



OHLONE COLLEGE MONITOR

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Students march against cuts Motorcyle crash injures student

By **ESMERALDA LEON**
Staff writer

"We are the mighty mighty students!" As Ohlone students marched over the bridge leading to the west steps of the state Capitol, it was the song that 7,000 students, staff, faculty and administrators chanted as part of Monday's multi-college "March in March" protest, as they held up signs and posters protesting the impending fee increases, layoffs and budget cutbacks for California colleges.

"In these difficult times of business closures, unemployment and deficits, the opportunity for a college education is critical to the economic and social future of California," said California Federation of Teachers (CFT) Vice President Dean Murakami. "But our state government continues to place barriers in front of student success."

The state budget cuts to education have been sweeping and deep. In the midyear state budget, legislators voted to delay \$540 million to community colleges. In addition, the state funds promised to community colleges this April will be deferred until July, and the July funds will not be paid until October.

Furthermore, the Legislative Analyst's Office is currently recommending an increase in the cost of community college tuition from \$20 to \$30 per unit.

Students represented their schools with t-shirts, banners and school mascots. Community colleges from all over California stepped up to make their voices heard for the fight for education. Ohlone's cohort, coordinated by the Associated Students of Ohlone College (ASOC), was comprised of 41 students, staff, faculty, and administrators, only partly filling 135 Ohlone bus seats available.

The ride to Sacramento was not so smooth in the beginning; the bus popped a tire and students had to wait for another bus to pick them up, leaving the group slightly behind schedule.

As my fellow students and I arrived at the center of the steps the sound of drums echoed through the crowd, sending vibrations through the ground. A local radio station contributed to the noise with their music and speeches by students. Students walked through the crowd passing out letterheads, asking those in the crowd to write a letter to the governor regarding their concerns for future education funding.

I was able to get inside the capitol and to the governor's office through the long line, but Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger was not at his office during the rally.

Employees of the capitol continued their jobs as normal.



Photo by Esmeralda Leon

Students marched in Sacramento Monday to protest college budget cuts.

Police officers stood at almost every street corner and the perimeter; however, there were no arrests or any outbreaks of violence.

Featured speakers were Lt. Gov. John Garamendi, Assembly member Sandré Swanson, Assembly member Current Price and University of California Student Association (UCSA) President Lucero Chavez.

President Chavez yelled over the microphone, "Si Se Puede!" She explained that Californians work hard and pay taxes, therefore we deserve to have a good education, and instruction should be the last place to see cuts.

Motorcyle crash injures student

By **NICOLE JOHNSON**
Features editor
and **INEZ BLACK**
Staff writer

An Ohlone student underwent surgery for a crushed left hip Wednesday afternoon after the motorcycle he was driving slammed into a car that pulled out of the Starbucks parking lot on Mission Boulevard across from the campus earlier in the day.

According to Fremont police, Allen Clark Pierce, 19, was riding southbound on Mission at about 10:06 a.m. on a Kawasaki 750 Vulcan motorcycle. A black Ford Mustang was making a left-hand turn from the Starbucks parking lot onto the northbound lane of Mission. Pierce apparently tried to stop his motorcycle and go around the rear of the Mustang when the collision took place. The driver of the Mustang was only identified as Amanda.

Pierce's motorcycle hit the left rear fender of the Mustang. He was thrown from his motorcycle and tumbled four or five times, landing in the street.

Pierce's father, Robert Pierce, said his son "has two lacerations above each eye, requiring 8 to 10 stitches and a broken left thumb." Allen Pierce was taken to the Regional Medical Center in San Jose. Pierce did, however, have a helmet on.

Ohlone student Christy Marovich, 21, pulled out of Starbucks just after the collision. She saw something tumbling down Mission Boulevard. She said she thought, "that's not supposed to be there," and realized it was a person that was tumbling. Marovich heard Pierce screaming in pain and parked her car, turning on the emergency flashers to stop traffic, and ran over to help him. Marovich asked the injured motorcyclist what hurt, and relayed the information to the person calling 911.

Ohlone Student Health Center Director Sally Bratton arrived on the scene of the accident just as the paramedics arrived, and consoled Marovich and the Mustang driver.

Bratton said that exiting from the Starbucks parking lot is dangerous, as traffic is difficult to see until the driver is already in the intersection.

Bratton reminded students "to be aware that if you suffer some type of trauma, the Student Health Care Center provides counseling for those situations."

Ohlone to collect debts; payment plans optional

By **SEAN NERO**
Staff writer

Beginning with the summer semester, Ohlone plans to crack down on late-paying students with its "payment plan and seat reservation systems."

The plan is targeted at students who have trouble paying their tuition completely. According to Dean of Business Services Joanne Schultz, "Ohlone loses between \$100,000 and \$150,000 a semester," due to unpaid fees. In the past, "The college [has been] very lenient in the way it dealt with these issues."

Usually Ohlone prevents students with outstanding balances from accessing transcripts and registering for any classes. According to Schultz, between California's "deferring [of] payment to community colleges," the current economic climate and skyrocketing enrollment increases, the college is being forced to take other actions. The new system allows the college to unenroll students from their

classes who fail to pay their tuition before a predetermined due date. Those who fail to pay before the due date risk losing their seats to other students who are on the waitlist.

Upon registering with WebAdvisor, students will be presented with a list of payment options including the payment plan selection. The payment plan allows students to pay for their classes over a period of time by making a \$20 flat rate payment. Those payments can be made either by credit card or directly withdrawal from a checking account. Students who sign up for a payment plan will receive updates from payment processing company Nelnet.

Nelnet will contact students by email should any changes arise. Schultz said, "it's very important for students to use the same email address that the school has on file" to insure all of the information is delivered to them effectively. For students who choose the payment plan, Schultz advised that they enroll early due to the "number of payment

opportunities that arise."

There will be a maximum of six payment opportunities throughout any given semester, and the longer a student waits, the greater those payments will be. Schultz said that the payment plan "gives the student options on payment" and seating priority because "the first students that pay are the first people seated."

According to Schultz, "The payment plan will benefit international students because they usually have higher tuitions and they will receive the same benefits as local students."

Schultz said she is "concerned with continuing students because they won't hear about this opportunity in any orientations."

A feature that Schultz would like to see implemented into the college is a "universal campus card." This card would be based on the cards currently in use in UC's and CSU's that allow students to pay for meals and laundry. Along with the Associated Students

of Ohlone College (ASOC), Schultz hopes to soon introduce these cards to the student body to help centralize finances. The cards would act as I.D cards, and also be accepted in the bookstore, cafeteria and even campus vending machines. Schultz said that "theoretically financial aid students could have their entire disbursement deposited on one of the cards." The cards are in their early planning stages, as there is not yet a vendor who has the resources to make the card. Still, Schultz is hopeful.

Students who neglect their payments will receive five notices through the mail. The notices are sent out to remind the students of their outstanding balances. Schultz advises students "not to ignore the letters and keep the school updated on their current home address." Students who don't reply to the letters will have their accounts sent to a collections agency as a last resort. Schultz said that collections are a terrible thing because "it stays on your credit report for up to seven years."