Students react to federal loan uncertainty

LOUIS LAVENTURE
Editor-in-chief

Students taking out loans to pay for college this fall got a not-so-pleasant surprise when the rates doubled. However, Congress stepped up and in July passed a bipartisan bill allowing federal Stafford loans rates to stay the same, going lower or in the worst-case scenario it drastically increases, sending rates through the roof.

“What if the market just jumps up really fast, now my rates are higher? Possibly tripling or quadrupling? That’s what it will be like in the future,” student Jovan Arias said. “I mean, I need the money so I am going to take it regardless, but it would be nice to have some kind of decent appropriate fixed rate.”

Students could luck out if the bond market takes a dip and pay their loan back at a fraction of what they originally borrowed, but that does not seem to be likely in our economy.

The bond market is relatively steady now for students but with the economy so finicky nobody can tell what it will be like in the future.

Former teacher and counselor Bob Rinetti feels for students who will be taking out loans to pay for their higher education.

“It is really tough for the youth today,” he said. “We tell them to go to school and they will pay it off. But then we make it impossible for them to pay their school accumulated debts once they are done. It doesn’t make a whole lot of sense if you ask me.”

ASOC to hold elections

LOUIS LAVENTURE
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The Associated Students of Ohlone College annual fall elections will take place on Sept. 30. Several positions need to be filled, including treasurer, representative at large, legislative representative and marketing and communications representative.

Students who want to be a senator also will be on the ballot during next week’s elections.

“Voting will be online and on campus (Fre- mont and Newark),” Student Activities Co-coordinator Renee Wong Gonzales said. “Our first meeting with a full council will be Friday, Oct. 11, at 11:30 a.m. in room 7101.”

For students not on campus, the online voting option was made possible by ASOC to ensure everybody has a right and access to vote.

Students at Ohlone are probably familiar with one of the senator requirements whether they realize it or not. Candidates are required to gather signatures from an average of 4 percent of the student body in their respective campus as part of their application for candidacy.

This year become a familiar sight in the quad and cafeteria areas as the application deadline dates draw near.

The petition deadline for fall 2013 candidacy packets was Sept. 9, which allows ASOC to review all of the prospective candidates.

“Last semester I remember a bunch of people asking me if I could sign stuff but not really telling me what it was,” student Jason Vasquez said.

“After about the third one I finally read it and had them explain it to me. I wish they would have done that instead of just trying to collect signatures.”

The ASOC elections process drew controversy last semester, when the elections were held twice after some online technical difficulties and campaign violations.

News

Ohlone trustee promoted to general

ALIZAH LODHI
Staff writer

The Army has promoted Ohlone College trustee Garrett Yee from colonel to brigadier general in the Reserve. His promotion ceremony was held May 19 at the Niles Veterans Hall.

“Getting selected for brigadier general is like getting hit by lightning,” Yee said. “The chances are pretty slim and I didn’t think I was going to be selected.”

Yee was serving on a mission in Afghanistan when he heard about his promotion. He saw his name in the Army Times weekly newspaper and received emails from people he had not seen in 20 years.

Yee served in Iraq from July to December 2006, and in Afghanistan for a 12-month tour ending in October.

During Yee’s time in Afghanistan, he served as the Army’s communications director for the Theater Signal Command, providing communications to U.S. military personnel.

“It was a very challenging assignment that required long workdays and close coordination with all of the major U.S. military commands in Afghanistan,” he said.

Yee served primarily in Kabul, but he traveled throughout Afghanistan and to other countries such as Kuwait, Qatar, and Bahrain. “I even made a trip back to Iraq,” he said. “That was a strange feeling to be back in Iraq as we were withdrawing from the country.”

Rep. Eric Swalwell, whose congressional district includes part of Fremont, honored Yee on May 15 in the U.S. House of Representatives.

“I am proud to honor Brigadier General Yee, who has served his community with excellence and has executed his role as a public servant with professionalism, fairness, and integrity,” Swalwell said.

Yee kept a journal from both his deployments, which can be seen on the Ohlone College website at http://www.ohlone.edu/org/collegeadvancement/yeeupdates.

Now, having returned to his family and friends, Yee works as a civilian in San Francisco and still serves on the board of regents.

“I feel honored to serve our country in uniform,” he said.”There may be a way that each of us can do our part to serve our nation and community. I choose to serve in uniform.”

Students in London, Paris

Sandra Park is leading a three-unit, study-abroad course in London and Paris from June 3 to 10. The film program within the Communication Arts and Sciences (ENG 127), is designed for those interested in journalism, creative writing, photography, fashion, music, food or art. For more information, contact Sandra Park at sandrapark04@yahoo.com.

Flu vaccinations on Campus

The Student Health Center will provide flu shots for those who still need to be vaccinated for this winter season. Shots will be $10 for students and $20 for faculty and staff.

The health center recommends calling to make an appointment. For more information, call 510-659-6258. The health center is located on the second floor in room 7101 at the Fremont campus. This presentation was held May 19.

Students react to federal loan uncertainty

“Rabbit Fever,” a documentary made by local filmmaker and Ohlone alumna Amy Do, will air Sunday on QKD’s True CA.

“Rabbit Fever” has been screened in USA Today, People magazine and on USA Today. For more information, contact Amy Do at amy.kimdo@gmail.com.

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