

Bush outlines plans for increased Pell grants

by Carolyn Barta
August 31, 2000
Knight-Ridder Tribune

CINCINNATI, Ohio -- George W. Bush spent the day talking about education -- an issue he is convinced resonates with swing voters -- in appearances in Pennsylvania, a critical battleground state, and New Hampshire, where he is trying to woo voters who supported John McCain in the primaries.

In a new proposal, he called for the expenditure of \$5 billion over five years to fully fund first-year Pell grants, providing greater access to college for low- and middle-class students.

But Bush was forced again to respond to continuing criticism from his opponent, Democrat Al Gore, including the charge that Texas has lagged behind other states in providing health coverage for uninsured children.

Participating with CNN.com in his first combined online, on-air chat Wednesday, Bush said states must "aggressively sign up" those who qualify for Medicaid. For children who aren't eligible for Medicaid but are below 200 percent of the federal

poverty line, he said, states can use the Children's Health Insurance Program passed by Congress in 1997.

"We anticipate signing up 400,000 children in Texas," he said, adding that "We spend over \$4 billion a year to help the uninsured in our state."

Gore has said his goal is for all children to have health care coverage by 2005.

"Our goal," Bush said, "is to make sure we sign up children within the law. I've heard the political rhetoric, that we don't want to sign up children to the Children's Health Insurance Program. That's not the truth. It's the same old-style politics -- to make an accusation that has no truth to it and hope it sticks."

"The state of Texas is a compassionate state. We care about our children. We probably care about our children more than somebody in Washington, D.C. does," he said.

Earlier in the day, Bush listed his higher education goals before an audience of 700 junior and senior students at a high school in Hampton, N.H., and again in Erie, PA.

Pennsylvania, which holds the fifth largest number of electoral votes at 23, last voted Republican

in a presidential race in 1998.

Besides increasing first-year Pell Grants from \$3,300 to \$5,100, he proposed "enhanced" Pell grants to students who take advanced placement math and science classes in high schools. He also called for a tax deduction that would allow families to put \$5,000 a year into tax-free Educational Savings Accounts.

"I want to make sure schools are affordable for children of all walks of life," he said.

Bush said he wants to increase education spending totally by \$25 billion. The biggest chunks would go to the Pell Grants, along with \$5 billion for an early education reading initiative.

In New Hampshire, where Bush experienced his biggest primary defeat, state GOP Chairman Tom Rath said Republicans who supported McCain are coming over to Bush. As for independents, he said, "it's hard to predict where they'll be."

He said of Bush, "the symbolism of him coming back (after the primary loss) is very important."

McCain is expected to visit the state in October.



PHOTO BY JEFF MILLER
Presidential candidate George W. Bush is welcomed to Erie by Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge. Bush spoke in Erie about education before continuing his campaign swing through New Hampshire and Ohio.

Commuter students looking for reasons to stay on campus

by Billy O'Keefe
August 31, 2000
TMS Campus

CHICAGO (TMS) -- Life doesn't always go according to plan, even if those plans are sketched out on a blueprint for everyone to see.

Take the historic Ludington Building. Located in Chicago's South Loop and owned by Columbia College since March 1999, the Ludington was earmarked one year ago as the school's next big thing. Students would finally enjoy all the luxuries -- a game room, a food court, a performing arts area -- that most universities and college towns take for granted.

Somewhere along the way, however, those plans faded away. Sure, you can still play in the cutting-edge Book and Paper Arts Center, but it's not exactly the kind of game students had in mind. And while the Glass Curtain Café has ample seating and plenty of ambience, you better bring your own lunch or you'll go hungry. For student performances, the Hokin Center down the street, while very limited in facilities and capacity, is still the place to go.

For many schools around the country, the botched addition of yet another food court and yet another place for games wouldn't raise an eyebrow. But at Columbia, where 95 percent of students live off campus and a lack of facilities scares students all the way home once classes adjourn, the mood is that of a community in desperate need of some food to eat, some games to play -- and someplace to go besides home.

Life at Columbia reflects that of the typical commuter college, which is anything but the typical college experience. For commuter students around the country, college isn't all about frat houses, marching bands and happy hours at the tavern. Rather, it's about train stations, car pools and rush hour on the expressway. Cab fares replace meal plans,

gas cards become more important than fake IDs, and the only time you talk about Alpha or Beta is during your freshman science class.

The University of North Carolina

"Try attending a basketball game on a Tuesday night. ...there may be about 12 students in the bleachers, and that's being optimistic."

-Aaron Krause, former Barry student

at Chapel Hill and University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Same school, right? In the words of the great Bart Simpson, "not bloody likely." True, the schools sound alike, and each boasts a full-time population of more than 10,000 (14,397 at Chapel Hill, 10,521 at Charlotte, according to U.S. News and World Report). But while the Tar Heels ignite the scoreboard and light up the night on weekends, UNC-Charlotte's campus barely even glows. In fact, most students don't even go home on the weekends, because they're already there: 72 percent of the student population lives off campus grounds.

The attitude in Charlotte is like that of most commuter schools: Get in, get the work done, and get the hell out before rush hour swallows you. And with so much of the student body adopting this routine, it becomes as much a tradition in some schools as pep rallies and point shaving does in others.

"UNC-Charlotte is what I would call a 'suitcase school,'" says Brad Burdick, a 29-year-old earth science

major. "A good number go home on the weekends, which I don't understand. They're finally away from home, yet they choose to go back to their parents' house."

Of course, Burdick is no rogue. "The only time I spend at school when I'm not in class is when I'm studying," he said.

Are UNC-Charlotte students a bunch of nerdy bookworms? Nope, and that's why they don't hang around. For students like Burdick, there's just nothing else to do here besides homework; very little entertainment is within walking distance of the school, and the most accessible clubs are a good drive away. What's more, few students are inclined to hang out at school all day just so they can go out at night, when they can do the same waiting at home and save thousands -- a fortune in collespeak -- on the cost of a dorm.

Some students really don't mind. "I'm here for a lot of reasons," said Columbia student Chris LaPelusa, 21. "Meeting people is possible, but it's not a big deal either way. I don't have time to hang around here anyway with my job."

But while the degree is still the thing, and attendance isn't exactly suffering - Columbia's student body is expected within the next few years to surpass 10,000 for the first time - most students still want more. And more they shall receive, as schools strive to offer road warriors more than a classroom and the occasional wash-room experience.

For three years, Barry University (7,500 students, 750 of which live on campus, according to University Spokesman Joe McQuay) has hosted the monthly Commuter BBQ, a free lunchtime soiree for students unblest by a meal plan. Columbia, in addition to the Ludington Building, has acquired four buildings in the past year alone and is working to bridge the gap between classwork, student activities and the burgeoning entertainment in Chicago's South Loop. And for those who would like a crisp

view of Chicago's swanky State Street, the college is combining forces with three other schools to build a \$200 million "super dorm" sometime within the next two years.

Many commuter students would agree that Columbia is on the right track. A good college town naturally needs a college, but it's the bonuses like bars, parks, restaurants, arcades and yes, housing that complete the picture; student organizations, sports and activities, safe bets as they are, aren't always enough.

"Try attending a basketball game on a Tuesday night," said former Barry student Aaron Krause, a first-year graduate student at hoops-crazed Indiana University. "There may be about 12 students in the bleachers, and that's being optimistic."

Asked what they would build if they could add one thing to their campus, most students had an easy answer: someplace to go.

"A street close to campus with nothing but entertainment, bars and clubs would be great," said 20-year-old UNCC Business major Trent Paino. "Most colleges have that."

Burdick agrees. "It only makes sense to put these clubs within walking distance. Right now, everybody has to drive downtown to go dancing."

Still, like most experiences, the college experience begins and ends with people. You need headcount to get headcount, and when a huge chunk of students go home all the time, new students simply follow suit. Some students believe that all the buildings and clubs in the world won't change a thing if they don't start the process themselves.

"It's not hard to meet people, and it's definitely worth the effort," Paino said. "But during the weekend, people who live on campus go home, and those who live off campus tend to stay off."

"I would hang around campus a lot more if there were more people who did the same."

Former U. Of Vermont athlete receives \$80,000 for hazing incident

by Billy O'Keefe
August 31, 2000
TMS Campus

Less than two weeks after strengthening its policy against hazing on campus, the University of Vermont reached an \$80,000 out-of-court settlement with a former hockey player whose story helped trigger the new policy.

Goaltender Corey LaTulippe joined the Catamounts last year as a freshman but left the team after an October incident in which he claims all first-year players were forced to walk naked holding each other's genitals, drink excessive amounts of warm alcohol, and eat seafood pie until they vomited.

LaTulippe's lawyer subsequently slapped the university with a federal lawsuit. University administrators and some of LaTulippe's teammates were also named.

After an internal investigation in January found several athletes untruthfully denying the events of the hazing, university President Judith A. Ramaley canceled the remainder of the Catamounts' 1999-2000 season. Additionally, authorities charged two players with provid-

ing alcohol to minors.

Last week, the board of trustees approved a new anti-hazing policy, which, in line with a state measure passed earlier this year, prohibits any act intended to "humiliate, demean or endanger the mental or physical health of a student," regardless of the person's willingness to participate in the act.

In addition, the university plans to continue a preventive education program that began in June, and have approved funds for a Life Skills program for student athletes.

A Life Skills coordinator will arrive Friday to further establish and eventually teach the program, which promotes team-building experiences and cooperation.

Since the hazing incident took place, LaTulippe has left Vermont entirely and is now attending another school.

In a statement earlier this year, Ramaley said that it is the university's responsibility to set an example by which other schools can follow.

"Our most important legacy may be to take a leadership role in finding, instituting and sharing solutions," she said.

Scooters Rule?



PHOTO BY NOVA CREUZ PRODUCTS, LLC
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