Bill proposed to safer streets

Anthony Mendola
staff writer

As the U.S. Congress currently debates a new national transportation bill, advocates for safer streets have gathered at 54th Street & University Avenue not far from the San Diego State campus to shed light on one of San Diego’s most dangerous intersections and focus attention on pending changes.

The bill, sponsored by California Sen. Barbara Boxer, would reauthorize federal aid for transportation along with highway construction projects. The last day of debate on the bill occurred last Friday, and ended with Sen. Harry Reid commending the bill to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works for further examination. Currently, there are 223 proposed amendments to the bill.

Walk San Diego, an advocacy group interested in improving the pedestrian experience in San Diego County, is opposed to passing the bill without first reforming it. The group said the bill will strip dedicated transit funding from the federal transportation bill.

“States and regions would no longer be assured of a regular and consistent stream of funding for transit investments,” the group said.

Walk San Diego said the bill is the “most dangerous move we have seen from the House, and would threaten the ability of our regions to plan and invest in transit projects and long-term plans.”

The group’s statement argued for lawmakers to contact their representatives and urge them not to cut funding for what it called “complete streets,” which are defined as streets that are safe to walk near and bike on.

Transportation for America, a coalition of transportation reform advocates, has a national sign-on letter that was sent to Congress, urging it not to cut additional funding for safer streets.

“Funding for biking and walking and Safe Routes to School programs is critical in fighting the obesity epidemic, which is one of the biggest health and economic challenges facing our nation and state,” San Diego County Supervisor Ron Roberts said, according to a press release from Transportation for America.

Local media have also brought attention toward the growing issue. In an article by ABC-Channel 10 in San Diego, one advocate was quoted as saying, “The roads are for people, not just for people in cars. We’ve got to share.”

Jim Baros, a bike safety advocate, said there is a desperate need for bike lanes and better signals.

Kathleen Fierer, urban planner, SDSU alumni and Policy Development Manager at Walk San Diego, said there is currently a need for change in transportation methods.

“The younger generation want to bike and walk and generations ‘Y’ and ‘X’ are moving to communities where there are complete streets; where there are cycle tracks and safe biking and pedestrian-friendly streets.”

Fierer said the issue has been building for some time.

“We have got these decades-old policies that favor cars and speeding cars along, rather than prioritizing pedestrian or bike safety.”

She then explained Federal Transportation funding for biking and walking is a measurer 1 percent of what is spent on highways; so any cut in the funding is critical.

“Areas that are proven dangerous for walkers can be made much safer with redesign,” Fierer said. “But funding for that is hard to come by.”

Leadership summit fosters diversity

Planning Committee implemented SDSU’s cultural competency program

Edward Henderson
staff writer

San Diego State’s Office of Intercultural Relations, along with Student Life & Leadership, held its annual Leadership and Diversity Summit in the Parma Payne Goodall Alumni Center last Saturday. The theme of the summit was “Differences Affirmed: Making an Impact on Our Campus.”

Students participated in workshops and diversity-awareness training focused on developing cultural awareness, sensitivity and competence in their leadership skills. SDSU’s cultural competency program implemented in the summit represents the first of its kind in the California State University system, SDSU’s Director of International Partnerships Dr. Paul Wang served as the opening keynote speaker. Wong’s message focused on the importance of viewing diversity as an institutional asset and vital part of the college experience.

SDSU student Keisha Mello-Hall gained a new perspective on what diversity means. “Being half black and half white, I thought I knew what diversity was about. Coming here and learning that diversity was much more than ethnicity or race was eye-opening for me,” Mello-Hall said.

The summit moved to the Arts and Letters building for three break-out sessions hosted by several student organizations, university officials and community volunteers. Students had the option to choose between several workshops structured to raise cultural awareness and enhance leadership skills.

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex Speaker’s Bureau Student Panel hosted a session to raise participants’ cultural consciousness about the LGBT community, as well as strengthened leadership and ally abilities. Ashley Boyd, a graduate assistant in SDSU’s Cross-Cultural Center, led the session.

“Part of being a leader is having a comprehensive awareness of diversity,” Boyd said. “If a leader isn’t aware of communities like the LGBT-community, they can’t be effective.”

Associated Students’ executive officers held a session discussing the diverse paths they took to become a S. leaders, and offered advice to those interested in student government.

“As a leader, you have to have an effective and appropriate message and the ability to communicate it to anybody,” A.S. President Cody Barbo said. “Being culturally competent is the best way to do that.”

Dr. Timothy Quinnan, Associate Vice President for Campus Life at SDSU, told the students that “everywhere you look, on every campus, you will see that diversity is critical.” Quinnan’s remarks focused on the importance of recognizing “a spiritual connection that we all share to create change.”

INDEPENDENT
FINANCE BEAT

Stock market update

Stocks had the day off yesterday for Presidents Day but opened positively today with news of a second Greek bailout. The Dow Jones industrial average increased 39 points to 12,890, the Nasdaq was up 9 points at 2,963, and the Standard & Poor’s 500 was up five points at 1,386. Gold is also trading higher at $1,756 an ounce and the yield for the 10-year Treasury note increased to 2.05 percent.

Apple’s factory conditions under scrutiny

A lengthy article from Yahoo Finance focused attention on Chinese factory conditions in Apple’s factories. Foxconn, known for producing Apple products, this factory has been the site of several tragedies, including the suicides of a number of workers, as well as accidental explosions that have caused other deaths.

Now, the Fair Labor Association is auditing the factory with inspections and interviews. Foxconn’s employees were given anonymous touch-screen questionnaires while the reporters were told to talk to anyone they pleased.

Some expressed concern that Foxconn would “clean house” before an inspection, but that remains to be seen until the report is published next month.

Some Foxconn employees said their working conditions are better than other factories, although the dormitories are cramped. One walking detail they shared was that “everywhere you look, in every factory and dormitory, in every stars-and-bars, are suicide nets.”

The audit has not negatively affected Apple’s stock price, but is currently trading up roughly nine dollars per share at $111.

–Compiled by Staff Writer Chele Galloway

INDEX:

BUSINESS & FINANCE
BrentAtStudent serves as an online classifieds section for student job seekers.

WEATHER:

SUNNY HIGH: 75 LOW: 51 SUNSET: 5:40PM

WEDNESDAY
February 22, 2012
Volume 97, Issue 78
WWW.THEDAILYAZTEC.COM twitter: thedailyaztec
S

haring notes is a hallowed student tradition, as old and revered as all-nighters and pre-final freak-outs. But not everyone looks kindly upon note sharing, especially not the California State University Office of General Counsel. As the Daily Aztec reported on Jan. 4, the council asked Chegg to ban CSU sys-
tem students from its note-sharing site, noteutopia.com. A similar note-
sharing website, noteutopia.com, was barred from the CSU system in 2010. Notehall and Noteopia allow students to buy and sell class notes online. In accordance with state laws prohibiting the sharing of notes for commercial purposes, the CSU was forced to send a cease-
and-desist letter.

This ban on online note sharing reeks of bureaucratic ignorance and an unwillingness to adapt to the times. Students have always shared notes. Many professors encourage it to keep students who missed a class from falling behind. Many college-
preparedness classes recommend comparing notes as a way to ensure preparation. Many students who are unable to attend all of the class meet-
tings, or who simply aren’t good at taking notes. Yet the California

California legislature needs to acknowledge that just because stu-
dents are able to reach their full potential. They shouldn’t be kept from

Students struggling from the financial

Banning CSU students from note-

sharing sites is harmful to our educa-
tion. But it is also harmful to schools, because they benefit when all stu-
dents are able to reach their full potential. They shouldn’t be kept from

As more of our education and our

students to exchange class notes legiti-
mately, while taking a stronger stand against those that illegally sell
term papers and copies of exams. Its ability to navigate this fine line
will determine whether the CSU sys-
tem will continue to be one of the
most innovative systems of higher
education in the world, or if it will fall
prey to out-of-date thinking and
backward fears.

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OPINION

BAN ON NOTE-SHARING SITES FAILS STUDENTS

Let’s compare note sharing to

hanging grades and promoting coopera-
tion among students.

Aside from raising grades, note-

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2012

MS MOVES ME!

LEONARDO CASTENADA SENIOR STAFF COLUMNIST

MS MOVES ME!

LEONARDO CASTENADA SENIOR STAFF COLUMNIST

UNLIMITED BUS AND TROLLEY RIDES ALL SEMESTER LONG!

THE LUNGE AT KB BOOKS IS NOW OPEN!

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SIGNS OF "KISS ME" OR "KISS ME NOT" COULD BE FOUND AT SEVERAL LOCATIONS IN THE CAMPUS TROLLEY SYSTEM DURING VARIOUS TIMES LAST WEEK. ALthough

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SOPHOMORE.

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SOPHOMORE.
Paid service puts students up for rent

Sofie Casillas
staff writer

With a large percentage of San Diego State students registered as business majors, it should be no surprise that any opportunity for students to collaborate with companies on new projects would be a hit. That is why approximately 10,000 students have registered for 1,500 projects through rentastudent.com, a website that pairs college students with companies that need help with specialized projects.

Co-founders Morgan Dierstein and Guillaume Truttman created RentAStudent as a place for students to earn cash by helping companies with tasks geared toward their particular skill sets.

According to the website, RentAStudent is a way to showcase what you’ve already learned, apply it to real world situations, build your résumé and create connections with companies… all while financing your education.”

Students 18 years and older are given the opportunity to create an online profile that displays a professional description and cover letter, while showcasing skills and competencies.

To open a valid account, student users must have an academic email address to prove student status. Once the profile-building process is complete, students can search through various tasks and projects, such as ad campaigns, proofreading, translation and budgeting. Once they find projects suitable to their needs, they need only apply.

During the selection process, companies can contact potential student candidates via email and even send down payments.

According to RentAStudent, ‘From there, they will be able to establish guidelines and a time frame for completing the project using our collaboration page. Once the student has successfully completed the project, the remainder of the agreed-upon wage will be paid using our secure payment system. We will provide an invoice on behalf of the student so that all transactions are transparent.”

Students are able to negotiate their pay by suggesting an hourly wage on their profiles. The minimum hourly wage companies are able to pay is $10.

The website was first created in France, where only French students were allowed access to the networking process. Last year, American students were offered the RentAStudent opportunity as well. Since then, 1,500 projects have been posted and the number is growing.

RentAStudent does have a few disadvantages. For example, it only grants students access one year from their graduation date and takes a 15 percent cut from student earnings. However, the opportunity to earn more than $10 an hour may still be enticing to some cash-starved college students.

As budgets continue to be cut and tuition fees continue to increase, a 15 percent loss may be no excuse to avoid the opportunity. RentAStudent is an innovative way to build experience before exiting the relatively comfortable bubble of college life.

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Katie Foster, Staff Photographer

Co-founders Morgan Dierstein and Guillaume Truttman created RentAStudent as a place for students to earn cash by helping companies with tasks geared toward their particular skill sets.

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Sarah believed her dreams were visions, an unfolding of the future. As soon as the engine sputtered and bucked, she turned to me. “I’ve had this dream before.”

Sarah nodded. “Do you wake up scared?”

“I called Mike,” I said. “They’re on their way to pick us up. Are you still hungry?”

Sarah sat down on an old crate and rested her back against one of the tree’s branches above us. The sun seemed to shrink between the canopies. The sun seemed to be magnified and its rays turned a shade of almond trees.

“Sarah,” I said. “I think I misstepped, and in my panic, I didn’t think of you. I felt the fluttering of wings. I couldn’t see past the pedals. I felt the blossoms fall in sheets so thick I thought I was going blind.”

She nodded. A flower flickered in her palm. I felt the fluttering of wings. I couldn’t help but think of moths’ wings whirling through the trees.

“Sometimes I think we’ve seen too much,” she said. “Sometimes I think we need to be more like the dogs, more like the wolves. The wolves were on the highway next to us. They were watching us. I could feel their eyes on us.”

I felt the tree sway, back and forth, the branches above us. The sun seemed to be magnified and its rays turned a shade of almond trees. Sarah got out onto the shoulder, next to a massive almond orchard. Sarah got out and stretched her back.

“I’ve had this dream before,” she said. “I don’t know why. I’ve always had this dream before. It’s never hit a tree branch on the way down. She could see the boughs down below her but none touched her. She reached out to grab one but they moved away. None helped to slow her fall.”

“Sounds terrifying,” Sarah nodded. “Do you wake up before you hit the ground in your dreams?”

“Right before,” I said. “Me too. But she didn’t. She remembers hitting the ground. She remembers being paralyzed, and the wolves came back, and they began to —”

Sarah looked up into the blackness of the sky. “I’m pretty sure,” I said. “What about the way the trees were plotted. As soon as the engine spluttered and bucked, she turned to me. “I’ve had this dream before.” I pulled onto the shoulder, next to a massive almond orchard. Sarah got out and stretched her back.

There was something strange about the way the trees were plotted. It looked like they were stretching to get a peak at us. While blossoms fell when the wind passed through, I couldn’t help but think of moths’ wings whirling through the trees.

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