

## Congress approves funding for campus abuse clinics

by Caryn Rousseau

TMS Campus Washington Correspondent  
October 12, 2000

WASHINGTON - Campus domestic violence shelters won't have to worry about federal funding for the next five years after the Senate passed the Violence Against Women Act Wednesday.

The measure will fund programs across the country for \$3.3 billion over the next five years. Because Congress is pushing to adjourn in the next week it was attached to the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, which passed unanimously.

"At campuses around the country our young girls are going to be protected," Rep. Chris Smith, R-New Jersey, said at a press conference following the vote.

The bill includes a provision for Megan's Law that would make it mandatory for offenders to register on campuses.

The legislation received one threat from Sen. Fred Thompson,

R-Tenn., who was unhappy with the Aimee's Law attachment saying that domestic policy should not be attached to a bill coming out the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Thompson's appeal was not successful.

Aimee's Law, which passed along with VAWA and the trafficking legislation, would garnish funding from states that release sex offenders and give that money to states who convict the same sex offender for a repeat crime.

The legislation now goes to President Bill Clinton, who is supportive of the measures. Clinton signed VAWA into law in 1994 as part of a larger crime bill.

"During the last six years VAWA has made a crucial difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands of women and children," Clinton said in a statement. "It has enabled communities to expand prevention efforts, enhance the safety of more victims and hold perpetrators of violence against women accountable for their acts."

## Graduating in 4 years: Is it history at colleges?

by Philip Walzer  
Knight-Ridder Tribune  
October 12, 2000

Parents, take note: For most college students, a four-year degree is a thing of the past.

At most of Virginia's 15 public four-year colleges, less than 50 percent of freshmen graduate within six years, according to state data. That's still an improvement from the recent past; in the past decade, the graduation rates have risen at two-thirds of the schools. The latest data from the State Council of Higher Education, which are not final, track the number of freshmen starting college in 1993 who graduated by 1999. They show:

•About 20 percent graduated at Norfolk State University, the Virginia school with the lowest rate.

That reflects Norfolk State's "almost open-admissions" policy in the early 1990s, President Marie V. McDemmond said. She predicted that the rate will increase with the university's recent shift to a C-average admissions requirement and more intensive advising of students without majors.

•Slightly less than 40 percent graduated from Old Dominion University, down from 41.4 percent of 1983 freshmen.

ODU President James V. Koch said the change is small and termed the rates "basically irrelevant" for ODU. Thirty percent of freshmen, including military dependents, "tell us they do not intend to graduate from ODU." Koch thinks those students should be excluded from the rates.

•Twenty-eight percent graduated at Christopher Newport University, down from 30.5 percent of 1983 freshmen.

The school has the state's second-lowest rate, but its provost, Robert D. Doane, said: "I don't think that reflects what students at CNU are like today. What we're doing now is accepting much more qualified students."

The colleges with the best graduation rates remain the University of Virginia and the College of William and Mary, at 91 and 88 percent, respectively. That's no surprise to Phyllis Palmiero, executive director of the state council, who echoed academia's caveat: Don't compare schools. "Students who go to William and

Mary and the University of Virginia are academically prepared," Palmiero said. At some other colleges, "students may be less prepared or they may have more challenges paying for school. So they're going to be dropping in and out, and taking fewer courses."

Academics say Virginia's figures are in line with nationwide results.

ACT Inc., an education organization in Iowa, surveys 450 public four-year colleges. It says the five-year graduation rate has fallen from 48.5 percent in 1987 to 42.2 percent in 1999. It does not compute six-year rates, as Virginia does. Neither compares four-year rates.

Kelley Hayden, a spokesman for ACT, offered two major reasons for the decline: "inadequate preparation for college work" and the need to work to pay tuition.

Krista Harrell hopes to graduate from ODU in May, five years after she started. Her explanation: She began as a political-science major but after a year switched to human-services counseling.

She couldn't take summer courses, because she was too busy working.

"If you don't work part time and you can go to summer school, you can graduate in four years," said Harrell, 22. "Other than that, it's very, very hard."

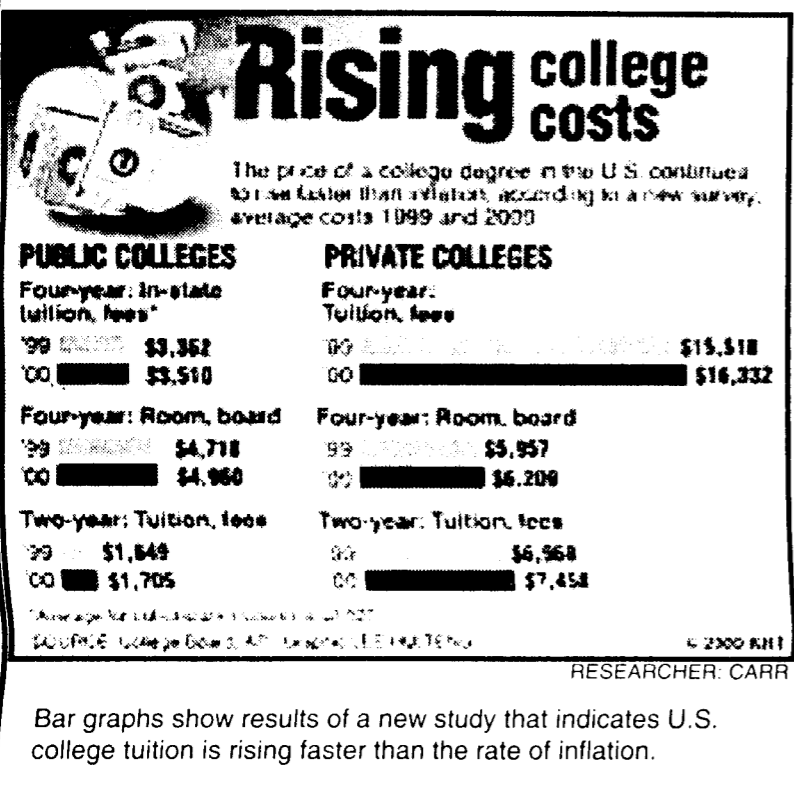
Longwood College enjoyed the biggest growth in its rate, which went from 44.6 percent for 1983 freshmen to 60.6 percent for 1993 freshmen. The president, Patricia P. Cormier, says it's a mix of tougher admissions standards and a revised freshman course focusing on study skills and time management.

The answer isn't totally in the classroom. At Virginia State University, which also recorded increases in its rate, President Eddie N. Moore Jr. says upgrades in food and housing didn't hurt. "You have to pay attention to creature comforts," he said.

Some administrators play down the rates, saying the numbers don't take into account transfer students. Plus, a one-year blip based on a few weak students in a freshman class could hurt a school's image.

But Cormier said: "Paying attention to graduation rates is very important. ... It is a measure of whether or not we are able to recruit and retain students to graduation. My objective is to give everybody a baccalaureate degree."

### Don't watch for falling prices...



## Beastie Boys' Mix Master Mike spins DJ tips to students

by Andy Argyrakis

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October 17, 2000

One highlight of the party scene on campus is the music played to keep attendees moving and grooving into the wee hours of the night. The DJ is a central focus of those weekend getaways from classes, and a lot of students have cashed in at their school by taking up the practice of spinning tunes tirelessly into the night.

For some, that dream is even bigger than mixing at freshman orientation weekend or the frat party scene. A few of those D.J.'s may have their sights set on mixing things up professionally, perhaps as a headliner at a top dance club or as part of a touring music group. Such was the dream of the Beastie Boys' Mix Master Mike, who got his focus nailed down in his teenage years, leading to his current position in one of the world's most famous party styled rock bands.

"I've spent 14 years building up my own style and presence," Mix Master Mike says. "I used to be a break dancer and I really liked all aspects of the culture. I got involved right in

the midst of the scene and went to every party and concert surrounding the style to study it and see where I could find my niche."

Mix Master Mike's niche turned out to be mixing the hip-hop style, while incorporating vinyl scratching, scratch drumming and improvisation of adding in songs from any genre.

"I actually play the turntable as a percussion instrument," he says. "I'll scratch sometimes, but I also keep my ears open to how other instruments sound. When I program



Mix Master Mike, the DJ for Beastie Boys, demonstrates some of his spinning techniques for an audience of eager listeners.

drums, I know where they hit, and when I mix in keyboards, I know where to add those sounds. I'm like the master of my own art, sort of like

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Developing that art form has come from years of practice and listening to each and every artist he could get his hands on. "I've learned not to just study one style," he says. "That means not just listening to pop music, but getting into everything, from blues, to jazz, to rock. Switching styles has given me a universal appreciation for music and helped me understand the process of mixing."

Having found that universal appreciation, and having been almost ev-

erywhere in the universe throughout his touring schedule, Mix Master Mike has developed a passion for helping out and giving advice to young D.J.'s.

"You must have a unique talent to do this and in order to be successful, you have to stand out," Mike says.

"The key to making it is to identify your own sound. Once you have that sound as a D.J., you also have to have it as a producer, who can form their own grooves and mix up sounds that fit within that style."

An additional tip he has for those starting out is to keep track of all the

progress they've made.

"I've written on paper some of the formulas I've discovered for mixing," he says. "I would highly recommend writing down anything you create so you make sure you have record of it and can recreate it some day."

As to a new Beastie Boys creation in the near future, Mix Master Mike is cautious about giving away too much.

"Adam [Yauch] and Mike [Diamond] are working on separate projects right now," he reveals.

"They're really moody musicians,

so it will come when they feel it's a good time."

In the meantime, Mix Master Mike is focusing on solo performances, like his dates on the Twix Mall Tour, where he's disc jockeying a set of music and giving fans the chance get some quick one-on-one turntable training.

"I've never done such a tour, but I'm been real interested in helping people go down the same path I've taken. And a mall is a cool place to start because it incorporates many aspects of culture."