HR 609 eyes Pell Grants & loans to trim deficit

By Larry Szuclczewski

The U.S. House of Representatives will vote on legislation later this year that will set higher federal education policy for the next six years. The bill, HR 609 (the Higher Education Act), proposes major changes in federal student aid policy that will significantly impact thousands of college students.

The current Higher Education Act expired Sept. 30, but Congress extended the law for three months. While HR 609 addresses issues ranging from amendments to the Education of the Deaf Act of 1986, to cancellation of student loan indebtedness for survivors of victims of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, the primary focus for students using financial aid will be on Pell Grants and loan repayment.

If HR 609 passes, the Pell Grant maximum would increase to $6,000, up from the current $5,800. The average grant would be a little over $2,440. Critics charge the increase to severely impact the purchasing power of lower and middle-income students who rely on Pell Grants to afford college.

Joyce Smith, executive director of The National Association for College Admission Counseling, an Alexandria, Va., based educational association, commended the House bipartisan Education and Workforce Committee for supporting an increased Pell Grant maximum. But she expressed disappointment that a proposed $2,400 increase was defeated in a party-line vote.

"We are concerned that this shows the subcommittee plans to effectively cap the Pell Grant for six years, at a time when need for such aid increases every year," Smith said. The bill also eliminates some benefits when students begin to repay their loans. Those who have taken out several educational loans may find it easier to consolidate loans when it's time to repay. Many students opt for one monthly payment to cover obligations instead of writing a check to each agency.

Jasmine Harris, legislative director of the U.S. Student Association, claims the proposed changes in HR 609 would also cost students more during loan repayment. One of the provisions would eliminate the loan consolidation option while still in school, an option that currently allows students to save hundreds of dollars in interest payments, said Harris.

"Any proposal that would adversely impact a student attending college ultimately will effect teachers," said Katz, "and that is not a good thing either," she added.

Katz acknowledged that if college ultimately becomes too expensive for many high school graduates because of rising tuition and shrinking financial aid resources, they may be forced to enter the workforce in low-paying jobs that are rapidly disappearing due to outsourcing.

"We need to keep college available and affordable to anyone who wants to attend," she said. However, Rep. John Boehner, R-Ohio, education committee chairman, said he and his colleagues produced a fiscally sound bill that would expand access to college.

It's important that Congress reins in out-of-control spending and unnecessary federal programs," Boehner said. "This committee is playing a part in that effort because out-of-control entitlement spending is a threat to every student and family in America.

But Democrats say it's irresponsible for committee leaders to cut so deeply into loan programs without directing the savings be used to increase student aid and make loans less expensive.

"Rather than investing those savings in the student loan system," said Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., leading Democrat on the committee, "the bill before us takes those savings right out of the system and instead applies them toward reducing the flood of red ink caused by this fiscally irresponsible Congress." It doesn't take long for students to realize the rising costs of going to school. A few minutes in the bookstore at the start of a term is jaw-dropping. It's starting to look like the rising costs that begin with the first check written before admission will continue to the last check written long after graduation.

Bush's popularity reaches new low

For the first time in his presidency, a majority of Americans question the integrity of President Bush, and growing doubts about his leadership have left him with record negative ratings on the economy, Iraq, and even the war on terrorism, a new Washington Post-ABC News poll shows.

Currently 39 percent approve of the job he is doing as president, while 60 percent disapprove of his performance in office -- the highest level of disapproval ever recorded for Bush in Post-ABC polls.

Virtually the only possible bright spot for Bush in the survey was generally favorable, if not quite enthusiastic, early reaction to his latest Supreme Court nominee, Samuel A. Alito Jr. Half of Americans say Alito should be confirmed by the Senate, and less than a third view him as too conservative, the poll found.

Bush has always retained major support on his handling of the U.S. campaign against terrorism -- until now, when 51 percent have registered disapproval.

The dissatisfaction with Bush flows in part out of broad concerns about the overall direction of the country. Nearly 7 in 10 -- 68 percent -- believe the country is seriously off course, while only 30 percent are optimistic. Only 3 in 10 express high levels of confidence in Bush, while half say they have little or no confidence in this administration.

Just 35 percent of those surveyed rated the economy as either excellent or good, with 65 percent describing it as not so good or poor.

Attitudes toward Bush are sharply polarized by party, as they have been throughout his presidency. About 8 in 10 -- 78 percent -- of Republicans support the president, while just 11 percent of Democrats rate him positively. Republicans long have been the key to Bush's overall strength, but Bush has suffered some

defects since the beginning of the year, when 91 percent approved of the way he was handling his job.

Among independents, Bush's approval has plummeted since the beginning of the year. In the latest poll, 33 percent of independents approved of his performance, while 66 percent disapproved. In January, independents were evenly divided, with 49 percent approving and an equal percentage disapproving.

Iraq remains a significant drag on Bush's presidency, with dissatisfaction over the situation there continuing to grow and with suspicion rising over whether administration officials misled the country in the run-up to the invasion more than two years ago.

Nearly two-thirds disapprove of the way Bush is handling the situation there, while barely a third approved, a new low. Six in 10 now believe the United States was wrong to invade Iraq, a seven-point increase in just over two months, with almost half the country saying they strongly believe it was wrong.

About 3 in 4 -- 73 percent -- say there have been an unacceptable level of casualties in Iraq. More than half -- 52 percent -- say the war with Iraq has not contributed to the long-term security of the United States.

The same percentage -- 52 percent -- says the United States should keep its military forces in Iraq until civil order is restored, and only about 1 in 5 -- 18 percent -- say the United States should withdraw its forces immediately. In the week after U.S. deaths in Iraq passed the 2,000 mark, a majority of those surveyed -- 55 percent -- said the United States is not making significant progress toward stabilizing the country.

The war has taken a toll on the administration's credibility. A clear majority -- 55 percent -- now says the administration deliberately misled the country in making its case for war with Iraq -- a conflict that an even larger majority say is not worth the cost.
Response to a reader’s letter

GSU aiding to Katrina’s victims

The following is in response to John Conrad’s letter to the editor, “Why limit helping friends?” printed in our last issue (Oct. 31) of the Phoenix.

Dear Mr. Conrad:

Thanks for your interest in helping Katrina victim, and for your question about the items we have been seeking for donation.

The guidelines posted on the collection boxes were not designed to deter donations, but instead to help us provide Hurricane Katrina survivors with what they needed most.

The guidelines were determined by the Public Action to Deliver Shelter (PADS) organization, with whom we are working. The group is in charge of the evacuate shelter at the Tinley Park Mental Health Institute, which housed the recipients of our original donations. The limitations were based on supplies they already had available, as well as PADS’ extensive experience in donation collection.

We still received and welcomed an overwhelming amount of donations of items not on the official list. As a result, the GSU relief committee has worked hard to make sure we found a suitable use for all items received.

In coordination with Dr. Robert Donaldson, GSU professor and mayor of East Hazel Crest, many of our additional supplies will be transported to the area surrounding Bogalusa, La. These donations are being made available directly to affected towns and individuals who have not yet received full aid. They will be transported via a fire-truck donated to the area by the Village of East Hazel Crest.

Eric Matanyi
Office of Public Affairs

Holidays stressing you out? Don’t sweat the small stuff

Commentary by John Madden

What, relax? It’s the holiday season! I can’t relax! You don’t understand! If I don’t get my order in for the ‘Whooshit Loozit Floozi’ game, they’ll all be gone. And what will my daughter think, expecting it from me?

What about the 46-tools-in-one my dad wants? It’s not in any stores around here so I have to drive to Newfoundland to get it. He’s been so good to me, and besides, he gets crabby when he doesn’t get what he wants.

Then I have to cook and bake for the 17 parties I have to go to in the next two weeks. I have to go to all of them because they’re all my closest friends and they would miss me. Or even worse, they’ll talk about me behind my back!

How am I gonna do all this? How will I manage? And you tell me to relax?!

Aaaaah, the joyful holiday season! A time of good cheer, the warm gatherings of family and friends, and peace throughout the land. But how do you get a moment of personal peace amidst all the hustle and bustle?

How can you become peaceful when the mere thought of all the things you have to do in so little time could drive you crazy? What drives you to the brink of insanity (a high stress?)

Let’s take a look at some unnecessary holiday stressors so many of us subject ourselves to:

Do you plan in advance, or are you a last minute person? Chances are that if you’re scurrying about at the last minute, you’ve set yourself up for a less-than-joyful holiday season. The stores are mobbed and it seems everyone is hunting that same special gift that’s number one on the must-have list this year.

Of course it’s sold out!

Planning ahead (and doing ahead) can help alleviate lots of frenzy in our lives.

Make your list early (maybe now?) of those people you’re buying gifts for and start looking online or in the papers for sales. Maybe getting one or two items at a time instead of “power shopping” all at once could bring some joy back into your holidays.

Think about your motives. What is it that drives you in relentless pursuit of that special gift for that special someone? Is it your desire to please, or to out-do someone else? Is it out of love, or is it guilt? Maybe a close examination of our motives and what we really want our gifts to say is in order.

Maybe we even need to change our way of thinking, and then do what we want those material tokens (no matter how expensive) to accomplish. Maybe it’s not spending dollars, but time, instead.

When we focus on what we want, solutions to holiday gift dilemmas suddenly become clear. When we give from our hearts, expressing real affection to those we care for, we can actually enjoy what we do.

Is it necessary to attend every single holiday function that comes across our lives? Scoffing from one gathering to the next may be a sign that slowing down could be a better option for us. Just breathe! Again, looking at the big picture, what is really important to you? Do you have to attend a party because and-so-and-so will be there; therefore so must you? Or do you sincerely want to be there because this specific gift you give to the people brings you joy? Or may you want to be there because you know your presence will bring joy to others. Regardless, an examination of our motives could help us realize that we may not have to attend every function.

The holiday season is truly a joyous time to be alive! If we take the stressors out of our lives and look at the beauty of the season, the smiles on faces all around us and hear the cooings and aahhhs of children, it’s an absolutely magical time of the year. To truly experience it though, it is a matter of deciding what’s important – and what’s not. These are decisions only you can make!

Student editor wanted; Paid position

GSU invites applications for student editor-in-chief of the Phoenix student newspaper beginning January 2006, for the remainder of the 2005-06 academic year.

Qualifications: A GSU undergraduate or graduate student with 3.0 cumulative GPA, past experience as a reporter or editor of a student newspaper or professional publication, and ability to work within a news media environment. Ability to get along with others is imperative. The editor-in-chief will receive a stipend.

Responsibilities: The managing editor-in-chief will run the operation of the Phoenix and will be in charge of assigning and selecting stories, graphics, and photos; copy editing, laying out pages, writing headlines, and other production needs of the twice-monthly newspaper. The editor-in-chief also will be responsible for writing editorials, coordinating with columnists and writers, and contributing to news gathering and writing. Knowledge of QuarkXPress and Adobe Photoshop software is a plus. The editor-in-chief will work in conjunction with the adjunct professor/technical coordinator to ensure the paper is published on a regular basis each trimester, and once monthly during Spring/Summer.

Review of applications begins immediately and continues until a suitable candidate is identified. Send letter of application, curriculum vita, names/address/telephone numbers/phone numbers of at least two references to Vanessa Newby, director of Curricular Activities and Volunteer Services, Governors State University, 1 University Parkway, University Park, IL 60466.
Brace your wallets for holiday giving

By Neilia Sherman

Have you just finished paying off last year's holiday shopping debts? This year, with a little planning and determination, you can breathe through the holiday season without emptying your wallet.

Some holiday bargain hunters start an entire year in advance. Stores advertise huge post-holiday sales with 30 to 80 percent off normal prices.

Get Creative!

To avoid the malls and the temptations retailers and advertisers have set up, consider using catalogs or the Internet for holiday shopping, according to Holt. "The telephone can be a cost-effective way of comparison shopping before you head out the door," says Holt. "You can use the information to bargain for the best possible price."

Liquidators who buy up inventories from overstocked businesses or ones that have filed for bankruptcy are sold well below retail prices. These are good places to stock up on gifts in advance. Check out the yellow pages or the Internet to find liquidators in your area.

Avoid making impulse purchases. "Starting early is really important to avoid the Christmas rush," says Campbell. "People tend to spend more if they start later, as they start to panic and don't comparison shop."

Serious holiday bargain hunters start an entire year in advance. Stores advertise huge post-holiday sales with 30 to 80 percent off normal prices.

Theme Gifts

Making a theme basket is a great way to save money and give a reason to be creative. And they're very popular! Items can be bought at the dollar store or on sale. If you have friends who love Italian food, for example, try taking an inexpensive colander and fill it with garlic bulbs, fancy pasta, gourmet spaghetti sauce, cheese, and a grater.

A hot drink lover's basket might include gourmet coffee, hot cocoa, specialty teas, shortbread biscuits, and an interesting mug.

Gift jars can be very expensive at retail stores. Let's say "Ocean's Eleven" found DVD prices ranging from $18 to $26. Other good web sites for shopping online are Booksclosers.com, ConsumerWorld.org, iParentingStore.com, Buy.com, and CatalogCity.com. Remember to allow time for shipping.

Collectibles abound at garage sales, and you can find fancy pasta, gourmet spaghetti sauce, cheese, and a grater. A hot drink lover's basket might include gourmet coffee, hot cocoa, specialty teas, shortbread biscuits, and an interesting mug.

Gift jars can be very expensive at retail stores. Let's say "Ocean's Eleven" found DVD prices ranging from $18 to $26. Other good web sites for shopping online are Booksclosers.com, ConsumerWorld.org, iParentingStore.com, Buy.com, and CatalogCity.com. Remember to allow time for shipping.

Holt suggests we keep in mind that the dollar value of a gift has no correlation to the amount of sentiment it expresses. "You don't have to spend a lot of money to let someone know you care," he says.

And don't forget the true meaning of the season. "Think seriously about what the holiday season means to you," says Campbell. Perhaps feeling better about your finances will also enable you to be less stressed and more able to enjoy the wonders of the holidays.

Joyous Eid-Al-Fitr celebrations; Muslims mark Ramadan's end

By Farha Behlim

Thousands of Southland Muslims, including members of the GSU community, gathered this month to celebrate the end of Ramadan.

The celebration took place at The Mosque Foundation of Bridgeview, with crowds of worshippers taking part in a special prayer to mark the day of Eid-Al-Fitr holiday. Eid-Al-Fitr is all about celebrating the good things that we have received, God’s (Allah’s) bounty and our family and friends.

Get Creative!

The celebration took place at The Mosque Foundation of Bridgeview, with crowds of worshippers taking part in a special prayer to mark the day of Eid-Al-Fitr holiday. Eid-Al-Fitr is all about celebrating the good things that we have received, God’s (Allah’s) bounty and our family and friends.

My husband mostly visits more often but I thought it would be nice to make it a family affair with the children," says Khan.

Gifts are exchanged, money is given to the poor, and food is distributed among celebrants on this Islamic holiday.

Every household who can afford it must pay a form of tax in the days leading up to Eid. It is a very small amount, and is paid for each person in the family. Traditionally the tax was in the form of food, although most people now give the equivalent in money. The money or food is given to poor people, so that they can celebrate Eid, too.

The tax is not collected by anyone, and no one is forced to pay it, but it is required as a religious act, and almost everyone pays.

To Muslims, it might be considered the equivalent of celebrating the Christmas holiday.

The number of practicing Muslims in America and in other countries around the world continues to rise, involving people from many different cultures such as Palestinian, Indian, Pakistani, Yugoslavian, Malaysian, and African American.

The celebration took place at The Mosque Foundation of Bridgeview, with crowds of worshippers taking part in a special prayer to mark the day of Eid-Al-Fitr holiday. Eid-Al-Fitr is all about celebrating the good things that we have received, God’s (Allah’s) bounty and our family and friends.
GSU linked to 'Prison Break'

By Victoria Rappatta

FOX television’s new drama, “Prison Break,” is the show to watch this season. And GSU faculty, staff and students may even notice a familiar face or two when tuning in.

Local talent was first in line to audition for the show that’s filmed in Illinois’ own Joliet State Penitentiary. So when James Zahn, son of GSU staff person Cindy Matthias, got the call, he was only too happy to get thrown in “Prison.”

“For the most part it was a fairly standard shoot, but working in the prison environment was kind of an interesting social experiment,” says Zahn, who appeared in several episodes as an inmate.

“A few days of work, the guys playing the inmates sort of stuck together, while the guys playing corrections officers bonded into their own little clique.”

Matthias, division secretary for ACFE/MIS in the College of Business and Public Administration, is quite the proud parent, and has always supported her children in their desires to pursue careers in entertainment.

“I used to be in The Drama Group in Chicago Heights, and the Illinois Theatre Center in Park Forest,” says Matthias. “So I tried to lend moral support, cheerlead them, and give advice when needed.”

And while she doesn’t know if she would have tuned into “Prison Break” if not for her son’s role (she dis­likes violence) she says, “I’m glad I did because I think it’s an excellent storyline.”

Matthias and other fans of the show won’t get another chance to see Zahn on future episodes of “Prison Break,” since he decided to break out and pursue new ventures. However, he’ll live on in celluloid history through the feature film he co­wrote and will begin directing in December. In “Death Walks the Streets,” Zahn will play a bit part among other notable television stars like Christian Kane (“Angel”), Justin Mentell (“Boston Legal”) and Larry Thomas (“Seinfeld”). The film is scheduled to hit theatres sometime in 2006.

“Prison Break” viewers may have noticed another rising star and GSU student on the small screen. DuShon Brown, a master’s student in the School Counseling Program, featured in a previous Phoenix article (March 16, 2005) for her performance at The Center in the Victory Gardens Theatre performance of “A Few Good Women.”

“Shoes,” and her many talents in the field of acting, Brown was excited to land a stint in the big house.

“When I first started grad school, I had all this free time and I was aggressively pursuing my acting career,” she says. “I had a hunch that the minute I put acting on the back burner, my career would really take off. And now here we are, in the midst of my full­time internship, here comes ‘Prison Break’!”

Since the show’s main character, Michael Scofield (played by Wentworth Miller), spends a lot of time in the infirmary to get familiar with the layout of the sewer system directly beneath it (part of his break­out plan), Brown’s role as Nurse Katie Wech has landed her a bit more screen time than she first anticipated.

“I’m pretty much a regular now,” she says, “I realized it when my agent said, you’ve been bumped up in status. You have a name now!”

Brown is juggling many other roles in her personal life but she isn’t about to complain.

“I feel really lucky to be on the show. My biggest challenge is finding a balance between single parenting, full time high school counseling, and Nurse Katie Wech. But the role is small enough that I’m able to schedule around my other responsibilities.”

Not to mention, now that Brown’s name and character are listed under “cast” on the script, she says the bump in pay from that of an extra “is going help in paying off those student loans.”

And it doesn’t hurt that she’s been offered an incred­ible opportunity to work with such a great ensemble.

“For each episode, we do what’s called a ‘table read,’ which is kind of a first rehearsal. At my first table read, I had to really try hard not to be star struck. On my right was Stacy Keach, and on my left was Peter Stormare (‘Fargo’),” she says.

“They both made me feel so welcome. Peter Stormare took my hand and spoke so warmly to me. He kept joking and making comments. There was no pretentiousness or ‘star behavior’. To see people whose work I really admire, sitting at a roundtable with them, it was just beautifully overwhelming and surreal. I was giddy, I was trying to be cool, but I was scared out of my mind. I just kept saying to myself, ‘Please don’t mess up your one line,’ says Brown.

Catch DuShon Brown et al on “Prison Break” at 8 p.m. Mondays on FOX TV. Catch Zahn in reruns of the cast of FOX TV’s magichal fall drama ‘Prison Break,’ which airs Monday at 8 p.m. It films at Joliet State Penitentiary.

By Victoria Rappatta

FOX television’s new drama, “Prison Break,” is the show to watch this season. And GSU faculty, staff and students may even notice a familiar face or two when tuning in.

Local talent was first in line to audition for the show that’s filmed in Illinois’ own Joliet State Penitentiary. So when James Zahn, son of GSU staff person Cindy Matthias, got the call, he was only too happy to get thrown in “Prison.”

“For the most part it was a fairly standard shoot, but working in the prison environment was kind of an interesting social experiment,” says Zahn, who appeared in several episodes as an inmate.

“A few days of work, the guys playing the inmates sort of stuck together, while the guys playing corrections officers bonded into their own little clique.”

Matthias, division secretary for ACFE/MIS in the College of Business and Public Administration, is quite the proud parent, and has always supported her children in their desires to pursue careers in entertainment.

“I used to be in The Drama Group in Chicago Heights, and the Illinois Theatre Center in Park Forest,” says Matthias. “So I tried to lend moral support, cheerlead them, and give advice when needed.”

And while she doesn’t know if she would have tuned into “Prison Break” if not for her son’s role (she dis­likes violence) she says, “I’m glad I did because I think it’s an excellent storyline.”

Matthias and other fans of the show won’t get another chance to see Zahn on future episodes of “Prison Break,” since he decided to break out and pursue new ventures. However, he’ll live on in celluloid history through the feature film he co­wrote and will begin directing in December. In “Death Walks the Streets,” Zahn will play a bit part among other notable television stars like Christian Kane (“Angel”), Justin Mentell (“Boston Legal”) and Larry Thomas (“Seinfeld”). The film is scheduled to hit theatres sometime in 2006.

“Prison Break” viewers may have noticed another rising star and GSU student on the small screen. DuShon Brown, a master’s student in the School Counseling Program, featured in a previous Phoenix article (March 16, 2005) for her performance at The Center in the Victory Gardens Theatre performance of “A Few Good Women.”

“Shoes,” and her many talents in the field of acting, Brown was excited to land a stint in the big house.

“When I first started grad school, I had all this free time and I was aggressively pursuing my acting career,” she says. “I had a hunch that the minute I put acting on the back burner, my career would really take off. And now here we are, in the midst of my full­time internship, here comes ‘Prison Break’!”

Since the show’s main character, Michael Scofield (played by Wentworth Miller), spends a lot of time in the infirmary to get familiar with the layout of the sewer system directly beneath it (part of his break­out plan), Brown’s role as Nurse Katie Wech has landed her a bit more screen time than she first anticipated.

“I’m pretty much a regular now,” she says, “I realized it when my agent said, you’ve been bumped up in status. You have a name now!”

Brown is juggling many other roles in her personal life but she isn’t about to complain.

“I feel really lucky to be on the show. My biggest challenge is finding a balance between single parenting, full time high school counseling, and Nurse Katie Wech. But the role is small enough that I’m able to schedule around my other responsibilities.”

Not to mention, now that Brown’s name and character are listed under “cast” on the script, she says the bump in pay from that of an extra “is going help in paying off those student loans.”

And it doesn’t hurt that she’s been offered an incred­ible opportunity to work with such a great ensemble.

“For each episode, we do what’s called a ‘table read,’ which is kind of a first rehearsal. At my first table read, I had to really try hard not to be star struck. On my right was Stacy Keach, and on my left was Peter Stormare (‘Fargo’),” she says.

“They both made me feel so welcome. Peter Stormare took my hand and spoke so warmly to me. He kept joking and making comments. There was no pretentiousness or ‘star behavior’. To see people whose work I really admire, sitting at a roundtable with them, it was just beautifully overwhelming and surreal. I was giddy, I was trying to be cool, but I was scared out of my mind. I just kept saying to myself, ‘Please don’t mess up your one line,’ says Brown.

Catch DuShon Brown et al on “Prison Break” at 8 p.m. Mondays on FOX TV. Catch Zahn in reruns.
Students get an eyeful in Hall of Governors at 1st Annual Art Happening

University art students moved their easels, inks, paints, and works-in-progress out of the studios and into the open Hall of Governors to share the creative spirit with their fellows Nov. 2. In addition to viewing these masters at work, the GSU community had the opportunity to purchase some of the original creations. Proceeds benefitted the furthering of art.

Faculty members Dr. Arthur Bourgeois (left) and Javier Chavira began the ‘Art Happening’ with blank canvases, creating multiple masterpieces. (Photo by Beth Parin)

Tracy Cook Kosinski clearly enjoys the process of rolling ink to create a collograph, a printmaking technique. (Photo by Beth Parin)

Robert Hensley paints the likeness of his own dog. This work is part of a series depicting curbsides. (Photo by Beth Parin)

Barbara Newman’s work is symbolic of her relationship with her father. (Photo by Nancy LaLunias)

Joshua Rainis painstakingly creates a self-portrait. Could this be a holiday gift for Mom? (Photo by Nancy LaLunias)
Admiral tells of US role in Iraq, Afghanistan, and antiterrorism

By Marina Huizar

Four star Navy Admiral Robert Moeller visited GSU last month to bring focus to the war against terrorism and the situations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The event was sponsored by the Chicago Southland Chamber of Commerce as part of their Executive Forum series.

On a mission to speak at venues across the nation, the admiral is determined to better educate the public on all things terrorism, and the U.S. role in the Middle East.

Moeller is director of Plans and Policy for the U.S. Central Command (CentCom), which is charged with U.S. military affairs in countries of the Middle East, Southwest Asia and Northeast Africa, including the Arabian Gulf. He told how the al-Qaida network stretches well into the CentCom region, including northeast Africa, the Arab peninsula, and southern and central Asia.

Moeller outlined CentCom's essential tasks. First and foremost is to defeat adversaries, with our most dangerous enemy being al-Qaeda and associated groups. Next is to promote regional stability, followed by supporting allies and friends. Finally, is to protect our national interests.

To give an idea of the situation in Iraq, Moeller began by describing that there are more than 30 provinces in the country. Of those provinces, four remain highly contentious, especially in those with Sunni Arabs, from where the heart of the insurgency stems. And there is a regular flow of foreign fighter jets over the country with which to contends.

CentCom has 196,000 troops in the region (most of whom are in Iraq), and defense-related civilians amount to 35,000; the subtotal comes to 231,000. Including coalition forces, the grand total is around 260,000.

"The Sunni Muslims see this as a 100-year campaign against us, so they are clearly committed to the long-haul," he said "and that's our challenge. This is a fundamentally different war than WWII or Vietnam.

But fighting terrorism must go far beyond supplying military forces, according to Moeller. He pointed out that need to cut off terrorist organizations' financial networks and their ability to communicated terrorist messages via the Internet.

Increasing the presence of Iraqi security forces is another priority. "It's one thing to supply basic training, but another to develop the proper leadership skills they need," he said. "That can only be gained in the field, which is what they are getting now."

Addressing last January's elections in Iraq, "We would like to have seen more Sunnis participate, but they have not had political culture," Moeller said. "Certainly not in the past 30 years, due to the dictatorship."

He explained that this whole evolution marks a tremendous step towards a political progression, stating that these are revolutionary times for the Middle East.

Moeller also outlined the life cycle of suicide bombing. He described how a suicide bomber is recruited and empowered. He reiterated that moderate Muslims agree that what suicide bombers profess is a perverted concept of Islam.

The admiral maintains that moderates clearly understand and are supportive of our mission, and that we don't want to be seen as occupation forces. "That's why it's important we turn (responsibility) over to coalition forces to reduce our presence," he said. He acknowledged that anti-American sentiment is a very serious issue which needs to be addressed more.

The evolution of the U.S. Central Command began with the much forgotten Iranian hostage takeover of the U.S. embassy in Tehran. Then came the Soviet Union invasion of Afghanistan, and later, the Khebair (Africa) Towers bombing in 1996. They have also been dealing with 27 combined countries, including Qatar, Afghanistan, and Somalia. However, the number of countries involved is largely irrelevant because the challenges include not only political boundaries, but ethnic ones as well.

He certainly has seen these troubled areas first-hand. "Having [travelled] to all these places has been fascinating. Since 9/11, it's been remarkable the distance we've come in Afghanistan. Indeed, the Russian fight in Afghanistan and Chechnya were failures.

"There's been a lot of progress, but there's still a problem with narcotics. The goal is to provide livelihoods other than the poppy crop." NATO is increasingly assuming more responsibility in Afghanistan.

CENTCOM looks ahead to aligning actions with command priorities. This includes focusing efforts to defeat terrorist and extremist networks. The posture is for a long-war scenario with a focus on: persistent intelligence; robust counter terrorism and counter insurgency; strike capability; and security cooperation.

What's your opinion of President Bush's leadership?

"It's hard to say. Unless we know what the pressures are, we can't really know if they're doing things right. It's tough to be all things to all people."

Terry Rickhoff Staff member
University Library

"I don't think he knows how to get us out of the dilemma in Iraq, and that's scary."  

Stefanie Caldwell, Graduate student
Public Administration

"I like him. He's doing everything he can under the circumstances. Unrest in the Middle East, limited capacity to refine gas in this country, natural disasters ... None of these are his fault."

Ray Post  
GSU alumni  
Accounting
Acclaimed film maker Jesus Nebot shares his vision with viewers here

By Marina Huizar

Film director and actor Jesus Nebot recently visited GSU and spoke with students after a screening of his much acclaimed film, "No Turning Back."

Nebot says he seeks to inspire personal and social healing through his artistic endeavors.

An award winning filmmaker and a vibrant, thought provoking voice among twenty-first century artists, Nebot says it is his passion for peace and positive change that prompted his vision in founding Zokalo Entertainment in 2000. Nebot claims it is a company dedicated to empowering people, celebrating diversity, and social healing through his artistic release in Europe and the United States after a screening of his much acclaimed film, "La Loba Herida," and "Divina Obsession," which were distributed in 27 countries. Nebot's recent television credits in the U.S. include guest-starring roles in "NYPD Blue," and "Arrested Development," and Sci-Fi Channel's, "Starfighters."

"No Turning Back" is a story based on actual events that brings to our awareness the importance of embracing diversity and our common humanity. He even brings back to life the much forgotten Hurricane Mitch, which killed 200,000 Hondurans and displaced thousands of others.

Due to its powerful message, "No Turning Back" is becoming one of the most sought after films on the college circuit, with over 30 screenings in the last year alone.

Demonstrating the versatility of his talent, Nebot wrote, directed, produced, and starred in the film. It's his proudest achievement to date because he had "full creative control which accurately reflected my vision."

The script attracted established actors such as Lindsay Price and Vanessa Watson Johnson, even at a drastic cut in pay. Indeed, every actor was paid the same $100 per day. Lifetime cable channel has picked up the film and has already aired it.

The film has won 21 international film festival awards. These include the 2004 International Hollywood Spiritual Film Festival and the Alma Award for Outstanding Independent Motion Picture, the most prestigious award for any Latino production shot in the U.S.

He only wants to be a part of a project that has something to say. His touching performance as Rubio has been praised by film critics and granted him the 2004 Imagen nomination for Best Lead Actor in a film, as well as the Atlantic City International Film Festival's Best Actor award.

After receiving his bachelor's degree with honors from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in Madrid, Nebot completed his education at the Lee Strasberg Theatre Institute in New York. He then became internationally known for starring roles in the top-rated and award-winning television series, "La Loba Herida," and "Divina Obsession," which were distributed in 27 countries. Nebot's recent television credits in the U.S. include guest-starring roles in "NYPD Blue," and "Arrested Development," and Sci-Fi Channel's, "Starfighters."

Nebot hopes to do a project in the Middle East. He believes there's a large gap between Western and Middle East cultures. He would address this from both perspectives.

He says he wants to be an example of what his peers can achieve. He doesn't feel he's special or different. He believes there is a need for better representation of Latinos in the industry. He acknowledges the strides Latinos have made at different levels, but there needs to be more, especially behind-the-scenes work.

"That's what's going to create opportunities to tell our stories," he says. "If I can do it, you can do it. We just need to be committed to our hearts and desires."

Nebot was named Star Filmmaker of 2002 by the non-profit organization "Latinos in Hollywood" and recognized with the Outstanding Independent Filmmaker Golden Eagle Award by Nosotros, a prominent non-profit organization founded by actor Ricardo Montalban.

Additionally, Nebot has been the recipient of the 2002 Aguila Azteca performing arts tribute award and the Southern California Motion Picture Council's Golden Star Halo Award for his outstanding contribution to the entertainment industry.

Among the best & the brightest

Cynthia Maxwell has been selected as the GSU Lincoln Laureat Award winner for 2005. She is in the Integrative Studies Program in the College of Arts and Sciences.

The award recognizes excellence in both academic and extracurricular activities. Only one student is chosen from each of the eligible Illinois colleges and universities.

Forty GSU students were invited to join the Alpha Sigma Lambda honor society for nontraditional students. They are among GSU's top 10 percent in academic achievement.

The society's aim is to recognize the special achievements of adults who accomplish academic excellence while facing competing interests of home and work.

Students must have completed at least 24 credits toward their bachelor's degree with a minimum grade point average of 3.2 on a 4-point scale to be invited into this prestigious group. Those inducted during a ceremony of the GSU chapter, Gamma Sigma Upsilon, held here last month were:

Linda Abdelnour
Raquel Abud
Gwen Ames
Cheryl Baker
Shelly Boyer-Dailey
Jamia Bush
John Conrad, Jr.
Alexandra Cook
Laurel Cramer
Kathy Davis
Jennifer Dean
Diana Deep
Renee Elff
Greg Finch
Lorrie Harper
Jeanine Hendrickson
Julie Henninger
Jennifer Initlhar
Amy Kreamer
Mariah Kraus
Krzysztof Lowisz
Kathy Mason
Allison Mainz
Lauren McClure
Christine Metcalf
Stephanie Miller
Rita Muth
Keri Nelson

No other shipping company delivers more.

Seasonal Part-Time Package Handlers
• Earn $8.50 per hour, with potential for permanent job placement in the New Year
• Consistent Work Schedule
• Weekly Paychecks
• Weekends & Holidays Off

UPS Hodgkins
1-55 & I-294 • South Suburbs
Sunrise Shift • 4am - 9am
Day Shift • 10am - 4pm
Twilight Shift • 5pm - 10pm
Night Shift • 10pm - 3am

Shift times are approximate. For more information about Seasonal Part-Time Package Handler Jobs and the UPS Earn and Learn Program offered through Governors State University, please visit: www.upsjobs.com/chicago • Access Code: 3354.

Equal Opportunity Employer
Program guidelines apply

Obituary: So tragic with holidays nigh

The Pilsbury Doughboy died yester-
day of a yeast infection and trauma complications, from repeated pokes in the belly. He was 71.

Doughboy was buried in a lightly greased coocon. Dozens of celebrities turned out to pay their respects, including Mrs. Butterworth, Hungry Jack, the California Raisins, Betty Crocker, the Hostess Twinkies, and Captain Crunch. The grave site was piled high with flour.

Aunt Jemima delivered the eulogy and lovingly described Doughboy as a man who never knew how much he was kneaded.

Doughboy rose quickly in show business, but his later life was filled with turnovers. He was not considered a very smart cookie, wasting much of his dough on half-baked schemes.

Doughboy is survived by his wife Play Dough, two children, John Dough and Jane Dough, plus they had one in the oven. He is also survived by his elderly father, Pop Tart.

The funeral was held at 3:50 for about 20 minutes.
WHAT'S HAPPENING

Tuesday Nov. 15
Thompson Center MPA info
Find out how earn your master's degree in Public Administration 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph, in Chicago. Call 708.534.4934.

Thursday Nov. 16
Fall crafts corner
Student Life hosts a Craft Corner from noon to 2 p.m. and again at 1:30 p.m. in the Hall of Governors. Fall themed crafts are available for students to make their choice: leaf bracelets, scarecrow votive holders, or copper signs with Thanksgiving fall theme. Free! Call Sarah Appel at 708.534.4552.

Wednesday Nov. 16 thru Dec. 5
Student art exhibit
Paintings by Barbara Thompson will be on display in the University Art Gallery. Meet the artist at a reception 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday Nov. 16.

Wednesday Nov. 16
Searching for Jobs in the U.S. (International Students)
Career Services hosts this workshop at 4 p.m. in B1215. Open to international students who wish to find employment in the U.S. Call Jim Howley at 708.235.3974.

Wednesday Nov. 16
Emergency Management post Katrina
A presentation and discussion about the emergency management response to Hurricane Katrina, from 3:30 to 5 p.m. in Sherman Music Recital Hall. The forum will address Illinois emergency preparedness issues. Guest speakers include the president of the new Orleans Chamber of Commerce and local area emergency management officials. Call 708.534.4934.

Wednesday Nov. 16
BOG Bachelor of Arts Info Session
Discover the Board of Governors Bachelor of Arts Degree Program. Unique, flexible, perfect for working adults. Information session from 7 to 9 p.m. Call 708.235.2223.

Thursday Nov. 17
Mosaic
GSU's own international musical ensemble. Mosaic delights audiences with melodies and vocals from India, Mexico, Japan, and more, from 2 to 5 p.m. in the Hall of Governors. Members perform their interpretations of selections they think are most representative of their countries. Call 708.534.3087.

Friday Nov. 18
Academic Computing Workshop
Learn Netscape Composer from 2 to 4 p.m. in D3401B. Space is limited. Register by a form available in the library or e-mail l-geller@govst.edu. Call 708.534.4135.

Saturday Nov. 19
'Three in One Road Map'
See what it takes to conduct a job search, refine interviewing skills, and learn how to create the ideal resume for yourself from 9:30 a.m. to noon in B1215. Enjoy a continental breakfast at 10 a.m. Call 708.235.3974.

Saturday Nov. 19
Koko Taylor & Seigel Schwall Band
Blues legend, Koko Taylor at 8 p.m. at The Center. A major force in the male-dominated blues world, Taylor established herself as the greatest female blues singer of her time. She shares the stage with the genre-defying Siegel Schwall Band, led by harmonica phenomenon and Chicago favorite Corky Siegel. Tickets are $34 - $43. Call 708.235.2222.

Saturday & Sunday Nov. 19 & 20
Victory Gardens 'Wheatley'
The real life, storybook adventures of Phillis Wheatley, a revolutionary American slave girl, whose poetic genius lifted her from New England parlor trick into the great salons of Europe and beyond. Written by Victory Gardens Playwrights' Ensemble member and Chicago native, Lonnie Carter. 4 p.m. at The Center. Tickets are $3 - $39. Call 708.235.2222.

Tuesday Nov. 22
Science Chemistry Open House
From 6 to 9 p.m. Call 708.534.4520 for more information.

Thursday thru Sunday Nov. 24 - 27
Thanksgiving holiday
University closed

Wednesday thru Friday Nov. 30 - Dec. 1
Salute to Graduates
Winter graduates can order caps and gowns, class rings, graduation invitations, have photos taken, buy "Salute to Graduates" tee-shirts, and sign up for the graduation hoopla from 11 a.m. in the Cafeteria Annex. Call Sara Appel at 708.534.4552.

Wednesday Nov. 30
Conducting a Job Search
The Office of Career services hosts this information session to see what it takes to conduct a successful job search. Call 708.235.3974.

Saturday Dec. 3
Especially for Kids
'A Christmas Carol'
Enjoy Theatreworks/USA's delightful version of this classic story filled with witty dialogue and fresh new songs from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. It conveys Charles Dickens' original message that the holiday season should be a "kind, forgiving, charitable time. Tickets are $9 to $14. Call The Center at 708.235.2222.

Saturday Dec. 10
'The Nutcracker' Ballet
Salt Creek Ballet returns to The Center from 1 - 5 p.m. with the Sugar Plum party from 3 to 4 p.m. This holiday favorite is filled with dancing flowers, a sugar plum fairy and more all set to Tchaikovsky's classic score performed by the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra. An annual tradition, the Southland's must-see event! Adult tickets are $27 to $56, children $21 to $30. The Sugar Plum party is $9. Call The Center at 708.235.2222.

Saturday Dec. 17
Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra
Back by popular demand, this third annual concert is an assortment of family favorites sprinkled with plety of local guest soloists and choirs to celebrate the season. Call The Center at 708.235.2222.

PHOENIX NOVEMBER 14, 2005