

Financial aid offers hope to needy A&M students

By Denise Thompson
Reporter

Remember when your parents used to tell you money didn't grow on trees? For those students who do remember but still need additional money for expenses, the financial aid department could provide some shade.

More than half of Texas A&M students receive financial assistance from the financial aid department, Taft Benson, director, said.

Last year, 20,969 students applied for and received financial assistance from short-term loans, long-term loans or grants, he said.

The first step in applying for financial aid is to complete a financial aid form before April 15. Parents' and students' income tax forms are needed to accurately complete the FAF.

After the FAF is sent to a processing center, A&M receives a letter stating the amount of family contribution for which the student and family are responsible.

Dawn Durr, administrator for information and counseling, said, "This amount is determined from income and asset information, the number of people in the household, and other information provided on the FAF."

The financial aid department determines the actual amount of the financial aid assistance by subtracting the family's contribution from A&M's student budget. For undergraduates the average budget is \$6,700 and for graduates the average is \$7,500.

Although the budgets appear low, Durr said, they are the result of surveys taken by students every two years to determine how much money is needed for the year.

"When students come to us and say our budget is unrealistic," she said, "it is actually what the students who were surveyed said they needed."

Five expenses — tuition and fees, room and board, books, transportation and personal expense — are taken into consideration when determining student's budgets. If the amount of aid provided from the budget is not enough, the student has alternative sources of funding.

Not qualifying for aid is a possibility, but students should not close their minds to alternatives, Durr said. "Probably the hardest part of my job is when I give people options, and they don't take them," she said.

Benson said scholarships can provide additional funding for students. Last year, A&M awarded more than \$13 million in scholarships.

"The financial aid department sponsors two scholarships — the academic excellence award and the opportunity award," Benson said. "However, most departments sponsor scholarships, and we are used as a central location for disbursement."

Short-term loans provide assistance to students with temporary financial difficulties associated with educationally related expenses. Applications for these loans are available in the Pavilion.

Working is another source of money that can help fund living expenses not covered in the financial aid budget.

"I assumed I would be working part time, so it turned out all right," Robert Farid, a senior geology major who has been on financial aid for two years, said. "You can't have full scholarships for everyone."

Brock Bordner, an agriculture economics major who is on financial aid, said, "I'm not the best financial planner in the world, but if you cut corners and stay home every night, you might be able to live on their budget. But I don't, so I work 35 hours a week in bus operation."

Durr said that people applying for financial aid sometimes make it hard on themselves by not reading and paying attention to letters and deadlines they receive.

"Sending in applications and reply letters early, making sure information is accurate and being timely are important things to remember," she said. "If you sit on something for two months, the process stops, and we can't do anything about it."

An important part of receiving a letter concerning financial aid awards is the legal obligation students face when accepting a loan, Durr said.

Benson said if the student defaults the obligation to repay the loan, several measures of action can be taken.

In the past, credit bureaus have been notified of defaulters and income tax returns could be denied a person who has not paid a loan. For the future, Bentsen said, professional licenses may be withheld.

"There has been talk of withholding professional licenses from anyone who has defaulted," he said. "What this means is doctors, lawyers and other people needing a license to work would not be able to do so."

Community adjustments necessary in Texas town

KEENE (AP) — An order for a cheeseburger is followed still by the automatic query, "Meat or vegetarian?" in this quiet Johnson County community where maintenance work by volunteer firefighters on the Sabbath can raise ire.

But Keene, a conscientiously groomed, broom-producing town built around a small college and located between Cleburne and Alvarado, is undergoing changes that might radically alter its reverential image.

Once populated virtually solely by members of the conservative Seventh-day Adventist Church who traditionally abstain from meat and observe Saturday as their day of rest, Keene has mushroomed in size from 3,000 to 5,000 a 66-percent increase — in less than a decade.

As late as 10 years ago, Adventists represented 90 percent of the town, said former Mayor LeRoy Leiske, an Adventist.

Now, with newcomers commuting to jobs in the Fort Worth-Dallas area and belonging to different faiths, he estimates that members of the town's single Adventist church compose slightly less than half of its full-time residents.

In recent years, Keene's public

schools for the first time had more students than the Adventist-run elementary and high schools which lost not only pupils but also staff to the well-regarded, tax-supported district.

The Adventists, an outgrowth of the 1840s Millerite movement that believed in the imminent end of the world, believe in the second coming of Christ but set no precise date. In the last century, some of its followers, also known as Sabbath Keepers, were persecuted for refusing to conform to Sunday worship.

"There may be some very, very conservative Adventists who think the town has gone to pot, become too liberal — and perhaps it has," Leiske said.

Some residents still complain when a neighbor mows on Saturday, and he got an earful last spring when Edward Detwiler, the training captain in Keene's volunteer fire department, replaced a valve on a fire engine during the Sabbath.

Leiske said he negotiated a settlement whereby Saturday work would be conducted behind closed doors.

But it gets over 100 degrees in the unventilated firehouse with its doors shut, and Detwiler said neither he

nor any officer would enforce the former mayor's "compromise," which he said violated the separation of church and state. Only five of the 20 volunteers are Adventist, but all City Council members are.

"We're going to come up here and work," asserted Detwiler, 29, who is an electrician with a Fort Worth firm. "And we're still going to get complaints from residents who have lived here 60 or 80 years. I was born and raised an Adventist, and I don't think it's a Christian thing to push your religion on someone else. People don't realize Keene has changed a whole lot."

Leiske, for one, maintains he not only recognizes the changes wrought by the demographic shift but also encourages them. Besides Keene wasn't that Utopiana community to begin with, he said.

"We are close-knit people who kind of formed a colony where all believed, ate and lived the same way," he said. "But I think the city of Keene today is just a good, normal town, probably not a lot different from Crowley, Burleson or Mansfield."

Campaign asks for day of safe driving

By Velia Velez
Reporter

The Texas Coalition for Safety Belts is heading a campaign to promote safe driving to try to achieve one day without a traffic death this summer.

The "One Deathless Day" campaign began on May 28 and will continue until September 5.

George R. Gustafson, president of Texas Safety Association said the summer season is a high-risk time for drivers.

"Summer driving means that there will be more vehicles on the road and more miles driven, which increases the chances of injuries and deaths," he said.

There are 300,000 miles of roadway and 12 million licensed drivers in Texas.

Gustafson said the safety campaign is directed toward all users of the Texas roadways.

"Our message goes out, not just to Texas residents, but also to our summer visitors," he said. "We're urging all of them to buckle up, avoid driving under the influence of alcohol, and to watch out for the other driver."

Ann Streetman, public information officer for the safety belt coalition, said law enforcement officers, community groups, and private business' have joined in promoting the first year campaign by posting campaign and safety belt posters in their business' and offices.

The last deathless day on Texas roadways was January 5, 1977.

Quiz tests knowledge of recent news events

(AP) EDITOR'S NOTE: How much do you remember about the stories that have been in the news recently?

1. It turned out that Congress would have to cut \$1.2 billion in social spending for 1989 when the White House's Office of Management and Budget said: (a) it had miscalculated the size of next year's budget deficit; (b) the president would veto the budget if it had the spending programs; (c) the money wasn't there for the programs.

2. The likelihood of treaties limiting the size of nuclear tests, signed in 1974 and 1976, finally being ratified was enhanced when U.S. and Soviet scientists: (a) held a parley on the treaties; (b) carried out a historic experiment to measure each side's monitoring ability; (c) lobbied the United Nations in support of the treaties.

3. Some members of Congress said they opposed the U.S.-Japan nuclear cooperation treaty authorizing shipments by sea of plutonium from Japan because it would: (a) deprive U.S. nuclear plants of valuable resources; (b) cause widespread damage in the case of an accident; (c) be easy for terrorists to hijack such a cargo.

4. Vice President George Bush's surprise selection for the Republican vice presidential nominee was little known Sen. Dan Quayle of: (a) California; (b) New York; (c) Indiana.

5. Well into its retreat from Afghanistan, the Soviet Red Army was reported to be leaving in its wake: (a) top military officers' luxury accommodations; (b) a strong Afghanistan government; (c) millions of deployed and dangerous mines.

6. A White House directive regarding Congressional investigation of possible illegal activities by Panama's Gen. Antonio Noriega ordered the State Department, the Defense Department and the CIA: (a) to cooperate fully; (b) not to cooperate; (c) to vigorously pursue their own parallel investigations.

7. Civil rights leaders claimed victory but said they would still press a \$1 million lawsuit against Toledo, Ohio, when the city's police chief rescinded an order to: (a) randomly stop and question black teen-agers in a mixed neighborhood; (b) censure a black officer who had shot a white citizen; (c) test for AIDS everyone the police arrested.

8. Sein Lwin, after his ascendency to the presidency had plunged Burma into prolonged political chaos, announced: (a) his resignation; (b) a state of emergency; (c) release of political dissidents.

9. Upjohn Co. received government approval to begin selling in six weeks: (a) the first anti-baldness drug; (b) a new drug to combat AIDS; (c) over-the-counter a previously on-prescription-only antihistamine. ANSWERS: 1.a 2.b 3.c 4.c 5.c 6.b 7.a 8.a 9.a.

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