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Extreme impact from budget

by Danielle M. Murphy
Collegian Staff

The Ridge administration has released its proposal for the 1995-96 Commonwealth Budget. If passed, Governor Tom Ridge's budget will have tremendous impact on financial aid availability for college students at Pennsylvania schools.

Part of Gov. Ridge's proposal will cut Tuition Challenge grants in half and transfer these funds into the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency, which supplies state grants to students and primarily benefits private universities.

The Tuition Challenge grants, a program started by former Gov. Robert P. Casey, gives \$210 per every full-time, in-state student if the university does not increase tuition by more than 4.5 percent. Gov. Ridge's proposal lowers this amount to \$100 per student.

Katherine Delfino, Assistant Director of Admissions, concerning the transfer of funds

to PHEAA said, "What we lose through this is in no way going to be made up through state grants. The private schools will benefit the most."

Currently, Pennsylvania ranks 45th in state support for state and state-related schools. However, Pennsylvania ranks in the top third in state funding for private universities. According to Dr. John M. Lilley, Provost and Dean, "This keeps the costs of higher education up."

"It's getting harder, not easier to qualify for these grants," said Delfino. "Generally, people with lower incomes get more financial aid to offset college costs. People within middle income brackets really feel the crunch. They're limited to loans and Penn State may be viewed as out of their reach."

There's less and less money out there," added Delfino. "More students are going to need loans for college."

Gov. Ridge's budget proposal would keep Penn State's state

appropriation at \$269 million, the same as last year. The University had requested \$292,191,000. "We do have a challenging budget," said Dean Lilley. "But admissions have increased 35 percent for Behrend as a first-choice campus and we will continue to raise our standards."

Although the budget proposal includes a cut in Tuition Challenge grants, Penn State will abide by the 4.5 percent tuition increase cap. "I think you can count on a 4.5 percent increase. No more, no less," said Dean Lilley.

The proposal will increase PHEAA grants to \$240 million from almost \$210 million in the 1994-95 school year. A 17.3 percent increase is planned for PHEAA grants, increasing availability to 10,000 additional students plus an increase in the maximum grant to \$2,700 per year. However, according to Penn State President Joab Thomas, more than 50 percent of

the PHEAA funds go to private universities and not state or state-related universities.

"We're working to improve the budget proposal," added Dean Lilley. "We are optimistic about

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- Dean John Lilley

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Gov. Ridge's budget proposal has yet to be approved and

students and faculty can voice their concerns to local state legislature members.

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Photo by R. Carl Campbell III/News Editor

STD expert speaks at Behrend

by R. Carl Campbell III
News Editor

Dr. Richard Keeling, the country's leading authority on the numbers of sexually transmitted diseases among young people, spoke yesterday in the Reed Lecture Hall. Keeling, a professor of medicine at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, is the chairman of the HIV Disease Task Force of the American College Health Association. His lecture was titled, "Sex, Alcohol, and Self-Esteem: Health and Community

on Campus" and was sponsored by the Office of Student Affairs.

The main concern of the lecture was the consequences when choices and context come together for college students. He mentioned unwanted pregnancies as the perfect example.

He stated that college students do as they see. "They (college students) are being told to just say no, when all around them they are hearing 'just do it.'"

Keeling seemed to define alcohol as the root of the majority of campus problems.

He said that everyone suffers from another's binge drinking.

Most campus situations that involve violence and vandalism are alcohol related. Alcohol is, as Keeling mentioned, the number one health problem on campus.

Keeling said that most of the problems are not because that college students believe they are invincible, as traditionally believed, but that college students aren't sure how to manage the framework of making decisions and handling the consequences.

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