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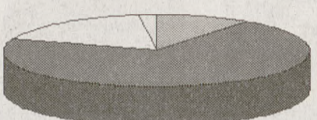
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Due to the magnitude of this offer, enrollment will be on a department by department basis.

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Students research ADA compliance

MAUREEN KANE
The Battalion

This summer, student senators will be researching ways to improve access for students with disabilities on Texas A&M's campus.

Kendra Williams, student senator and an educational psychology graduate student, is one of the senators who initiated a resolution creating a committee to research A&M's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Williams said the resolution was passed during the 1998-1999 session of the Student Senate and is currently in the implementation stages.

"We're just trying to see if there are ways in which students with disabilities feel they are not getting equal services, if there are instances of noncompliance with ADA at A&M," she said.

Williams said A&M buildings are ADA compliant, and the University has taken measures to ensure that disabled students have equal access to on-campus buildings. Williams said the Student Senate committee will determine whether there are other ways in which students feel their needs are not being met.

Although A&M is legally ADA compliant, physical access still poses a problem for some disabled students.

Anne Reber, coordinator for the office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), said to qualify as disabled under the ADA, a person must have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits his or her ability to do important life activities.

Reber said the SSD makes sure students with disabilities have the same access to opportunities that non-disabled students have.

"The physical access is still an issue. A building may appear to be accessible, but is not. The Military Science building is not accessible - that is because it was built before the ADA," Reber said. "If a student can't get into a building, we work with the University on moving that class to a more accommodating place."

Williams said although physical access is still an issue, the Student Senate has not expressed much interest in it.

"My impression from student government is if no one is complaining, they don't want to make a deal of it. There hasn't been a big interest in the Senate to do much research on it. Legally, A&M is ADA compliant. We're just doing research on instances in which disabled students don't feel they are getting equal services," Williams said.

Rob Ferguson, student body executive vice president and a senior political science major, said the intent of this resolution is to shed a positive light on the services offered by the SSD, as well as to make the University more accommodating to the needs of disabled students.

"We want to minimize problems for students with disabilities," Ferguson said. "Student Body President Forrest Lane and I will help Kendra Williams as much as we can. We will make sure that this happens efficiently."

Ferguson said the research is being done over the summer so that it can be presented to the full Senate and administration in the fall of 2000, when a plan of action will be created.

RISK

Continued from Page 1

insight into what is actually going on with the activity."

Lewis said such a difficulty arose during last year's Greek Olympiad.

"Basically, there was a breakdown in communication between us and the University that resulted in some unnecessary difficulties for us," he said.

Mindy Bregenzler, president of the University's Up All Night and a sophomore business major, said she has had some negative experiences.

"I guess I'm pretty neutral on the subject," she said. "It probably won't affect our organization because we don't do anything dangerous. Overall, the fewer people that get hurt, the better. I don't really see any negative drawbacks."

LOANS

Continued from Page 1

have forewarned student borrowers of the increase and the steps to take to manage their debts.

"This is the first I have heard of the increase. It's going to affect me immediately because I'm going to take out one (a loan) in the fall," Allison Glickman said.

Glickman said he hopes all other student borrowers to consolidate their loans before the interest rate increases will help borrowers manage their debts.

Students who need more information on how to apply for a consolidated loan can call 1-(800)-575-7392 or go to www.loanconsolidation.ed.gov.

LIBRARY

Continued from Page 1

update fire safety, new sprinklers and doors at the stairways have been added.

Restrooms on the third and fourth floors were renovated because their old pipes would burst with the power of the new pipes on the first and second floors.

The library has been under construction for different purposes since the mid-1990s, but there are not any future plans for construction.

"As for now, we are not planning any major construction," Gilreath said. "We are ready for a break. We hope the students enjoy the library because that is our goal."

The idea to improve the library was brought on by student observation.

"It is pretty clear we needed to move services," Gilreath said. "We were trying to match our observations of student needs to the services we want to offer."

The need for more study space and individual study rooms was apparent to library staff.

"We knew we needed to increase student reading space and independent study space."

Brad Whittlesey, a senior geography major, feels the renovation of the library will provide students with a better study environment.

"It's been exciting to see the changes that have taken

place over the last year," said Whittlesey. "It's like having a whole new building on campus."

Other students are excited about the library, but are more excited about visiting the coffee shop.

"I'm most excited about the coffee shop coming in," said McKay Howard, a junior marketing major. "It will be a much more enjoyable place to study in the library."

New Features in Evans Library

- Additional reading rooms
- Conference rooms
- Coffee shop
- New copy center
- Hands-on classrooms
- New map room
- Textbook section - enables students to check out textbooks from their class
- Individual study rooms for students to check out for 2-4 hours
- Gallery for monetary donors and academic recognition to scholarship recipients
- Assistive Technology Center - computers and software for disabled students

Texas children are second poorest in United States

AUSTIN (AP) — Despite a booming economy and record low unemployment, the number of poor children in Texas is the second-worst in the country, according to a study released Tuesday.

More than one in four children, or 1.5 million of the 5.6 million Texas children, are living at or below the federal poverty level, the Texas Kids Count Project study states.

The rate remains unchanged from last year.

"We still have a lot of children in need," said Pam Hormuth, director of the state project.

"It's very hard for people who see prosperity all around them to see that the increase in our standard of

living is not affecting all Texans," Hormuth said.

The Texas county-by-county study was released in conjunction with the national Kids Count study, financed by the nonprofit Baltimore-based Annie E. Casey Foundation.

The foundation's mission is to encourage policy changes that more effectively help needy families and children.

Texas ranks 37th overall among all 50 states for the 10 areas measured in the study. The reports were based on data from 1990 to 1997.

According to the study, Texas improved in five areas since 1990: infant mortality rate, child death rate, teen death rate, teen birth rate, and the

percentage of children living with parents who do not have full-time, year-round employment.

The state remained stagnant in the percent of high school dropouts, teens not attending school and not working, and the percent of children in poverty.

Texas fell in two areas — the percentage of low-weight babies and of families with children headed by a single parent.

"I think we're on the right track, but we still have a long way to go," Hormuth said.

Gov. George W. Bush has done and will continue to do his part to tackle the problem, said spokesman Mike Jones.


"Texas has made significant progress in helping those Texans who

have been able to fully enjoy state's prosperity," Jones said.

Jones pointed to the Children's Health Insurance Program, increased funding for child care programs that discourage teen pregnancy as examples.

"And most importantly, is the continued improvement in the state's education system, which in the long term is the best way to help children escape poverty," Jones said.

But Samantha Smoot, executive director of the Texas Freedom Network, said Bush favored a version of the CHIP bill passed last legislative session that would not be covered as many poor children in the current program.

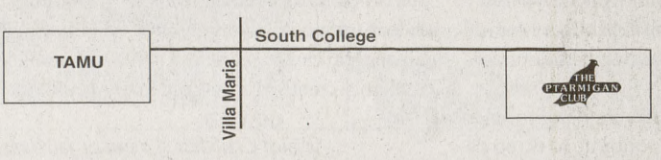


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