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Recruitment

(Continued from page 1)

a higher institution is proof that the BEST program is needed. "With BEST, we are saying that colleges can find talent out there in the junior institutions by identifying black and Hispanic students early enough in college to ensure better academic and financial planning for transfer to a university," she said.

Early identification of talented minority students also is the objective of a minority outreach program sponsored jointly by A&M and the University of Texas.

Ed Cooper, director of A&M's Office of School Relations, said, "We've heard the same old story everywhere we go. We haven't orchestrated well enough to motivate Hispanics and blacks early to prepare for college."

"From an early age, they don't feel they can succeed in college for whatever reasons. So they say, 'Why take all the hard courses?' They just

take home ec, FFA, the easy courses. But in their senior year, they change their minds and now they wish they had taken math and English. But they haven't, and they're not eligible for admission."

Branch offices of the outreach program to be established in Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, San Antonio and McAllen will look among seventh- and eighth-graders for signs of high academic potential, Cooper said.

"The first question is, 'Can we motivate them?'" he said. "Do they show signs of interest in continuing their education? And then we ask, 'Have they shown some academic progress in their young life?'"

Working with teachers, counselors and school administrators, the outreach program will attempt to motivate the junior high school students to begin thinking about their future and to prepare for college admission requirements early, Cooper said.

Representatives from both A&M and UT will work with the schools, presenting role models for the students, providing motivational programs and tutorial services, and informing students of standardized testing procedures, admission requirements and financial aid opportunities, he said.

High school students will be encouraged to formulate a "degree plan" to monitor their academic progress until graduation, he said, which will indicate the college preparatory classes required by different universities. This will help the student plan ahead "so he doesn't wake up in the twelfth grade sorry he didn't do that," he said.

Cooper emphasized that students involved in the outreach program would not be guaranteed admission to any school. Students in the program are selectively screened to ensure academic potential and the motivation to succeed, he said, but admission requirements still must be met.

Although A&M and UT sponsor the outreach program, participants are not required to attend either university, Cooper said.

"If you think we're trying to steer them to maroon or orange, you're wrong," he said. "We're just trying to get them to college."

Once in college, most minority students remain until graduation, he said, but getting them there has been the chronic problem. Now, however, increased action in minority programs should help the situation, he said.

"For about 10 years, we've been saying that it's important to do these things," Cooper said. "Now, the climate is just right."

"We've been hearing this for so long, but we just happened to say the right thing at the right time. It's time to move—it's not too late."

"You have to prove yourself. Let's stop pointing fingers and start joining hands."

Deposits

(Continued from page 1)

not to cancel. He said there is a great possibility they will lose their money, but he will not know until after Nov. 6.

He said if a student does cancel and decides to move back on campus and there are no spaces available, the student will forfeit his

deposit. Even if there are spaces, the student is not guaranteed the same dorm room.

Jacqui Sentmanat, a Mosher Hall resident adviser, said the slight change in the contract seems unfair to students since they don't know if they will receive their \$200 refund or not.

She said it is another way to "leave students up in the air."

"Last semester students were told that they were going to lose their deposit if they moved off campus for the spring semester and this is kind of a way to say 'you may get it back but don't count on it,'" she said.

Murray said almost every

school in America has the two-semester contract and A&M was one of the last universities to adopt this policy.

"It does certainly decrease the flexibility students have, although we are hoping students will decide to plan ahead a little better by deciding in March to renew the contract or not," he said.

A&M uses nuclear reactor to provide help with research, training in Texas

By Marie L. McLeod
Reporter

Some newcomers to Texas A&M think the University is on fire when they see the black clouds billowing over the west side of the campus.

Then someone tells them about Brayton Fireman Training Field. But many other unknown research and training facilities exist at the west end of Jersey Street, including a nuclear reactor.

The Nuclear Science Center, a part of the Texas Engineering Extension Service, operates the A&M reactor.

"We are surprised at the number of people who are unaware of the reactor," says John Krohn, assistant director of the Nuclear Science Center.

The only other school in the state that has a nuclear reactor is the University of Texas, he says. UT's reactor runs with 10 percent the amount of power A&M's does, but UT is in the process of constructing a new building and upgrading its reactor.

Construction on the A&M reactor began in the late 1950s and it began operation in January 1962, Krohn says. The reactor has a maximum steady-state power of one megawatt, the highest power it is licensed to operate at on a daily basis.

The reactor has a variety of uses, he says. It provides A&M researchers with the capability of performing neutron activation analysis, radioactive tracer studies and radiation damage and exposure studies.

"Also for the University, it is a training tool," Krohn says.

Nuclear engineering students can perform labs using the reactor and observe the principles they have learned in class in operation, he says.

Students, usually physics and chemistry majors, come in from other schools, such as Baylor University, Sam Houston State University and McLendon County Community College, to tour the facilities, see a demonstration and observe neutron activation analysis.

Neutron activation analysis is a method of trace-element determination. Basically, a sample is exposed to neutron radiation from the reactor, which makes trace elements radioactive. Then, by looking at the type of radiation a trace element gives off and its intensity, Krohn

says one can determine the isotopes of an element in the sample and how much of the element exists.

Sul Ross State University and the University of Texas-El Paso both have neutron activation analysis laboratories, he says, but they don't have reactors and, therefore, rely on the A&M reactor to provide the neutrons needed to irradiate their samples.

"... Within the community there are a lot of research activities that need the capabilities of a nuclear reactor to produce radioisotopes ..."

— John Krohn, Nuclear Science Center assistant director

"In addition, within the community there are a lot of research activities that need the capabilities of a nuclear reactor to produce radioisotopes (radioactive forms of elements) or for other reasons," Krohn says.

At the reactor, workers make a lot of radioisotopes that are used as tracers. He says some are used by plant scientists in fertilizer utilization studies while some animal scientists use tracers for determining the way cattle utilize the different nutrients in grass. The scientists put non-radioactive tracers in the grass. After the cattle eat the grass and digest it, their by-products are sent to the reactor in small vials to be irradiated. Then the researchers can study the sample, he says.

Krohn says most of the tracers produced are used in the oil industry for things such as well-logging jobs and in chemical industries.

The nuclear industry itself also benefits from the reactor.

Dr. Jon A. Reuscher, director of Nuclear Research Reactor Programs, says another service involves studying, on a small scale, accident phenomena that might occur in a big plant.

A&M also uses the facilities for training operators for industrial work with reactors. The trainees get a feel for the controls while starting the reactor up and shutting it down, a process that is too expensive to do on an industrial-type system, he says.

"The uses are endless," Reuscher says. Besides industry, the reactor provides aid to doctors.

Krohn says there are a lot of doctors using radioisotopes for diagnosing and treating patients. The center provides medical radioisotopes to two hospitals in the Texas Medical Center in Houston.

Doctors in M.D. Anderson Hospital use the reactor facilities on a

increased powers, the opposite of here."

Several commissions are set up to oversee everything that goes on at the reactor.

Krohn says a staff of health physicists, who are employees of the Radiation Safety Office on campus, preside over the center's daily operations, such as the handling and production of radioactive materials for users.

"They ensure we're doing it in a safe and competent manner," Krohn says. "And they have the power to tell us not to do something if they feel that it is not safe."

Actually, he says, the safety office monitors anyone on campus that uses radioactive materials and anyone who plans to work with the materials must get a license from the office by going through its training courses.

The center must get approval from the Reactor Safety Board, an on-campus group of faculty members knowledgeable in the health science and nuclear science fields, for any modifications to the facility, new experiments or changes in operating procedures, Krohn says.

The federal government joins the other groups to ensure the safety of the reactor. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission periodically inspects the reactor site. Krohn says all operators at the center are licensed by the NRC after passing operating, written and oral exams.

Funding for the Nuclear Science Center comes from the extension service, the University, commercial customers and a Department of Energy grant, Krohn says.

The center's goals are to continue servicing the University and its needs and to upgrade the reactor and support equipment. It would also like to add new experimental facilities and revive some old ones, he says.

The reactor uses highly-enriched fuel and the NRC ruled that all research reactors must convert to low-enriched fuel. So, as the Energy Department makes money available to them, reactor officials hope to convert fuels while upgrading the reactor to two megawatts, Krohn says.

Anyone can tour the facilities but Krohn encourages people to call ahead.

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