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AGGIE BASKETBALL
McGinnis "D" spells trouble for Aggie opponents.

Sports, Page 7

STUDENT LEADERS
Profiles of Brooke Leslie and Matt Segrest.

Aggielife, Page 3

NOVEMBER ELECTIONS
Democrats lost because their policies don't make sense.

Opinion, Page 11



THE BATTALION

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"Serving Texas A&M since 1893"

Thursday • January 19, 1995

A&M's minority funding policies under review

Native American and Asian students are not eligible for two of A&M's largest scholarships.

By Gretchen Perrenot
THE BATTALION

A&M's minority funding policies are under review to determine the possibility of updating the policies to include Native American and Asian students, A&M administrators say.

Administrators want to resolve the problem within the academic year.

Dr. Dale T. Knobel, executive director for the Honors Program and Academic Scholarships, said that A&M is trying to clarify whether the university's policies can be changed before the

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board changes the state policy.

"We are communicating back and forth between the state and the university," he said, "and hope to resolve this as quickly as possible."

Dr. Dan Robertson, director for Graduate Studies, said the Office of Graduate Studies would also be reviewing the policy for minority fellowships for graduate students, for which currently only African-American and Hispanic students are eligible.

Robertson said a change in the policy is uncertain and reviewing it would require at least a week.

A&M officials began investigating the university's minority policies in July 1994 in response to a civil complaint from Rose Red Elk Hardman, a senior sociology student and founder of the Native American Students Association at Texas A&M.

Hardman filed the complaint after discovering, through her student activities, that Native American and Asian students are not eligible for some minority funds.

Hardman said she is waiting for the results of

the review before responding further.

"I'm hoping they are reviewing the policies, and I feel confident that A&M will do the right thing," Hardman said. "I love this school and I want there to be more opportunities for Native American and Hispanic students here."

Hardman said her cause is not for her own benefit.

"It's not for me; I've always received financial aid," Hardman said, "It's the principle of the thing."

Dr. Sallie Sheppard, associate provost for Undergraduate Studies, said A&M has been very supportive of Hardman's efforts.

"I've worked with Rose over a long period of time," Sheppard said, "and have quite a bit of sympathy for her cause."

Kevin Carreathers, director for Multicultural Services, said the Office of Multicultural Services is also sympathetic toward Hardman's cause.

Carreathers said that he believes any deserving student of the four minority groups—Asian, African American, Native American and Hispan-

ic—should be eligible for minority scholarships.

Knobel said that all students on campus, regardless of ethnicity, are eligible for most university generated scholarships.

"Scholarships are merit-based," Knobel said, "and most are awarded regardless of the person's ethnicity."

All scholarships, except two merit based scholarships awarded to only African-American and Hispanic students, are available to whoever has the best qualifications. The Presidential Achievement Award and the Aggie Spirit Award are the only scholarships which have an ethnic requirement.

However, Knobel and Don Engelage, director for Student Financial Aid, said all ethnic groups are eligible for financial aid.

"Normal financial aid is color blind," Engelage said. "There is nothing specifically for any ethnic group."

The financial aid process includes a State Scholarship for Ethnic Recruitment which is available to all minorities, said Engelage.

A&M hosts minority conference

Southwestern Black Leadership Conference begins today.

By Brad Dressler
THE BATTALION

Minority student leaders from throughout the state will converge at Texas A&M University this week in an effort to improve their leadership skills at the Southwestern Black Student Leadership Conference.

Kevin Carreathers, director of the Department of Multicultural Services, said the SBSLC was founded at A&M in 1989 for minorities to enhance their leadership skills and apply those skills at their respective universities by strengthening existing programs and initiating new ones.

"I hope this year's conference inspires students to further their leadership roles by increasing their efficiency, communication skills and overall effectiveness," he said.

The conference's theme, "When Will Tomorrow Be Today?" puts the focus on the here and now, SBSLC chairwoman Stephanie Williams said.

"We all need to apply our skills to the problems that face us today instead of putting them off for future generations," Williams said.

"College campuses have always been areas of change and growth, especially during the 1960s and 70s. Students need to get back to that philosophy and act now before those problems continue to grow."

The conference will offer guest speakers, workshops, a career fair and a cultural extravaganza for the more than 1,100 expected visiting student leaders.

Speakers at the 1995 SBSLC will be Dr. Julia Hare, co-director of the Black Man Think Tank, Cincinnati, Ohio; Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu, president of African-American images; and Bev Smith, host of Black Entertainment Television's "Our Voices."

Lashaun Pollard, SBSLC associate chairman of Operations, Public Relations and Transportation, said that the committee hopes to offer a variety of workshops, with something to interest and enlighten each attendant.

Workshop topics such as networking, furthering education, finding solutions to racism, and searching for jobs will be offered.

The career fair, with more than 25 corporate recruiters, will conclude the week's activities, giving students the chance to make business contacts that could lead to job opportunities.



Amy Browning/THE BATTALION

Fishing for applications

These lighted fish mark the table in the MSC where Fish Camp applications can be picked up.

Doctorate program aims to increase number of minority degree candidates

Video-conferencing system gives students throughout Texas a chance to earn a Ph.D. from A&M.

By Tracy Smith
THE BATTALION

A new Texas A&M Ph.D. program is combining environmental research, distance learning and technology to boost the number of minorities receiving doctoral degrees in Texas.

The program, funded for the next five years by the Texas General Land Office, will link engineers and researchers at Texas A&M University, Prairie View A&M University, Texas A&M University-Kingsville and Texas A&M Corpus Christi.

The \$1.5 million program will emphasize research in natural and engineered systems ranging from oil spill remediation to wetlands and coastal problems.

Dr. James Bonner, a Texas A&M civil engineering professor and head of the environ-

mental pipeline program, said this environmental pipeline program links smaller historically Hispanic and black schools with the larger Texas A&M institution. This reinforces the educational process for underrepresented students in engineering at all the institutions, he said.

"The pipeline program creates a support structure for students and researchers between majority and minority institutions," he said.

Dr. Andy Ernest, assistant professor in environmental engineering at Texas A&M University-Kingsville, said the basic purpose of this program is to provide an enhanced research environment for developing advanced degree candidates with expertise in environmental oil spill remediation.

"Since we are a regional university, we have ties all the way down into high schools, including ties into the community colleges," Ernest said. "The main goal is to pipeline students from an undergraduate degree into a master's and then on to a Ph.D."

The academic program al-

lows students to complete an environmental master of science and master of engineering degrees through the Trans-Texas video conference network, Ernest said. The network will allow professors at the four participating universities to teach students at any of the other participating universities through a live telecommunications feed.

Kirby Donnelly, assistant professor in veterinary medicine and anatomy at Texas A&M in College Station, said the pipeline program has been a win-win situation for both professors and students.

"It gives students the chance to receive expertise in an area that their university may not have expertise in," Donnelly said.

Donnelly, who is one of the professors participating in the program, said the program has increased the number of minority Ph.D. candidates.

"There are a number of top students out there interested in getting their Ph.D., but are attending universities without a Ph.D. program," he said. "This program gives them the link that they need."

CrimeStoppers program relies on student input

Campus CrimeStoppers must overcome obstacles before starting.

By Lisa Messer
THE BATTALION

Student leaders are struggling with forming a campus CrimeStoppers program that would help reduce theft and other crimes on campus.

Gene Zdziarski, coordinator for the Conflict Resolution Center and campus advisor for CrimeStoppers, said finding a way to staff and operate the student-run program has been difficult.

"It takes students to work it," Zdziarski said. "They've got to learn how to operate the program and how to forward

the information to law enforcement officials."

Garrett Higley, chairman of campus CrimeStoppers, said deciding who will answer the phones and what hours the program will operate is the biggest problem.

"We've got to figure out who's going to do what," Higley said. "We've got to work out some compromises with other student leaders."

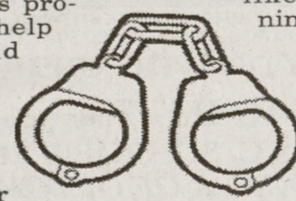
"We did a lot of work on it last semester, but it's felt like we were just running in place."

Zdziarski said the program should have sufficient funds to start this semester.

"We should be able to get going fairly easily," Zdziarski said.

Zdziarski said finding \$1,000 for set-up from the county program.

"There may also be some funds that were established for a reward program a



See Crime, Page 9