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Student Life

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Illinois General Assembly ponders budget:

Improve health care and K-12 schools?

Not without enuf $ for higher education

President Stuart Fagan and Board Chair Bruce Friefeld testified before the Senate Appropriations Committee in late April regarding higher education as a priority in the state budget for fiscal year 2006.

Governor Rod Blagojevich's proposed budget went forward in February to the Senate and House of Representatives, where it is currently under consideration. Last year's budget was not approved until late-July.

The governor's proposed budget held funding levels for public universities at the same level as FY 2005, without even accommodating for standard inflation or cost of living increases. In the Blagojevich proposal, K-12 education and healthcare were top priorities. In his testimony, Friefeld stressed that there could be no improvement in K-12 education, nor improvement in the state's health care systems, without adequate funding for higher education. After all, he said, it is higher education that produces the teachers and health care professionals.

Fagan reinforced those points in his testimony. Given the austere fiscal climate, he called for three actions by the legislature, the governor, and the Capital Development Board have already approved.

Third, authorize a supplemental appropriation to GSU of at least $200,000 for additional cohorts in education, new initiatives in the health professions, and additional support for the Small Business Development Center.

The state faces a possible budget shortfall of more than $1 billion for the coming fiscal year. Ideas on the legislative table include pension reform, which the governor claims will save up to $800 million; more slot machines for existing casinos; and increasing income tax, with the additional revenue to be designated for education. Pension reform is opposed by University Professionals of Illinois (UPI), the civil service, and others. They maintain as proposed by the governor, it will hurt universities' efforts to recruit quality faculty and staff, and could also impact current employees.

Senator James Meeks, and others, including Senate President Emil Jones, support raising the state's income tax to five percent, as well as increasing corporate tax. Their proposal would provide for some reduction in property taxes. The additional funds the tax would provide would be diverted to education.

Higher education would be allocated $500 million – 25 percent would be allocated to community colleges; the balance would go to the public universities. Under the formula put forth in Senate Bill 750, GSU would receive about $5.3 million in additional funding.

The governor has said he will veto any tax increase. Meeks and other legislators are working to build a veto-proof majority.

United GSU -- Students, faculty, and staff members headed for the state capitol April 14 for Springfield Lobby Day. They met with legislators to express concerns that higher education must be given higher priority in the state budget. From left are BPA Professors Charles Olson, Marsha Katz, Edna Fry; Student Senators Pamela Thompson and Toure Peck; Michael Wortham, assistant to President Fagan; and George Ashford, student representative to the Illinois Board of Higher Education.
Student commentary by Dan Barkman

March 31, 2005, should be remembered as a sad day in American history. It was on this day that Terri Schindler-Schiavo passed away after a nearly 14-day fight against dehydration and starvation, and after a Florida court ordered her feeding tube removed.

Our country seems to be sliding down a slippery slope, and the Terri Schiavo case is evidence of this. Despite what various media outlets were reporting, Terri was not on any "life support." She was not on a respirator. She was simply unable to swallow on her own. Consequently, she was given both food and water through a tube. This was the extent of the "life support" she was on. If food and water constitute life support, we are all on it.

As I watched the news coverage prior to her death, I heard various experts disagree as to what exactly constitutes a "persistent vegetative state," and whether Terri's condition was to fall into that category. I found the entire discussion -- and even the question irrelevant.

Since when does keeping someone in a vegetative state constitute a "right to life," appointed by the Constitution or anywhere else? Aren't we all constitutionally guaranteed the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? During this entire debate, I felt that an important distinction needed to be made. There is a stark difference between refusing or removing extraordinary medical treatment (i.e., another round of chemotherapy, or a respirator causing someone to breathe artificially) and aggressively procuring a person's death by the withdrawal of basic life sustenance, as in the case of Terri Schiavo.

Many people continue to deny that this woman was murdered. Despite her severe brain damage, Terri Schiavo was not dying. She was just as alive as you and I. If someone were to lock you up in a room for a 14 days without food or water, we would be dead too.

It seems that there is something wrong when a Florida judge can order the death of an innocent human being, and nobody has the power to stop it. Not Florida Governor Jeb Bush, not the Florida legislature, not even the president of the United States.

I hope this case wakes this country up. However, in the future, I am afraid more people will die the way of Terri Schiavo. And this is very sad, indeed.

Dan Barkman is an undergraduate Communications major. He is a regular staff volunteer to the Phoenix student newspaper.
Caring for our kids in the summertime

Editor's Note: Soon they'll be chattering, "School's out, school's out..." With elementary, junior high, and high school summer vacations just around the corner, parents are frantically making plans for keeping our children safe, cared for, and out of trouble.

In addition to finding sitters and services for those times we have to be at work, doing errands, or at school ourselves, it's a good idea to ensure we're also making plans to spend more time with our kids, and making sure their "idle time" is not going to ill use.

The following article and resources in the chart below have been compiled from the web site: "ParentingTips@TheAntiDrug.com" - It's a great resource!

THE MANY WAYS TO BE INVOLVED

Simply put, the more involved parents are in their child's life, the less likely kids are to try drugs or alcohol. While the increase of drug and alcohol imagery in the media is unfortunate, parents can use this trend as a way to talk to their kids about the risks associated with substance abuse.

For instance, parents can make a weekly date with their child to watch a popular show targeted at youth. Or perhaps a weekly video game match between parent and child, with a free-dinner on the line, would be an enticing engagement? Making this a regular practice not only increases parent's awareness of what their kids are watching, but also ensures time with their child.

Reports released in the past few weeks have drawn attention to the increasing amount of time children and teens spend engaged with various forms of media, often exposing them to potentially harmful content. A Kaiser Family Foundation study shows that young people today are exposed to media for an average of eight and a half hours a day -- the equivalent of a full-time job.

The Pew Internet & American Life Project also released a study about American families' usage of online filters to limit children's access to harmful content. The report shows large gaps in perception about how much parent-child monitoring is taking place when teens are online: 62% of parents report checking up on their child's online activities, but only 33% of teens say they believe their parents monitor their Internet activity.

Research has shown that teenagers whose parents are aware of the televisions they watch and the music they listen to are less likely to smoke, drink or use drugs.

Parents should review and talk with children about the images of drugs and alcohol that are present in media, paying special attention to the subtle, yet influential, messages that promote unhealthy choices.

Useful Internet sites for parents

Protecting teens on the Web
Limiting time spent online and using content filters are good ways to help protect teens from unhealthy content. But experts say that these alone are not enough; parents need to talk to their kids and establish guidelines.

Learn effective media guidelines for parents: http://www.aap.org/pubed/ZZZGVL4P Q7C.htm?&sub_cat=17

Learn some simple ways to be more involved:
http://www.theantidrug.com/advice/advice_more_involved.asp

Learn how to reduce access to media
http://www.theantidrug.com/advice/advice_reduce_media.asp

Do you know the signs and symptoms of drug use?

Download "Keeping Your Kids Drug-Free: A How to Guide for Parents and Care Givers"

Learn more: http://www.theantidrug.com

Feeling your education's pinch on your pocketbook? Here's some tips to help ease the budget squeeze

By Jacob Burnett

With the recent news of tuition and fee increases that will go into effect this fall, many students will have to find new ways to finance their education.

Currently, an Illinois resident undergraduate pays $127 per credit hour, while resident graduate students pay $143 per credit hour. Rates are higher for out-of-state students, who pay more than $381 per credit hour.

Public college and university students throughout the state of Illinois are feeling the state budget's squeeze on tuition, will charge new students tuition (currently at $4,050 per year). The Bush administration has recently proposed legislation to increase the maximum amount of Pell Grant aid a student can receive, from $4,050 to $5,100 per year. The Bush administration has proposed raising the cap to $4,550 over the next five years.

The amount of aid a student receives is determined by a formula that takes the student's status (dependent or independent) and the family's financial need into account. A financial aid package can be awarded through scholarships, grants, work-study programs, or government loans which must be paid back, with interest), or any combination of these programs.

If a student's parents have a solid credit history, they can help pay for college by obtaining a PLUS loan. Depending on the type of PLUS loan, a parent in must either go through the school or a lender to obtain funds.

In addition to direct financial aid, savings on college costs can be realized in the form of federal income tax deductions on certain types of tuition and fees. A student can also choose to take a Lifetime Learning Credit, up to $1,000 a year per household. Taxpayers can deduct a portion of their costs or take the credit, but not do both. For example, this writer was able to deduct $484 dollars from his adjusted gross income in 2004, and that was just for a single class.

If students have to pay back government loans, the interest paid on certain student loans can also be deducted from personal income tax. The Internal Revenue Service has more information available at their Web site, http://www.irs.gov.

There are government proposals calling for increases in student financial aid. For example, Illinois senator Barack Obama has recently proposed legislation to increase the maximum amount of Pell Grant aid a student can receive, from $4,050 to $5,100 per year. The Bush administration has proposed raising the cap to $4,550 over the next five years.
There’s a way to start off Smart with your child

By John Madden

You’re a new parent and you’ve read every “beginning parenting” book you can get your hands on. You’re constantly on the phone to mom and dad, the in-laws, grandma and grandpa, and married friends with kids. You subscribe to dozens of parent-friendly magazines, and you have an entire bookcase on children’s health, building self-esteem, kids’ etiquette, and child psychology. And still you feel unprepared, perplexed, and challenged on the right way to raise your children and how to let them discover the emerging literacy of this young age.

Music and Movement explores the enchantment of music and play with carefully chosen peaceful activities. The Open Art Studio explores the process of art and allows the child to express their individual intrinsic artistic talents. Baby Sign Language teaches children to communicate before they can actually vocalize words. In addition, Parent and Child Playgroups and Parent Education Workshops provide guidance in the fine art of play and address other parenting issues so critical to this young age.

Smart Start is a year-round program that continues in 6-week blocks, with a 2-week break in between each block. This allows parents and children a short break, which refreshes them for continued learning once the program resumes. Smart Start also offers a Pre-Kindergarten program, available in both morning and afternoon sessions. This program is free to those families who have been screened and who qualify through the Illinois State Board of Education’s Early Childhood Block Grant. Tuition slots are available for children who do not qualify under this grant.

This stimulating Pre-K program is based on the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education. At Smart Start, the children are valued as powerful co-creators of their knowledge. Working in hands-on projects that are documented in photographs and dialogue by the teachers results in the children’s reflection and further inquiry into the subject. Daily journal writing and drawing provides assessment over time.

Smart Start is available to all who work or go to school at GSU, as well as members of the surrounding communities. The Pre-K program serves children from three to five years of age in multi-age groupings, which have been shown to be very effective for modeling and collaborative learning. The children “loop,” or stay with the same teacher throughout their Smart Start experience. This lessens the disruption of transition and enhances learning because the teacher is familiar with what the children already know.

For more information on the programs offered by the Family Development Center and a calendar of events, call 708.235.7300.

Get ready. Get set. Give your child a Smart Start!
Students, faculty, staff and community members are encouraged to visit the GSU Recreation and Fitness Center located on the west side of campus in the A Building Wing.

The center has a 167,000-gallon indoor heated swimming pool, fitness room, gymnasium, racquetball court, showers, and locker rooms. Currently-enrolled students pay no membership or usage fees, as use of these facilities is included in student fees. Reasonable membership rates are offered to other patrons age 18 and up.

"We're committed to improving the quality of life and fitness of our students, faculty, staff, and community members," says Dean Jennings, assistant program director for Student Life Services.

"Whatever your fitness goals are, the center will give you the tools necessary to reach them," Jennings added.

Free weights, exercise bikes, treadmills, Nordic ski machines, circuit training equipment, and aerobics equipment are available. The gymnasium offers basketball, volleyball, soccer, fitness walking/running, and speed bag/heavy bag.

The Olympic-style pool features lap swimming, aquacise courses, adult and child swimming classes, and American Red Cross lifeguard training.

"Use the fitness room once a week and the gym three times a week for volleyball and soccer," says graduate student Vince Gutierrez, who has taken advantage of the Center between classes for nearly two years. "I like the people here. It's all about a good time."

The Recreation and Fitness Center opened in 1977, and was run by the YMCA until GSU took it over in 1989. The staff does its best to provide the basics for the center, adding at least two new pieces of equipment each year. A new polystyrene floor was installed in the gym last year.

About one-fourth of the center's usage is by students, one fourth by faculty and staff, 13 percent by alumni, and community members round out the remainder. Most activity occurs around noon during the week, followed by open volleyball on Thursday afternoons, and open basketball in the evenings.

"The center's biggest selling point is that cost is incomparable to other fitness facilities," explains Jennings. "We run it as a service, not as a business. Jennings says it's rarely nec-

Aaah, the perks of being a student!

Fitness Center usage is covered by student fees

By Julie Carlson

Swim season is right around the corner and GSU has just the ticket for anyone who's hoping to get healthy and fit before summer hits. But there's a whole lot more to fitness than just what meets the eye.

It's a well-known fact that most people aren't active enough. More than 60 percent of American adults fail to get the minimum recommended exercise: a half-hour to an hour of moderate and boosts HDL (good) cholesterol.

Heart Association attributes about what meets the eye.

It's a well-known fact that most people aren't active enough. More than 60 percent of American adults fail to get the minimum recommended exercise: a half-hour to an hour of moderate activity most days of the week. The American Heart Association attributes about 250,000 deaths a year to lack of regular physical activity.

Regular activity has a number of proven, positive health effects, especially on heart health. It renews energy.

Regular activity relieves stress and anxiety, can help you sleep better, and renews energy.

Enroll yourself in

Spring/Summer Fitness Programs

The following classes are offered for the Spring/Summer term at fees as noted. Fitness instruction runs May 9 thru Aug. 15, unless otherwise described. No classes on May 30 or July 4. Current GSU students receive a $6 discount per course. To register, stop by the Student Life Service Office in A-1120 or call 708.534.4550.

Aerobics ($10)
Tuesday, Thursday
5:15 to 6:15 p.m.
Morning Aerobics ($10)
Saturday
9:30 to 10:30 a.m.
Next Level Fitness ($10)
Tuesday, Thursday
noon to 12:45 p.m.
Water Aerobics ($25)
Monday, Wednesday,
Friday
6:15 to 6:45 a.m.

Total Water Exercise
($10 per weekday; or $40 for all weekdays throughout the trimester)
Monday thru Friday
10 to 11 a.m.
Aqua Power Lunch ($18)
Tuesday, Thursday
11:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
Aquacise ($10)
Saturday
10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Adult Swimming ($28)
Level I
Tuesday, Thursday
9:30 to 10:30 a.m.
Tuesday, Thursday
11:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
Adult Swimming ($28)
Level II
Saturday
9:45 to 10:30 a.m.
Private Swimming Instruction ($50 for 12 sessions).
Also available:
Children's swimming instruction
Senior fitness and exercise classes
As Chris Miernicki discovered, there are many reasons to join UPS. But she soon realized that UPS can provide you with something even more valuable: a solid career path. If you have the drive to learn and enhance your skills, you have the potential to move up at UPS. Find out for yourself.

Part-Time Package Handler
Work a consistent schedule 3-1/2 to 5 hours a day, 5 days a week. No weekends or holidays! Not only will you earn great pay of $8.50 per hour, with increases of 50( after 90 days and 50( after one year, but we offer unsurpassed benefits including paid vacations, weekly paychecks, consistent work schedules and excellent benefits (Medical/life & 401K). Plus, we make it easy for student employees to receive up to $23,000 toward tuition, books, fees and related college expenses with our Earn and Learn Program. UPS is an equal opportunity employer.

Chris Miernicki
Security Supervisor
Started in 1993 as a Package Handler at the Bedford Park facility. Hired in General Justice at Governors State University.

As soon as an UPS Part-Time Package Handler opportunity and the UPS Earn and Learn Program at Governors State Universe, please contact Kim Chisholm at 708.387.4684 or email: workjobs@chicago
Access Code: 355A

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Roosevelt Summer 2005

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Don’t miss out on our summer undergraduate tuition discount. Register early at www.roosevelt.edu/summer.
Friday May 20
Step Show
Enjoy the best and brightest step dancers on the Center's stage at 8 p.m. Friday May 20, as Delta Sigma Theta Sorority sponsors a Step Dancing competition. Tickets $20. Available at The Center for Performing Arts box office, 708.235.2222.

Saturday May 21
Chicago Teachers Job Fair
Chicago Public Schools' Teacher Job Fair will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Soldier Field Stadium. More than 80 elementary and high schools principals who have current and anticipated teaching positions will be represented. Call 773.553.1045.

Saturday May 21
Salute to Graduates Picnic
Hey, you've earned it! Join other graduating Governors' students, families, and friends for the "Salute to Graduates" picnic 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday May 21. Festivities occur in Engbretson Hall, the Hall of Governors, Cafeteria Annex, and E-Lounge. Free for graduating students and three guests, in celebration of the graduates' academic achievements. Reservations and info: Student Life at 708.534.4553.

Saturday May 21
Debbie Reynolds
This seasoned performer of stage and screen, nominated for an Academy Award for her performance in "The Unsinkable Molly Brown," has not had any trouble keeping her career afloat for more than 50 years. Don't miss this all-around entertainer in an evening of laughter, song and dance. Tickets are $20. Available at The Center for Performing Arts. Call 708.534.4553.

Tuesday May 24
GSU Research Conference
Students will present outstanding research findings during the 11th annual GSU Student Research Conference 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday May 24. Free registration includes lunch. Contact Dr. Shelly Kumar at 708.534.228.

Wednesday May 25
Golf Outing
The Masters of Public Administration Club hosts a golf outing Wednesday May 25 at the University Park Golf Club, just across from the college. Tee time is 11:30 a.m., with dinner at 5:30 p.m. There's slots for 144 golfers. Funds raised from the outing will support the club-sponsored Distinguished Lectures Series. Contact Paul Barris at 815.693.9658.

Monday May 30
Memorial Day holiday
University closed

Sunday June 5
Commencement Ceremony
Spring/Summer 2005 graduation ceremony will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday June 5 at the Holiday Inn Select & Convention Center located off I-80 at 18501 S. Harlem Ave. in Tinley Park. Contact Student Life at 708.534.4553.

Monday July 4
Independence Day holiday
University closed

Law Enforcement Torch Run seeks $10k to help Special Olympics

GSU's campus cops are looking for your support in the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Illinois. The GSU leg of the state-wide charitable event occurs around 10 a.m. Wednesday June 15 on the east side of campus. Supporters can run, bike, roller skate, skateboard, or use any other means to show their support for the GSU torch-bearers. The event includes a picnic complete with food, soft drinks, games, and music. And of course, you are welcome to pledge dollars in support of the event. Last year GSU raised more than $4,500. This year's goal is $10,000.

GSU is part of the ninth leg of the 23-leg Illinois Law Enforcement Torch Run. The Law Enforcement Torch Run is the single largest year-round fundraising event benefiting Special Olympics Illinois. The annual intrastate relay and its various fundraising projects have two goals: to gain awareness and to raise money in support of Special Olympians from Illinois so they can compete in worldwide events. Similar events are held throughout the U.S. and worldwide.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run began in Illinois in 1986. That first run raised $14,039.93. In 2004, more than $1.469 million was raised, making it the second highest Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics program in the world.

The Village of University Park police department will hand off the torch to folks from GSU Department of Public Safety (DPS). At the completion of its portion of the Run, GSU will hand off the torch to the Drug Enforcement Agency.

If you'd like to participate, volunteer, pledge a donation, or have questions, contact Dispatcher Colleen Buche or Sgt. Debra Boyd in DPS at 708.534.4900.

Torchbearers - GSU contributed $4,500 to Illinois Special Olympics last year. Participants from left: Dorothy Sanders, Colleen Buche, Tascha Lewis, Chief Albert Cheesser, Sgt James McGee, Officer Hanna Lee. This year's goal is $10k.