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Tuition Under Review

Class of 2009 student's tuition grant for UNC system schools undergoing serious consideration

BY EDINA WANG AND LAURA CHAO

On May 21, the NC General Assembly's House Education Committee passed the bipartisan bill in favor of rescinding NCSSM students' tuition grant in order to study several issues at hand. The evaluation of the tuition concession is now underway. The tuition grant, available for students since the graduating class of 2004, allowed any NCSSM student to go to a UNC system school free of instructional fees. The Class of 2009 now faces the possibility of no longer receiving the privilege of full tuition.

The bill proposes to offer \$25,000 for NCSSM to study three pressing issues: the possibility of requiring recipients of the tuition grant to teach in NC schools for three years, examine the reason behind the median income of enrolled students at this school is \$78,000 and why there are so few NCSSM students from underperforming NC schools.

State Representative Paul Luebke and House Minority Leader Paul Stam are the primary sponsors of the repeal measures. They believe the tuition grant is unfair to graduates of the state's other public high schools.

"The repeal does not presuppose that there is anything wrong with the School of Science and Math, with its teachers, students or administration," Stam wrote in a May 13 guest column for *The Herald Sun*.

President Michael B. Jones of SG 2006-2007 and several of the Development Attachés met with Representative Earline Parmon and

Larry Womble to discuss the tuition grant changes.

"I told them about how I believe the grant to be an effective, merit-based scholarship for the students of North Carolina," said Jones. "Each of them received my comments well, but as is the nature of the legislative process, their public stances may not reflect the conversations that we had behind closed doors."

The Development Attachés went to the state legislature to address the legislators sponsoring the revocation of the tuition grant. According to Ayscue, many of the legislators that were contacted did not know details about NCSSM and were eager to hear what the students had to say.

"Some of [the legislators] received us warmly and were curious about NCSSM," said Attaché Hattie Chung, "but the major supporters of the bill brushed us off and said they already knew about the school."

The Attachés also talked to Representative Kay Hagan, who supported and introduced the tuition grant to the state legislature.

"[Hagan] said that as long as she is in office, she will never let the tuition grant go away," Chung said.

Another major concern, cited by those advocating the grant's repeal, is the expense. According to House estimates, the tuition grant will cost taxpayers \$449,905 in the 2007-2008 fiscal year, and \$834,099 in 2008-09.

Countering the complaints of taxpayer expenses, the program has had extensive success in keeping



Art by Laura Chao

NCSSM students in NC through their college years. Since the grant was introduced in 2004, nearly 82 percent of NCSSM graduates have attended UNC system colleges, up from a previous average of 55 percent. There are currently NCSSM alumni at 15 of the 16 UNC campuses.

This tuition grant also greatly affects the recruitment of NCSSM.

"I don't think I would have come if I didn't know about the tuition grant," junior Jordan Pearson said. "It was one of the biggest parts in my decision."

Other students say the tuition grant affects their plans for the future.

"[The] tuition grant did not influence me coming here, but it will affect where I go after here," said junior April Sharp, who plans to attend a UNC system college. "I would be disappointed if it went away."

Opponents of the repeal point to the fact that similar bills have, in previous years, gained support in the House, but stalled when proposed in the Senate. Many students remain optimistic about the grant's lifespan.

"Pretty much," Ayscue said, "[the repeal] is not going to get passed."

2007 NCSSM STUDENTS UNC-CH ADMISSION STATUS

246 students applied

203 admitted students

142 students enrolled

*AS OF WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 2007

Proactive Student Government

BY EDINA WANG

SG is already working on proposals and ideas for the coming school year as senators have been appointed as heads of various committees.

One proposal is a Discount Card that would include discounts for several 9th Street and Broad Street restaurants and shops. They hope it will be available at the beginning of next school year to encourage students to explore Durham.

The Academic Issues Committee is concentrating on various issues.

"For testing, there have been a few recent issues with teachers announcing non-scheduled tests only a few days before they occur," said Cyndey Swofford, SG Senate President and Vice President. SG is proposing a policy where a due date for a major assignment must be announced at least seven days in advance.

Honor Council, which was started by the Ethical Awareness Group in

2005-2006, will become a judicial branch for SG. A Chief Presider will help keep track of cases and act as a liaison between Honor Council and SG. Steve Warshaw, who sponsors EAG said, "Honor Council will assist in the increase in overall integrity of the community."

This summer, SG plans to continue support of student rights in UNCASG, the University Of North Carolina Association Of Student Governments.

"A major focus in many of the officers' platforms was communication," said Swofford. "SG plans to have a weekly radio show, an easily accessible, updated website, a current bulletin board and newsletters for next year."

"I want to make sure students know that I am here for them," said Patel.

Swofford said, "SG is excited to have the opportunity to create the foundation for student governments for many years to come."

Don't
miss:

A Year-in-Review,
athletic anecdotes
pages 2 and 3

SENIOR WILLS
pages 4-7, 10-15

Jr. Reflections
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