

GPSA Office of External Affairs – September 2009 Assembly Report

Arizona Students' Association Update

Arizona Board of Regents Tuition Work Group: The first meeting of the ABOR Tuition Work Group happens Wednesday, September 23, 2009 in Flagstaff, Arizona. According to ABOR, the charge for the Tuition and Affordability Work Group is the following: "To examine the policy issues surrounding tuition and affordability related to the University System of Arizona and to provide options and/or recommendations to the Council of Presidents serving the Arizona Board of Regents prior to the March 2010 tuition decision."

ASA Graduate Issues Ad Hoc Committee: The first meeting of this committee takes place on September 18, 2009 via conference call. Each public university in Arizona has at least one graduate student appointee; ASU appointees are: Justin Boren, Kelley Stewart, and Matt McCoy.

Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (H.R. 3221): The Arizona Students' Association joined coalition partners across the United States in a grassroots effort to gain support for House Resolution 3221. Commonly known as SAFER, this resolution was passed on September 17, 2009 by the U. S. House of Representatives. The Senate is expected to take up similar legislation later this fall.

According to Robyn Nebrich of ASA, "Arizona has been the leader in grassroots support for SAFRA in the country which is really exciting." Results generated by Arizona student leaders on the National Day of Action by collecting bricks signed by students with personal student debt and post cards written to legislators:

ASU Tempe: 453 bricks plus 117 postcards= 570 total cards

NAU: 515 bricks plus 20 postcards= 535 total cards

UA: 268 bricks plus 13 postcards = 281 total cards

ASU Downtown: 130 bricks plus 20 postcards = 150 total cards

SAFER Key Points -

- Provides \$8.8 billion to community colleges over the next ten years – including money for grants to help students stay in and complete college, and funds to help repair and modernize community college facilities.
- Increases the Pell Grant scholarship to \$5,550 in 2010 and \$6,900 in 2019. (The current Pell Grant maximum award is \$5,350). About 6 million lower-income students received help from Pell Grants to attend college in 2007-2008.
- Lowers interest rates on need-based federal student loans.
- Simplifies the federal financial aid application.
- Provides \$4 billion in grants to states and local school districts to help repair and modernize K-12 school facilities, which will stimulate the creation of more than 100,000 new jobs in the construction and related industries.
- Makes significant investments in comprehensive, high quality early childhood education, including professional development for early childhood providers.

Key Points are attributed to the National Education Association's *Education Insider*, to sign-up, go to <http://www.nea.org/lac> and click on "Become a cyber-lobbyist and subscribe to our weekly e-mail newsletter".

Office of External Affairs News

- Please welcome Conrad Ottey, Jr. as GPSA's new Director of Graduate Advocacy. He can be reached via email at Ottey001@gmail.com.
- National Day of Service 9/11/09 – GPSA partnered with USG and AZPIRG to collect 200 pounds of canned food and non-perishable food items, plus \$35.00 cash to donate to the United Food Bank in Mesa, Arizona. Collections were delivered by the City of Mesa Fire Department.