In the near future college students during the past two academic years. may be able to earn more financial aid or even a "voucher" to help them buy their first houses if they take time off from school to work in "community service" jobs for a while.

Congress moved closer to creat- local volunteer service jobs. ing a "national service" system for students Sept. 13 when the U.S. House of Representatives approved a bill to give schools and colleges \$100 million next year to set up programs to promote student volunteerism.

The Senate passed its own national service bill March 1. It would pay student volunteers with "vouchers" that, in turn, could be used for college tuition or buying a house.

Now, a joint House-Senate conference committee will discuss both bills, and try to come up with a com-

Campus volunteer programs already have been popping up frequently

Most recently, on Sept. 19 Northeast Missouri State University President Russell Warren announced his school would set up a Center for Service Learning to place students in

Other schools that have set up similar programs include Stanford, Georgetown, Tulane, and Xavier universities, and the universities of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and Scranton.

As students volunteered and adult worries about student materialism became something of a fad, groups such as the Democratic Leadership Council and the Education Commission of the States suggested making students volunteer in order to graduate or to get financial aid.

A National Service bill introduced promise version both bodies can in Congress in 1989, for example, would have made all students who needed college aid devote two years to either a community program or the

'Reservations' About The Idea

Supporters of the notion, which would have cost \$330 million, hailed it as a way to help their communities while giving students new life experi-

"I would be in favor of incentives that would connect students with the world around them," said Bruce Pitman, dean of student services at the University of Idaho.

But critics complained they would make college a place for the rich, who would not need to volunteer, while lower-income students would have to do extra work to afford higher education. Many lower-income students, they said, simply would not go to college.

"There was a lot of reluctance on the part of higher education officials to support a bill that would make college aid contingent on community service," said Michael Sherraden, an

Washington University in St. Louis.

"I'm not big on the volunteer aspect," added Mikal Belicove, a senior and former student body president at the University of Houston. "I don't think a student's options (to get financial aid) should be limited to community service only."

Paul Hughers, a junior at Maryland's Salisbury State University. agreed. "I don't know if it's in everyone's best interest to volunteer."

It may not be legal to require students to volunteer, maintained a group of parents who sued the Bethlehem (Pa.) Area School District Sept. 19, claiming a new district rule that kids must perform 60 hours of volunteer work to graduate amounted to an illegal demand for extracurricular work.

Yet the United States Student Association (USSA), which lobbies in Washington, D.C., on behalf of student body presidents nationwide.

associate social work professor at is "definitely happier with these versions (of the national service bill)." reported Selena Dong, USSA's legislative director.

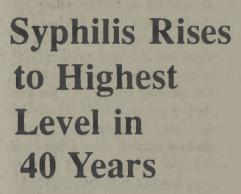
> However, Dong added, "we have definite reservations." She dislikes provisions of the bills that would prevent drug addicts or students who have not registered for the draft from getting any of the financial benefits of volunteering.

Bush Threatens Veto

"It's crazy to me to say that we want to help youths, and then add an amendment that says drug addicts can't enter the program. If it (the bill) doesn't go anywhere, that's fine with me," she said.

There is a good chance the bill won't go anywhere because President George Bush has threatened to veto it, Sherraden noted.

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(CPS)

Syphilis has risen to its highest level since 1949 in the United States, with the resurgence of the venereal disease striking blacks hardest. reasearchers reported Sept. 18.

College-aged people, who tend to have more sexual partners than older people, could also be at a higher that average risk of contracting the disease, Drs. Robert Rolfs and Allyn Nakashima of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) added.

For women of all races, the incidence of syphilis was highest among the 20-24 age group, Rolfs said. For men, black and Hispanic men in the 20-24 age group had the highest incidence, while for white men, the highest incidence was for those between 25 and 29, he found.

The return of syphilis as a more common disease is particularly omi-

"The dramatic increase in syphilis incidence among homosexual men during the 1970s foreshadowed" the beginning of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, the researchers noted.

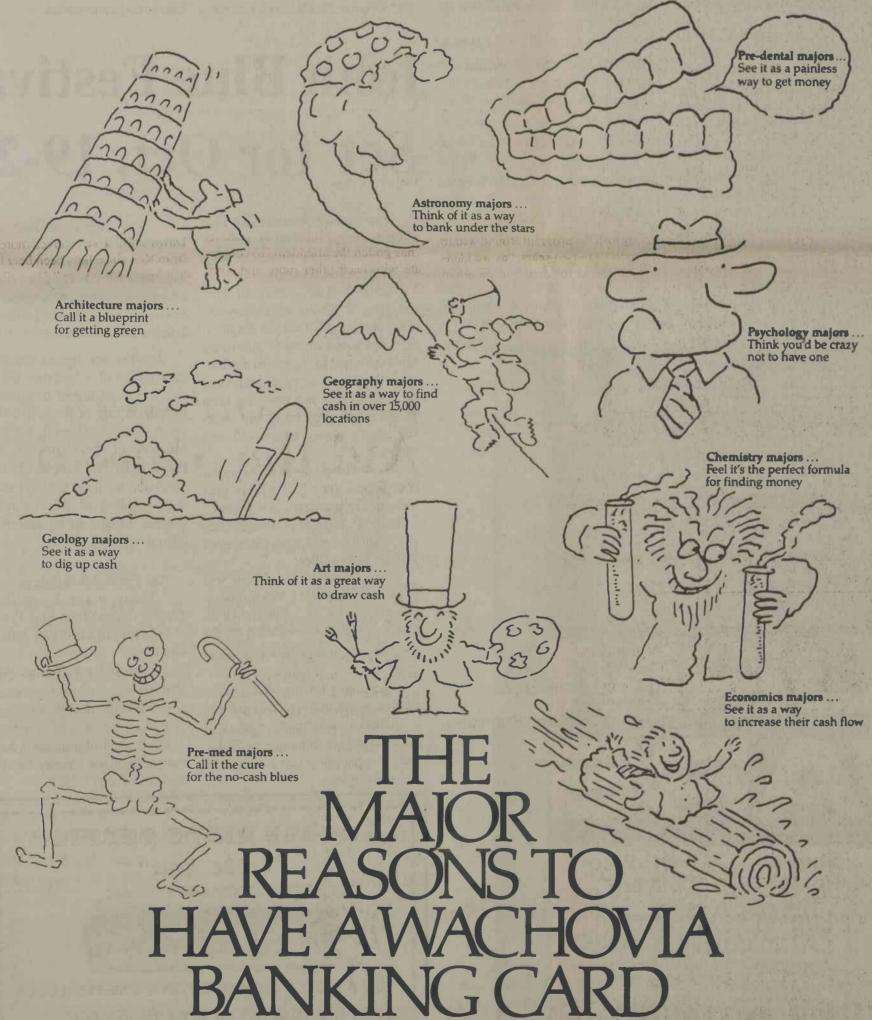
Although syphilis itself is often treatable with antibiotics, the doctors wrote, its recent spread is "likely to be (an) important indicator of changes in sexual behaviour" that, in turn, would also help spread the virus that causes

AIDS, an incurable disease that destroys the body's immune system, is transmitted through the use of contaminated blood products, the sharing of intravenous needles with infected people and sexual contact with infected people.

The AIDS virus, however, can take four-to-five years to begin affecting its victims noticeably.

Consequently, people who are already infected may not yet know it, and could inadvertently go on infecting other sexual partners for years.

Rolfs and Nakashima found that, after decreasing in the early 1980s, the overall syphilis rate increased 61 percent betwen 1985 and 1989, with the incidence disproportionately high among black women and black men and in the South and the District of Columbia.



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