

News

Budget Has No Sympathy For Financial Aid

President Barack Obama's budget plan will eliminate approximately \$10 billion in financial aid for students



By BARBARA MILLER

Republicans introduced cuts to education that include the need-based Pell Grant and 56 other education programs. Proposed cuts would reduce the maximum grant by 15 percent, a loss of \$845 per year. Pell Grants would drop yearly from \$5,550 to \$4,705. This cut is the largest reduction in Pell Grant history.

During the 2009-2010 school year, 8.9 million students qualified for a Pell Grant. In 2008, 6.1 million students received Pell Grants

and an estimated 9.6 million are expected to receive grants next year. There is a 45 percent increase based on statistics from the College Board Advocacy and Policy Center. The amount awarded also increased from \$2,970 to \$4,115, doubling Pell Grant expenditures in only three years.

In President Obama's 2010 federal budget proposal, he introduced cuts that would remove \$10 billion from student aid programs. His budget seeks to maintain the Pell Grant for the 2011-2012 school year and beyond. The President's budget eliminates year round Pell

Grants, which cost more than ten times what was expected. US Education Secretary, Arne Duncan, called the program "unsustainable" in an interview with *USA Today*.

Financial expert, Mark Kantrowitz, publisher of *www.finaid.org* and *www.fastweb.org*, predicts that any cut in Pell Grant awards would reduce the number of bachelor degrees earned by low-income students.

Groups that statistically display the greatest need for Pell Grants are single mothers, African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics and physically disabled individuals. 74 percent of recipients came from families that made less than \$50,000 and could only contribute \$1,200 or less to their children's education.

The United States Student Association Foundation (USSA) opposes the Republican cuts. They point out an \$845 reduction in the Pell Grant equals a year's worth of transportation or textbook costs. For the poorest families, losing \$845 per year increases loan burdens and may lead to students giving up their education.

Catastrophy Strikes Japan

9.0 Earthquake and massive Tsunami hit Japan, causing turmoil and death

By D.A. BAKER

Consumed by the aftermath of an earthquake and tsunami, Japan is now not only facing the hardship of rebuilding a nation after Mother Nature wreaked havoc on its populous, March 11, but it also faces the invisible danger of nuclear radiation.

On March 11, Japan was hit by a 9.0 magnitude earthquake that caused a massive tsunami to hit the eastern most part of the island. According to CNN, the death toll rose 10,500 over the weekend, and there are still an estimated 7,000 people missing. In addition, 2,612 were accounted for, but injured. Patrick Fuller of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said that rescue efforts were being hindered by snowfall in the most

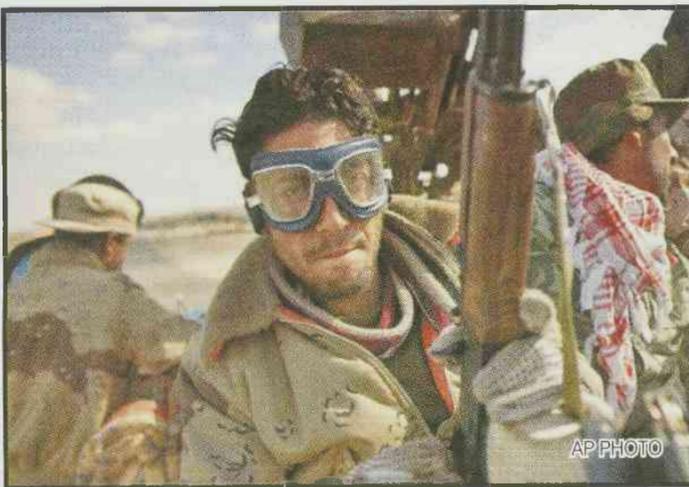
devastated parts of the country.

Although the extent of the damage is extensive, it is not what is on the minds of most Japanese citizens. This topic falls to the threat of radiation from one of Japan's nuclear power plants that has been without power for two weeks now.

Employees are working fervently to cool down the reactors that are causing the leaks in radiation. It is not uncommon to see pictures of Japanese citizens wearing protective facial gear, and CNN reported that iodine pills, commonly used to protect the thyroid from radiation poisoning, cannot be kept in stock throughout Japan. The radiation threat is ever looming throughout Japan, and Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano told reporters "We will continue to monitor the situation while making the necessary preparations."



Yamamoto town, in Miyagi Prefecture, is still partially submerged in water Friday, March 18, 2011, a week after the earthquake and resulting tsunami hit northern Japan.



Libyan rebels who are part of the forces against Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi sit in their vehicle near Ras Lanuf, eastern Libya, Monday, March 7, 2011.

Libyan Warplanes Continue To Pound Rebel Positions

By NPR STAFF AND WIRES

Libyan warplanes struck the coastal city of Ras Lanuf on March 8, as rebels braced for what they fear could be a more intense assault, while reports emerged that the western city of Zawiya had fallen to government troops.

Air force jets carried out multiple airstrikes against rebel positions in the oil port city, NPR's Peter Kenyon reported. He said loudspeakers broadcast requests

for information on missing people a day after aerial strikes reportedly caused casualties.

Representatives of the opposition said they have rejected an offer of negotiations from Moammar Gadhafi's government.

A spokesman for the transitional National Council, which was established by the opposition as a de facto government in the east, said there will be no talks until the man who has ruled Libya with an iron-fist for more than four decades steps down.

"We are not worried...

everybody knows it's either us or him," the spokesman, Iman Bugaighis, said at a news conference Tuesday in Benghazi. "It's a personal issue now. After the blood that has been shed, there is no return."

Libyan state television denied that Gadhafi had sent an envoy to talk to the rebels. But NPR's Lourdes Garcia-Navarro said Tripoli did make an overture "for some sort of negotiated solution to this crisis."

DR. WALTER SWAN TALKS QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

By BRITNEE EXUM

Dr. Walter R. Swan, an instrumental member of the Quality Enhancement Plan committee, was interviewed by Compass Editor-in-Chief, Brittnee Exum. Below is the correspondence:

Q: What was your involvement in QEP?

A: I serve on the subcommittee of the QEP as the Chair of the Branding Committee and the Chair of the Student Marketing Committee. My assignment was to provide the core committee with a brand that would best serve the QEP and represent

the university. As the chair of the Student Marketing Committee, my assignment is to work with the certain students to promote the QEP to the student body. I am working closely with Mr. Calvin Wright to accomplish this goal.

Q: How often do universities have to be evaluated for accreditation (re-accreditation)?

A: The university is reviewed every five (5) years from the time it becomes initially accredited.

Q: What did QEP set out to accomplish?

A: The purpose of the QEP at ECSU is to enhance students' academic writing skills, while strengthening their reading

comprehension and critical/analytical thinking skills. The QEP describes a carefully designed course of action that addresses a well-defined and focused topic related to enhancing student learning. Guided by our mission statement and goals in our strategic plan, the ECSU QEP is designed to impact student learning positively. The purpose of developing the QEP as a part of the reaffirmation process has become an opportunity for ECSU to improve academic writing and enhance the overall quality of the institution. As a result, we have implemented a strategic plan to assess the implementation of the QEP and its outcomes.

Q: Was it accomplished?

A: It is still in progress. Outcomes TBA

Q: How does QEP effect the students?

A: It is assist in strengthening the students at ECSU in their prowess' to:

1. Improve writing
2. Improve critical thinking skills
3. Improve reading input and comprehension skills
3. Improve student's apprehension and cognitive performance pertinent to communication.

Q: When is SACS coming to review ECSU?

A: April 11-14, 2011 there will be an on-sight team to review the Quality Enhancement Plan.

Have an opinion on current events you would like to share?

Email The Compass at :

thecompass@mail.ecsu.edu

