

The Montreal College Student Voice WHETSTONE

Volume IV, Number V Montreal, NC 28757 November 19, 2003

King & Cabinet Shrink Tuition Hike

By Kortney Blythe

In a meeting between the Board of Trustees, President's Cabinet, and Interim President Dr. Don King, the previously announced 8.1 percent (\$1,502) spike in tuition dropped to 7.6 percent (\$1,408).

This new figure breaks down to a 7 percent increase in tuition (\$988) for a new total of \$15,108 and a 9.5 percent increase in room and board (\$420) for a new total of \$4,862. The total tuition for the 2004-2005 school year presently stands at \$19,970.

In the 10-31 Whetstone, King cited the primary reasons for the tuition boost, "three faculty positions need to be filled [and] for three [and four] consecutive years the faculty and staff have

not received increases in their compensation."

"Faculty and staff received a four percent increase in 2000-01. It should be pointed out that while employees have not received a salary increase since then, the college has paid the equivalent of a 2.5 percent increase, which is tax free to the employee, in the form of increased contributions to the college's health insurance program," Dirk Wilmoth notes.

Two years ago, the budget was so tight that current employees had to forfeit their retirement for six months.

"At some point the bleeding has to stop," King adds. The lack of income augmentation is

Continued on Page 7

Colleges	'02-'03 tuition	% Increase	Current Cost	Students	Majors	Minors	Clubs/Organizations
 MONTREAT COLLEGE	\$13,488	5%	\$14,121	461	15	19	6
Mars Hill	\$14,500	6.6%	\$15,548	1,242	30	33	43
Lees-McRae	\$13,488	7.5%	\$14,500	700	27	19	25
Warren Wilson	\$15,548	7.4%	\$16,674	769	43	26	12
Gardner Webb	\$13,220	7.1%	\$14,160	1,800	35	55	54
Lenoir-Rhyne	\$15,306	9.4%	\$16,450	1,093	63	unknown	72
Brevard	\$12,390	5.4%	\$13,360	664	14	23	14

-A. Heyward

Montreat Helps Fund Bible Majors

by Lyndsay Mayer

North Carolina residents receive the Legislative Tuition Grant, a tuition credit of \$1,800 for attending private colleges within the state. Private schools also receive an additional grant of \$1,100 for each North Carolinian attending their institution as a full-time student.

This grant, called the State Contractual Scholarship Fund, is meant to provide additional scholarship opportunities for in-state students based upon their financial need. These financial aid programs were established to encourage North Carolina residents to fill the 9,000 plus vacancies at private schools,

which would save taxpayers the \$9,500 per student in subsidized costs for the public UNC system.

Montreat College has recently experienced a glitch in this free-money matrix. "State law," says Lisa Lankford, Dean of Financial Aid, "denies this funding to students pursuing a degree in religious studies or preparing for a career in the ministry field."

This statute has been in effect for a number of years, but the college's interpretation of religious programs allowed for the continuation of state funding awarded to Bible and

Religion majors. This past year, heeding the advice of the North Carolina Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (AICU), the Administration turned down state monies with regard to Bible and Religion majors. State institutional audits are expected within the year "to ensure compliance," says Dr. Dirk Wilmoth, Vice President for Finance.

Junior Greg Noble is from Louisville, KY and so he never received the NC state grants. The Bible and Religion major was active on the committee last year, however, that re-wrote the Bible and Religion course descriptions in the college catalog. The revisions were an unsuccessful attempt to circumvent the state's policy on funding religious studies programs. We decided to take out the word 'ministry'" explains Noble, rather than "[leaving] it in there and seeing if we could get private donor contributions."

Despite the changes to the

catalogue, college administrators were still urged by AICU to reject state funding to Bible and Religion majors.

Lankford estimates there are at least 15 students affected by this state tuition cut, but says, "[the College has] covered the amount lost by these students with institutional dollars."

Wilmoth agrees, saying, "all of the aid was replaced; the students did not feel the difference."

Senior Tara Jobson, another Bible and Religion major from Winston-Salem, NC says she got a letter from the college in January of this year saying that the state was taking her scholarship away because it doesn't support religious majors. Jobson was assured that her tuition assistance would be funded instead by the college, through the Whitehead scholarship.

"I'm really grateful the college stepped in like they did," says Jobson. "If I was at a

state school studying religion, they might have just yanked that money. Montreat said I deserved the money no matter what, and they covered every cent."

19.  Gardner Honored
What's Inside
INSIDE

VERSE
of the WEEK

"Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD."

- Leviticus 19:18