Commencement Surprise: Rev. Jesse Jackson
Reverend Jesse Jackson attended the commencement ceremony Sunday afternoon, June 1, to watch his niece receive her GSU degree. At President Stuart Fagan’s request, he spoke briefly to the graduates, congratulating them on the life choice they had made by pursuing an education at GSU and encouraging them to live a life of purpose and service. “He was amazed at the diversity of our faculty and student body,” Fagan said later. “Follow your passion,” Jess McDonald, former director of IDCFS, told the graduates at the morning ceremony. “Face your fears, be yourself, you can succeed,” John Gray, author of *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*, told the graduates at the afternoon ceremony. More than 1,000 students marched at the ceremony. Graduates included Kyle Hastings, mayor of Orland Hills. After the ceremonies were over, Fagan said, “Some people tell me this may have been GSU’s best commencement ever. The credit goes to the volunteers who organized the students, managed the guests, handled the special requests, and represented the best of GSU. Thank you all.”

GSU Budget for FY04 Set
The Legislature has approved a budget for the state and sent it to the governor. At a university-wide meeting May 29, President Stuart Fagan and Budget Director Jeff Slovak reviewed the university’s budget for FY04. Appropriations for public higher education will be cut by 8.2 percent from FY03 levels – a $2.2 million reduction for GSU. In addition, the governor directed that 8.1 percent of the public universities income fund (primarily tuition) be reserved – in effect a rescission of $961.4 thousand in GSU’s case. The total hit to Governors State for FY04: nearly $3.2 million.

Meeting the Budget Challenge
Fagan and Slovak enumerated the actions the colleges and the administrative and executive units took to meet the FY04 budget. Non-personnel expenditures – equipment, travel, extra help, etc. – will be reduced. There were some reorganizations and reassignments of duties. The deans eliminated 68 classes, postponed 20, and consolidated 23 others. One hundred classes were originally targeted for elimination.

To increase revenue, tuition was increased twice in FY03 and will be increased again for the Fall Trimester. Fees were increased and two new fees were added. Even with the increases, GSU remains affordable and accessible, both Fagan and Slovak emphasized – GSU’s tuition is among the lowest in the state.

“Unfortunately, this combination of reduced costs and increased revenue is not sufficient to meet the FY04 budget,” Fagan said. “Because more than 70 percent of our spending is for salaries, we had no choice but to eliminate 16 staff positions.”
Buying Furniture When Cash Is Scarcе?
Fagan explained how the university is able to buy furniture for the Faculty Office Center, complete that building, and move ahead with the renovation of E & F Wings when appropriations are being cut. He said, “These projects are funded by the Capital Development Board and were approved a few years ago. Capital projects do not come out of appropriations. They’re supported by a different pot of money. We don’t hold that money. The money is appropriated to CDB for our projects.”

Looking to the Future
In closing his remarks, Fagan listed his five priorities for the future.

1. **Find new sources of funding and increase revenues.** He called for continuing the effort to secure Federal earmarks and secure Federal grants. He also said that he will revitalize the GSU Foundation so it will become a major source of funding for the university.
2. **Increase enrollment.** Enrollment has been up at the start of each trimester, but there is then significant erosion. Both Fagan and Slovak said there is an urgent need to improve retention of students.
3. **Continue to cut costs by adopting new ways of doing business.**
4. **Continue to encourage scholarship.**
5. **Implement the strategic plan.**

Physical Therapy Program in Tip Top Shape
The Physical Therapy program has been recognized by its accrediting body, the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), for outstanding progress in meeting the body’s accreditation criteria. In a May 21 letter to President Fagan, CAPTE informed the university that the program has been evaluated as being fully compliant and stated, “The Commission appreciates the thorough and professional manner in which these obligations have been addressed.” The program is now freed of all reporting requirements, save the Biennial Accreditation Report (BAR), which is due from all programs accredited with the agency. Program accreditation runs through 2011. “This decision indicates the quality of the program and the very hard work that the faculty have done to develop a strong program,” said Dr. Russell Carter, Physical Therapy program director. “There will be no relaxation on our part. We will keep ourselves above this required level.”

New Wireless Access to the Campus Network
ITS has deployed wireless network access in a limited number of areas on campus. Currently, 3 campus locations are configured for wireless network capabilities, creating high-speed connections to the campus network. These locations include the Hall of Governors, Cafeteria, and the Cafeteria Atrium. Users with a laptop or other mobile device can use a standards-based wireless card to enjoy working within a wireless location. GSU’s wireless access is supported through a standard network PC card, such as a Linksys, 5 Ghz, 802.11a or 802.11b, 54 Mbps, installed in the PCMCIA slot on a laptop or mobile device. Just set the network name (sometimes called SSID) to govest to establish a connection. For more on wireless cards, go to www.linksys.com/edu/wirelessstandards.asp. To read more on GSU’s wireless access, go to www.govest.edu/its/support/publications/tutorials.html.

Scholarship Sails On: Education
University Professor Maribeth Kasik has served as chair of the Technology Committee and as webmaster for the Illinois Board of Education Faculty Advisory Council, www.ibhfac.org, these past two years. Dr. Kasik is the GSU representative to the IBHE-FAC elected to a four-year term. She presents monthly reports to the GSU Faculty Senate and participates in monthly FAC meetings at various universities around the state. Most recently activities of the FAC include the preparation of “white papers” on the Budget Issues, the Illinois Commitment, and Assessment, which were presented by the chair of FAC to the IBHE and shared with the GSU Faculty Senate. The FAC will conclude its activities for 2002-2003 in June and begin again in late August for 2003-2004 higher education issues.
ScholarShip Sails On: Psychology

Two Governors State University graduate students from the Division of Psychology and Counseling presented their master’s thesis research at the May 2003 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Psychological Association. Lori Davis presented a poster session titled “The Psychological Abuse Assessment in the Workplace: Initial Tests of Validation,” and Amy Green presented at a special poster session for Psi Chi titled “Insight, Anxiety, and Stereotype Threat in Persons with Mental Illness.”

Dr. Diane Balin to Serve as Voting Delegate

Dr. Diane Balin, director of the Board of Governors B.A. degree program, will represent the Riverside Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) at the organization’s June 2003 National Convention in Providence, R.I. Balin was selected by the branch’s Board of Directors to serve as its voting delegate to the convention. The AAUW Educational Foundation is the world’s largest source of funding exclusively for graduate women. Foundation awards support aspiring scholars around the globe, teachers and activists in local communities, women at critical stages of their careers, and those pursuing professions where women are underrepresented.

Volunteers Needed: Baritones – Sopranos – Contraltos – Bass

Smart Start is looking for volunteers to participate in their “Come Read to Me” program, which will take place on Mondays from June 23 to July 28. Participants will read to pre-kindergarten classes at the Family Development Center for approximately 30 minutes either 9:30 a.m. or 1 p.m. on each Monday. Readers are asked to tell a bit about themselves and their own childhood and bring and read their favorite childhood book. Books should be appropriate for 3 to 5 year olds. Smart Start will be happy to help locate the book you remember or offer reading suggestions. To volunteer, call Cheryl Poulos at Ext. 7329 or e-mail her at c­poulos@govst.edu.

Mission and Vision: Revisiting GSU’s Founding Philosophy

Last week, GSUniverse began a series that features the words of GSU’s first president, Dr. William E. Engbretson, as they appeared in the 1973 Governors State University Bulletin. Unfortunately, too little notice has been taken of GSU’s history and traditions, though they lie at the heart of this university’s important and resonating philosophy. So the words of Dr. Engbretson follow as part President Fagan’s initiative to create an internal communication program – a joint venture by the University Library and Public Affairs that will tell the story of Governors State.

Dr. Engbretson: “Governors State has been planned as an open, humane, experimenting, flexible, innovative learning center. We suggest that no less a model could be offered to our students and community if we are to effectively deal with the most pressing problems of human beings and our environments. The University is futuristic in its orientations and is committed to an unusual degree of responsiveness to individual and community needs.”