

Bush signs College Cost Reduction Act

By SANDEEP ABRAHAM
Staff writer

President Bush signed the College Cost Reduction and Access Act in Congress Thursday, which will provide the largest increase in federal student aid since the Montgomery GI Bill of 1944.

Still, the act will probably impact Ohlone students only minimally. "It may have a small impact, but nothing significant since our costs

are so low," said Director of Business Services Joanne Schultz. "It will probably affect out-of-state students the most."

The bill will increase the maximum amount awarded by the Pell Grant Scholarship to \$1,090 and will cut interest rates on federal student loans in half without any burden on taxpayers as money will be deducted from excess federal subsidies currently being paid to the student loan industry.

"It will increase [Ohlone students'] Pell awards by \$490 for the '08-'09 and '09-'10 years...and it will eliminate tuition sensitivity for the Pell Grant starting on July 1, 2007," said Director of Financial Aid Deborah Griffin.

Most middle- and low-income families make anywhere between \$28,000-68,000 each year, with the median income being \$45,000 in 2003 and \$54,000 in 2004. As this bill will slice interest rates in half, it

also guarantees that borrowers will contribute no more than 15 percent of their annual income to repaying their loans.

Also because of this, the method of calculating the degree to which a student needs money changes, making more college students eligible for federal aid.

As a whole, the state is set to receive an extremely generous portion of the benefits offered by this bill. Under this bill, California

will receive more than \$3 billion over five years as part of the total increase in Pell Grants and student aid given to families.

This will then be distributed to students who take out need-based loans at California's four-year public universities, each of whom on average accumulates a student loan debt of \$15,125. University students with loans also stand to save \$4,380 on interest payments through this bill.

Pouring cement, installing rebar for SSB begins

By VANESSA BAUMANN
Staff writer

The construction of the new Student Services Building (SSB) is proceeding on schedule, with workers beginning to pour concrete and install rebar this week.

The SSB is set to be completed in February 2009, and will be occupied by May 2009. The building's main purpose will be to provide students help with financial aid and health care, as well as to assist with registration.

The construction process is progressing gradually. It has been an ongoing project since May 2007. Section by section is being carefully taken care of to make sure the building is finished in time, structured right, as well as for the protection of the students and staff. About 80 percent of the footing is finished, which is key to finishing the rest of the building. The crew has been mainly focusing their work on the bottom of the building, which includes putting in the beam support to have the base of the building steady and secure.

The construction crew's schedule includes working six days a week, rain or shine. They work eight hours a day, with a total of about 25 crew members; however, the number of crew members fluctuates day-to-day. Turner Construction, the firm responsible for the construction, has completed several buildings before this project. Though the crew has been involved with the construction of many buildings before, this is the first time they've worked for the Fremont Ohlone campus. Though this is their first time on this campus, construction manager Miguel said, "We are going to make this building similar to all of the other buildings; it'll look about the same." (Miguel refused to give his last name.)

In regard to some of the graffiti incidents that have been happening on the campus lately, construction manager Miguel said there shouldn't be any worries of anything like that happening to the construction site. "The fences around the site are used to keep anybody out, and also the campus police drive around and watch 24/7, so it's pretty secure."



Photo by Daniel Yuan

A worker cleans a section of the SSB construction site in preparation for concrete and rebar.

ASOC breathes life into committees of all kinds

By BRIAN CHU
Staff writer

The Associated Students of Ohlone College (ASOC) appointed Janelle Feliciano to the executive position of representative at large, Kevin Feliciano to treasurer and Kelley Kita to secretary at their meeting Tuesday.

A number of committees were formed at this week's meeting, the most prominent being an unnamed committee that has been fused from the recently created ASOC Awareness Committee, Spirit Committee

and the Monthly Event Committee. The forming of this committee is aimed at helping raise awareness of the ASOC in general.

"A large number of students don't even know ASOC exists. We need to make sure people who come to our school know we are here for them and are here for their suggestions," said Senator Alexander Song.

In regard to the Spirit Committee, Janelle Feliciano said, "I believe school spirit is a very vital part of going to college. It fuels people to come to events, to come to school, it is the basis of everything. We need a

committee that raises awareness to people of where they are going, to raise awareness that they are going to Ohlone College."

She also added, "I want to give a new life to what it means to go to Ohlone College. I want to create new things that are not boring! It's to create a sense of unity and school pride."

Also of interest is that the website committee, suggestion box committee and promo ad committee, which were ideas presented in last week's meeting, did not come to pass. "We shouldn't stretch ourselves thin with

all these committees," said ASOC member Jackie McCulley.

The ASOC also passed Board of Trustees Representative Ken Steadman's brainchild, the Campus Live Music Committee. "We are responsible for bringing live music to campus, things like battle of the bands would be one of the projects, Wild and Out Wednesdays would also fall under the umbrella of this committee," said Steadman. There are rumors that Steadman himself may play an instrument at the first Battle of The Bands on Oct. 26.

Also passed and of interest to the

student body are the self-explanatory Food and Cafeteria Committee which is spearheaded by Steadman's rally cry "I just need food!" along with the Facilities/Newark Campus Committee, the Marketing Committee (whose goal is to market out Ohlone, perhaps even making it a "brand," according to Feliciano), and the Speakers Committee, which brings speakers to the college.

Committees are open to the public, and can be joined by students and faculty. The ASOC urges students to create committees concerning their needs.

Newark finances variable

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until Dec. 15, 2007 and Stagnaro explained that the purchasing schedule has been coordinated with Ohlone's full acquisition of the site. "We haven't purchased [much of] it yet," Stagnaro said, "only because we don't have a place to deliver it and rather than have it delivered [to the Fremont campus] and then have them move it to Newark, we are trying to time everything in a way that we can just receive it over there." Director of Purchasing and Contracts Mark R. Robbins added, "If we order too soon, we would have to store it somewhere and then move it, creating double handling and additional expense." The estimated total needed for purchasing equipment is \$15 million.

In addition to the money from the chancellor's office, the Newark Center is seeking to tap into other funding streams to purchase

additional equipment. According to Schultz, these funding streams include: bond funds, grants, some general funds and donations both in-kind and in cash. President Doug Treadway also mentioned that the Newark center has two rooms designated for Contract Education courses aimed at the corporate world with training programs for staff and group coaching.

"There's part of the campus that is set up to revenue generate from that corporate training," said Treadway. The hands-on contract development training creates real world contracts between outside businesses and Ohlone, which brings in additional revenue.

Treadway is hopeful regarding growth for the Newark Center and believes that over time it may have the potential to become a full-fledged second campus rather than a center. "My prediction would be

that in five years it would qualify for the next level of funding," said Treadway.

To reach the next level of that funding, the Newark center itself would have to generate 5,000 Full Time Equivalent Students a year. If it does reach that level in the future, the Newark Center would then earn the Ohlone College District an annual base grant equal to the \$3 million the Fremont campus earns now.

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