **Iowa** General Assembly. Under the proposal, the state would pay the difference after the student, who also has to maintain a C average, has secured all available loans and financial aid. A similar program in Indiana pays an average benefit of \$1,500 for each eligible graduating senior. In Iowa 12,000 seventh- and eighth-grade students would qualify to make the pledge.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: **North Carolina's** state auditor says the former board chairman at Wake Technical Community College appears to have broken the law by receiving \$5,600 from the sale of property on which the college later built a training center. A lawyer for the Board of Trustees argues that charges should not be pursued because the state's conflict-of-interest law was different at the time of the sale, in 2001. The auditor also recommended that the college board beef up its ethics policy.