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Stony Brook

Statesman

Monday
June 24, 1991
Volume 34, Number 59

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT STONY BROOK

HIKE

State raises tuition \$500, cuts financial aid programs

By Ian McGowan
Student Leader News Service

Students in the State University system will be paying a \$500 tuition increase next semester, receiving as much as \$1,000 less financial aid, and competing for seats in more crowded classrooms with fewer teachers available to teach.

This will be the second round of simultaneous budget cuts, financial aid cuts and increases in tuition to hit students at SUNY and the City University of New York in less than six months, and will result in the near-doubling of educational costs from this time last year.

Budget cuts proposed by Gov. Mario Cuomo in his executive budget in January were partially restored by the state legislature in early June, following four months of debate and negotiations during a record-breaking delay in passing the state budget.

These restorations of nearly \$1 billion would have softened cuts to financial aid and funding cuts to SUNY and CUNY, but were all vetoed by Cuomo, virtually setting SUNY and CUNY back to the beginning of the budget process.

This means that both SUNY and CUNY are currently operating without final budgets. Legislators are expected to take up the budget again later in the month or early July, and completing the work could take a

month more, legislative sources said.

Financial Aid Cut

Cuts to financial aid will affect students receiving Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) grants, Regents Scholarships, STEP, C-STEP, Empire State Scholarships and other programs. The final amount that these programs will be cut has not fully been determined by the legislature.

The only part of the SUNY budget that is finalized is the tuition hike.

USB Student Casts Dissenting Vote

The SUNY tuition hike, which was formalized June 13 by the SUNY Board of Trustees, will raise tuition to \$2,150. The sole dissenting vote was made by the newly-elected student trustee, SASU/Student Assembly President Randy Campbell. Campbell, a Stony Brook student, was last year's SASU delegate for Stony Brook and is a former Polity senator.

The CUNY Board of Trustees is shortly expected to make a final determination on the system's tuition hike. CUNY originally planned to use its \$17 million budget restoration by the legislature as a reduction in the CUNY tuition hike. Proposed by Cuomo to be \$500 per year increase, CUNY opted to raise tuition \$300 because its students are generally from lower income levels.

But Cuomo vetoed the restorations, throwing the issue back in the hands of the legislature.

Cuomo Blasted

The governor's vetoes have been assailed by members of both the Assembly and Senate. Assembly and Senate higher education committee members expressed their concerns about how the governor's vetoes will affect students.

"Over the past few years, the governor has been unkind to higher education," said Assemblywoman Patricia McGee, a Republican representing Niagara Falls.

McGee added that the "cuts to SUNY and CUNY are going to limit access, no matter what your income is, because the teachers just won't be there to teach [and] degree programs will be dropped."

Assemblyman Martin Luster, also a member of the higher education committee, called the cuts to TAP the "most unkind cut of all, dealing directly with access."

Assembly Republican leader, C.D. Rappleyea, lashed out at the governor: "We certainly do not agree with the governor's vetoes of school aid and other local aid. In fact, throughout this miserable excuse for a budget process, Governor Cuomo has acted like a firefighting arsonist. He has set fires, only to take credit for putting them out."

USB Student Named SASU President — Page 2

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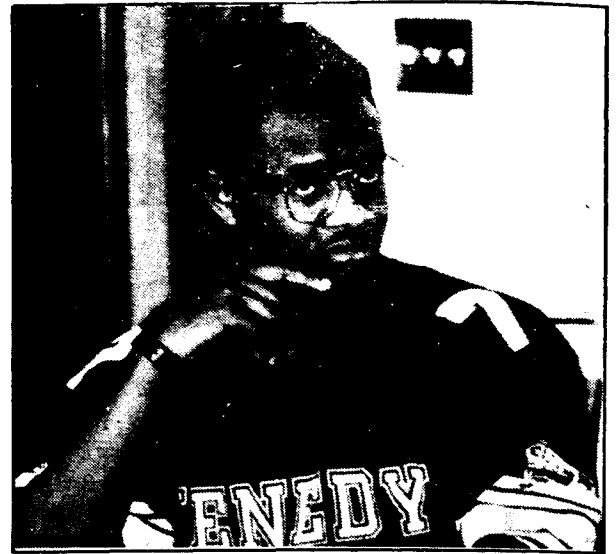
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Randy Campbell Student Leader Photo

USB student elected SASU president

By Eric F. Coppolino Student Leader News Service

AFTON, N.Y. — The Student Association of the State University (SASU) began its 21st year earlier this month with the election of SUNY Stony Brook student Randy Campbell as president for the 1991-92 academic year.

Campbell, last year's SASU delegate representing Stony Brook, will represent nine SUNY student governments that belong to SUNY's oldest student advocacy organization, which in recent years has been troubled by declining membership among SUNY campuses.

Campbell, a former Polity senator, was also elected president of the Student Assembly, a statewide organization the membership of which includes all 64 units of SUNY.

SASU and the Student Assembly currently have parallel structures, with officers and board of directors members for one serving as officers and executive committee members for the other.

Other Officers Elected

Three vice presidential positions were filled in both SASU and the Student Assembly when both organizations conducted their annual meeting here, which is about 30 miles northeast of Binghamton.

Mary Kate Cullen, a student at SUNY Binghamton, was elected to her second term in the position of executive vice president of both SASU and the Assembly.

See SASU on page 7

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Voices raised over sign language courses

By David Joachim
Statesman Editor-in-Chief

Stony Brook students don't even have to speak to fulfill their undergraduate foreign language requirements.

But while the University at Stony Brook currently accepts a one-year series of American Sign Language courses to satisfy its degree requirement, several faculty are beginning to ask questions.

Is American Sign Language a foreign language? And if so, are the courses challenging enough to qualify for the undergraduate requirement?

These questions were asked by the English department of the university last month, when it voted not to allow ASL courses to satisfy the English department's foreign language requirement, despite student protests.

After what Thomas Kranidas, English department chairman, called "long and serious discussion," the department decided to continue its present policy, which does not allow ASL to fulfill the department's requirement. The department requires its majors to take one year of a foreign language, Kranidas said.

The issue has also reopened campus debate over the university's undergraduate foreign language requirement, which was not affected by the English department's vote.

Several faculty are opposed to continuing the acceptance of ASL as fulfilling the undergraduate foreign language requirement, which mandates that students take one year of a foreign language to graduate.

On behalf of several foreign language department chairs, Thomas Kerth, chairman of the Germanic and Slavic languages department, sparked student protest when he recommended that ASL be removed as a course that fulfills the undergraduate requirement. In a memorandum to the foreign language proficiency committee — an advisory committee to the University Senate's curriculum committee, which determines student requirements —

Kerth wrote that ASL courses do not "fulfill the purpose" of the university requirement because it is not foreign. And he wrote that the courses are an "easy A," which has caused the courses' enrollment to "grow out of all proportion."

According to Kerth, more than 60 percent of the ASL students receive an A. "This has led some of us to believe that the popularity of sign language has but little to do with a commitment to the hearing impaired," he wrote, "and a great deal to do with the grading pattern."

Because of this grading pattern, he wrote, enrollment has soared in ASL courses, and dropped dramatically in other foreign language courses.

Kerth refused comment.

Roman de la Campa, chairman of the department of comparative literature, called for "controls" on the ASL courses. He said he thinks ASL should be able to fulfill the language requirement, but not in its present form. "When you have hundreds of people taking a course, and over 50 percent get A's, there is a question," he said.

De la Campa added that sign language courses "should have full time faculty who have a scholarly investment." The courses are presently taught by adjunct professors, he said.

Lou Deutsch, chairwoman of the Hispanic languages department, said sign language is not a foreign language and condemned the frequency of high grades in the class. "Any modal-A course [a course that gives out A's to more than 50 percent of the class] should not count for a requirement," she said.

In response to Kerth's memo, more than 30 students held a protest May 9 in front of the administration building and gathered over 1,000 student signatures to continue accepting ASL for the university requirement.

"The professor [Kerth] is afraid of losing his job," said Dane Spirio, an ASL student and an organizer of the protest. "He's afraid less people will take his class because of sign language's popularity."

Spirio, who said he is "heavily involved in deaf culture," said the misconception about American sign language is that it is not foreign. "It's not signed English," he said. He said the language is based on French and other foreign languages.

Mark Aronoff, chairman of the linguistics department, agreed. In a statement, Aronoff wrote: "The internal structure of the words is . . . similar to Latin, Sanskrit, Navaho, or Eskimo."

"Do members of the deaf community regard American English . . . as foreign to them?" he added. "If the answer is yes, then ASL is a foreign language and deaf culture is a foreign culture."

"Foreign means people don't know it," said Penny Wong, an ASL student, "and most of us don't."

In response to Kerth's argument that ASL has no written literature, Lawrence Forestal, an ASL instructor, said: "There is plenty of literature material relating to sign language and deafness heritage history."

Forestal, who is deaf, urged the curriculum committee to allow ASL students and deaf people to talk to the committee before a decision is made. "How can the committee set such policies without real knowledge of sign language?" he asked.

Forestal also said that Kerth's information on the number of students who received A's was "exaggerated."

University President John Marburger called the issue "complicated" but would not comment further.

Charles Franco, chairman of the foreign language proficiency committee, said: "I can see both sides of the argument." He added that the committee will have a recommendation for the University Senate by the beginning of the Fall semester.

"When you have hundreds of people taking a course, and over 50 percent get A's, there is a question."

— Roman de la Campa

"Foreign means people don't know it, and most of us don't."

— Penny Wong

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Editorials

State Should Emphasize Public Education

As tuition for public universities in New York goes up \$500, and the University at Stony Brook prepares for an estimated \$8.5 million cut, the state pays private universities over \$100 million a year in subsidies.

This money, which is granted to private universities according to their number of annual graduates, is meant to subsidize the cost of private colleges for students who attend the university. But as most states have recognized, these subsidies help private education at the expense of public education.

The money that goes into the private universities only discourages students from choosing

the public universities, such as Stony Brook, because high school seniors recognize that while State University schools suffer budget cuts, private schools flourish.

These subsidies also defeat the purpose of taxation, as out-of-state residents are more likely to go to private schools than public schools in New York. Therefore, out-of-state residents are getting a disproportionate share of state taxes.

State residents should be the state's top priority.

Of course, private universities would say that without these funds, they could not exist. But as we have seen in California — where more

of a stress is put on public education — a shift of funds to public schools only increased the quality of state schools, and in turn created better private universities through their new competition.

The \$100 million in subsidies that goes into private universities in New York State every year only helps keep the cost of education up, as SUNY must raise tuition to keep its head above water, and private universities take advantage of their popularity by charging exorbitant tuition.

Give the taxpayers what they want: a quality and accessible *public* education.

Tuition Hike Represents Wrong Priorities

The \$500 tuition hike passed by the state represents an almost 60 percent increase in the State University tuition in one year. And it represents students taking a larger burden of their cost of education than ever before in New York State.

At the same time, the state wasted millions of dollars because the State Legislature could not produce a budget on time — again. And meanwhile, the legislature delays a raise in taxes to the richest New Yorkers, which would create several more millions of dollars.

Although Gov. Mario Cuomo vetoed the restorations to state financial aid programs, he *did* do something right in his executive budget plan. He offered a plan to tax the sale of large estates 10 percent, and other non-income-related taxes of the richest New Yorkers. But the legislature would not go for it.

Therefore, the state has students — who are among the poorest in the state — taking the burden of the cost of education instead of the rich. What a plan.

What will it take for the state to realize the importance of affordable education? Remember, 20 years ago, tuition for the State University of New York was *free* for New York State residents. This means that the state picked up 100 percent of students' tuition. Now it only picks up

about 40 percent of it.


Soon we will take 100 percent of the burden and public education will be but a memory.

It's time the state, and the nation, took edu-

cation more seriously. It's time we considered education a priority instead of a nuisance. It's time we put the "public" back into public education.

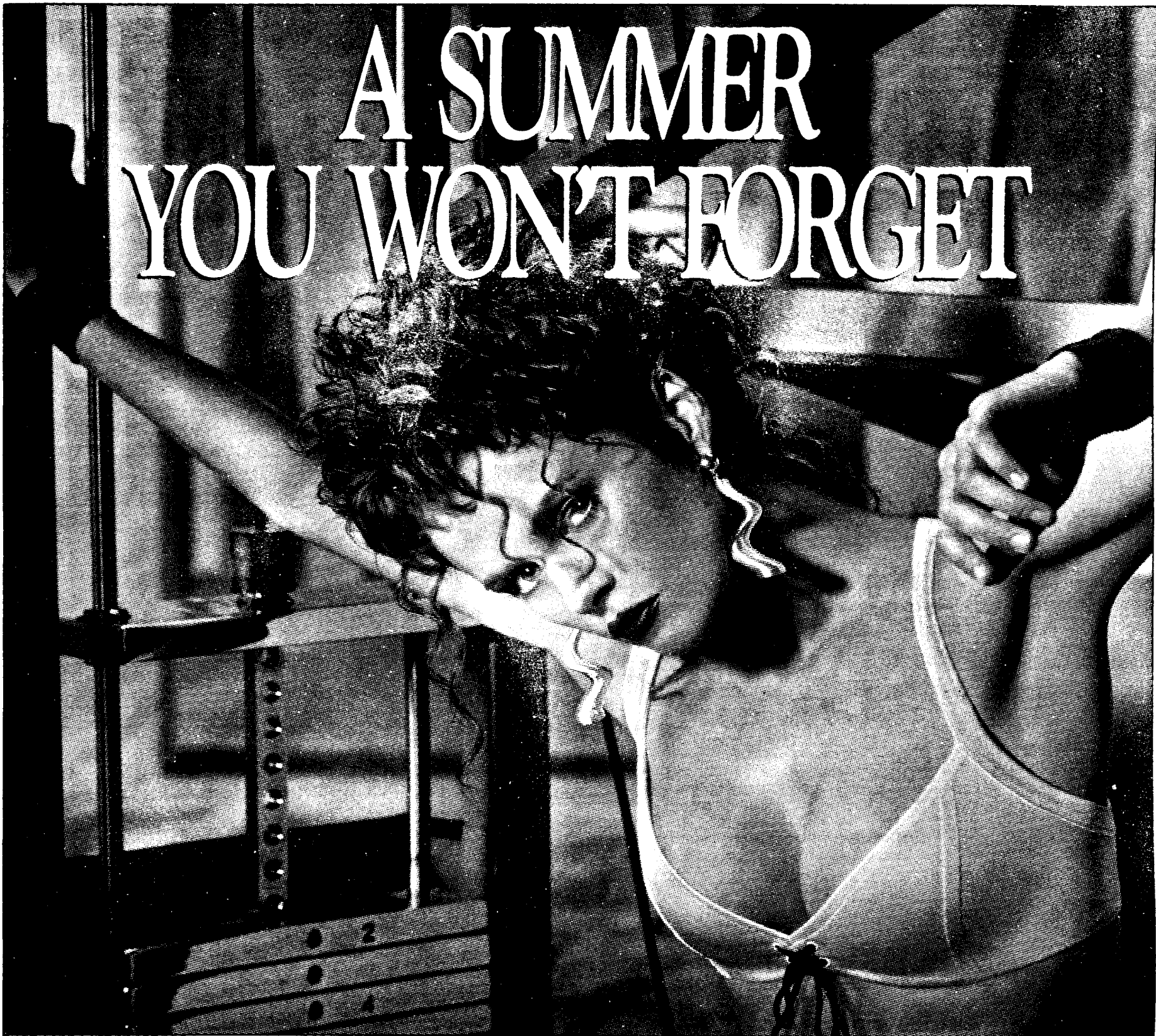
Publication Notice

Statesman will publish three more issues during the summer session. The issues will appear every other Monday, on July 15, July 29 and August 12.

 PO Box AE Stony Brook, NY 11794 Office: (516) 632-6480 Fax: (516) 632-9128	David Joachim, Editor-in-Chief	Eddie Reaven, Managing Editor	Charlene Scala, Executive Director
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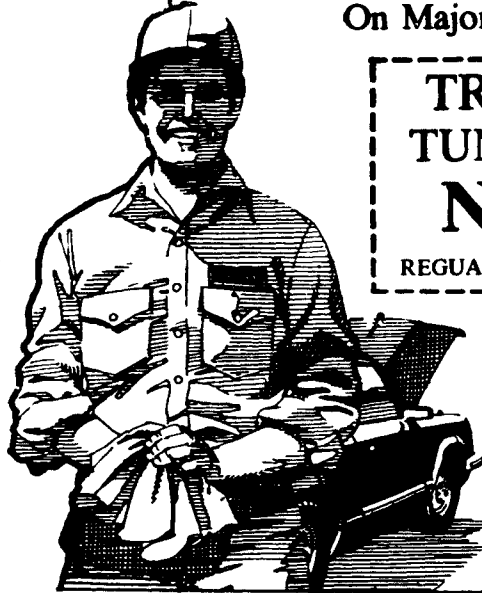
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SASU, Student Assembly officers named

SASU from page 2

Shiela Stowell, who last semester served as SASU's legislative intern, was elected vice president for campus affairs for both SASU and the Assembly. Stowell ran unopposed.

Jeff Luks, who last year served as chair of the Central Council at SUNY Albany, was elected SASU vice president for campus affairs and the Assembly's vice president for community colleges. Luks ran unopposed for the SASU vice presidency, but was opposed by a student at Erie Community College for the Student Assembly vice presidency.

Campbell to Serve on SUNY Trustees

The Student Assembly presidency, which the SASU president has held for as long as the Assembly has existed, is a position of little power other than automatic, or "ex officio" membership to the State University Board of Trustees, which governs the entire State University system.

Campbell, who was sworn in as student trustee June 12, succeeds SUNY Oswego graduate student Judith Krebs as president of both SASU and the Student Assembly.

Campbell defeated Darrin Brightman, a delegate from SUNY Oneonta, for both positions by wide margins. Brightman came close to losing his delegate seat at the conference, but was able to secure both SASU and Assembly delegate seats from SUNY Oneonta, which recently decided to leave SASU.

Campbell told the approximately 80 voting delegates that he was "Running on a platform of reform," saying he believed that SASU and the Assembly needed to undergo serious changes if they were to remain viable organizations.

One of those changes, he said, was the need to "Diversify the upper and middle class leadership."

Campbell also stressed the need to increase membership in SASU, which is done on a campus by campus basis, with students voting annually on whether to continue membership.

Diversity and racial issues became a prevailing theme of the conference when Shawn Graham, who was nominated for executive vice president, accused the SASU organization of placing minorities in leadership roles as tokens. Graham only sought nomination, she said, to raise this subject. Once Graham finished her speech, she declined the nomination.

Classifieds

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BUDGET CRISIS

Cuomo vetoes restorations in aid

Student Leader News Service

Gov. Mario Cuomo last week vetoed restorations in financial aid programs proposed by the State Legislature, which were in response to Cuomo's elimination of the programs in his executive budget.

The following is a list of the legislature's restorations before they were vetoed by the governor. These changes in state aid are not final because of the executive veto, and the legislature must now find a compromise plan.

- **TAP** The need-based Tuition Assistance Program, proposed by the gover-

nor to be cut \$66 million, was restored \$33 million by the legislature. TAP awards, for most students, would be cut by between \$50 and \$225, instead of Cuomo's proposed cut of between \$100 and \$400.

- **Regents Scholarships** In existence since 1913, the last checks of the this merit-based program have all been written. At one time the \$250 awards, based on academic performance, covered all tuition costs. The program was terminated by Cuomo and not restored by the legislature, but a replacement program, based on need, is on the drawing board of the Assembly

Higher Education Committee.

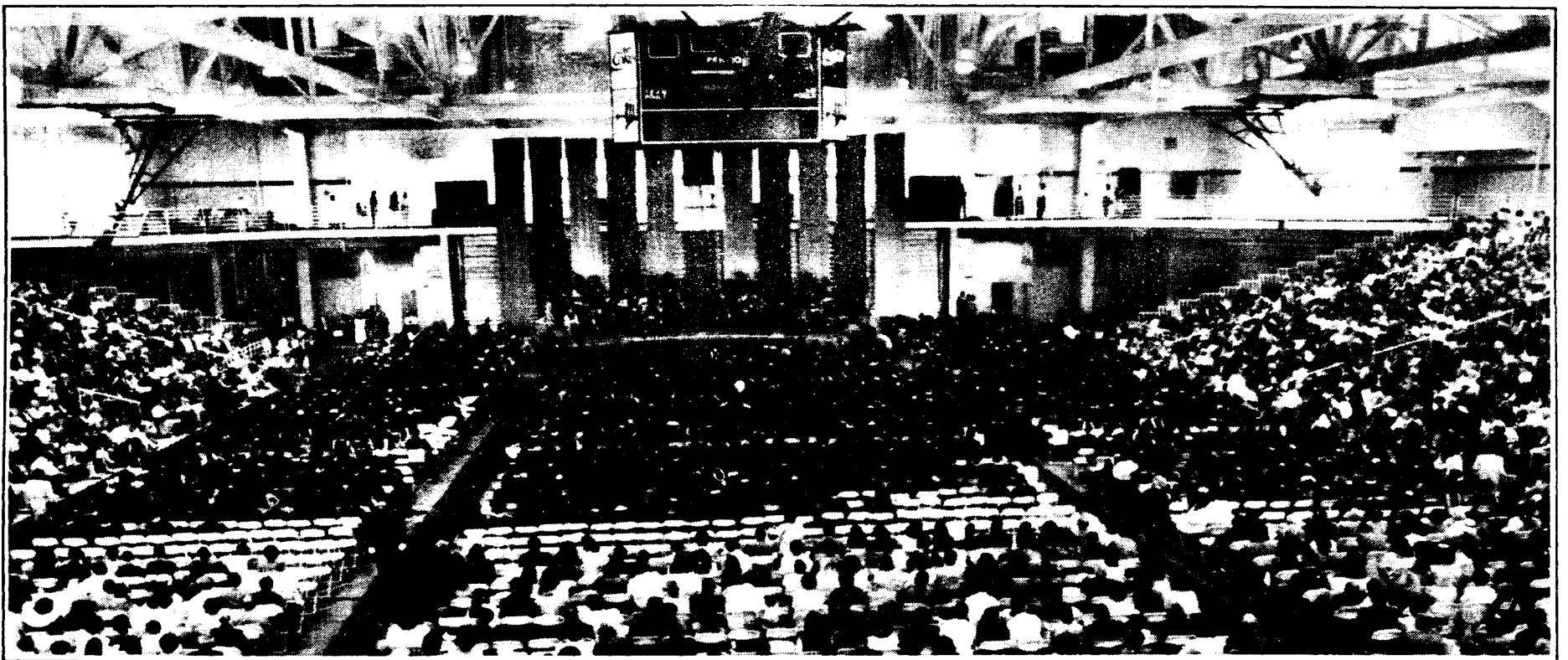
- **STEP and C-STEP** These programs, which totaled \$10 million last year and provide academic funding, special tutoring and instruction for students of color and international students, were slated for elimination by Cuomo. The legislature, however, attempted to restore the plan to \$7 million.

- **Liberty Scholarships** These scholarships were supposed to guarantee for underprivileged students starting the Fall. They were slated for indefinite delay by Cuomo, and not restored by the legislature.

- **Empire State Scholarships** These \$2,000 per student scholarships were canceled by Cuomo before the legislature attempted to restore the program to \$1,800.

- **Aid to Part Time Study** An important program for the City University of New York because of its high part-time enrollment, this was increased by \$1 million to \$11 million a year. Legislation passed during the end-of-year budget cuts in 1990 relaxed eligibility for the program, liberating millions of dollars that were allocated each year, but literally went unspent.

COMMENCEMENT



About 5,000 spectators pack the Indoor Sports Complex during the commencement May 19.

University News Services/Maxine Hicks

Indoor ceremony despite protests

By David Joachim
Statesman Editor-in-Chief

Despite student protest about the 31st University at Stony Brook commencement ceremony, the event was held without disruption May 19 in the Indoor Sports Complex.

Student protest stemmed from the university's decision to hold commencement indoors for the first time in Stony Brook's history, which resulted in a petition of about 1,000 students against the plan. A group of seniors also reportedly threatened to stage a walk-out during the ceremony in response to the move indoors.

University President John Marburger said the move indoors was experimental and was necessary to save money.

The atmosphere of the event differed from past commencement ceremonies, with graduates doing things like "the wave" and bouncing beach balls around the complex, rituals ordinarily performed during indoor rock concerts and the like.

Sherry Nathan, a graduate of biochemistry and this year's student speaker, told the audience of about 5,000 people of her experience at Stony Brook. "They said Stony Brook was among the collegiate 'best buys,'" she said. "Well, they were right, and I've received a wonderful education."

Nathan, who said she plans to return to Stony Brook for medical school, predicted that the Class of '91 will have a great impact on society. "Over the next few years

the names in your newspapers will be the names of your fellow graduates," she said. "Take a look over your shoulder, look to your right, look to your left. You might be sitting beside the next Watson and Crick, Marie Curie, Donald Trump, Janet Jackson, George Bush, or even the next President Marburger."

Nathan encouraged the graduating class to look ahead rather than behind. "Just as an infant is born, nurtured, and eventually rises to take its first steps," Nathan said, "we were born from high school, nurtured in college, and alas, now it is time to take our first steps."

"We're not Stony Brook replicas but we will always carry a piece of this institution in everything we do for the rest of our lives."

Mathilde Krim, founding co-chair of the American Foundation for AIDS research, discussed her experiences in AIDS research and discussed the future of the disease in her address. She predicted that AIDS research and the search for a cure will allow the medical profession to better understand AIDS and other incurable diseases.

"AIDS research . . . will open vast new frontiers for a better understanding and control of many diseases other than AIDS that still are, today, equally incurable," Krim said. "Then, although the precious young lives lost to AIDS cannot be reclaimed, the pain and suffering wrought on mankind by AIDS will, at least, not have been in vain."

Krim told the graduates that their training and understanding of the problems of the world will help find answers to many of the world's problems. "Your educa-

tion has qualified you as active participants in bringing about changes," she said. "You are among the first generation that can give flesh to the spirit of human solidarity on a global level."

Marburger, who gave the closing address, told the graduates not to rely on luck for their future. "To ascribe prosperity to good fortune is a trap," he said. "From all we know about the universe, neither prosperity nor ruin is preordained."

Marburger said that although graduates earned their degrees, success requires more. "Academic degrees do not ensure success in life," Marburger said. "They do not ensure anything beyond a first step toward being taken seriously because people know it is not easy, especially at Stony Brook, to earn a degree."

"Real success comes only as the result of real effort. Your readiness to act to help yourself and others will create the conditions that others call 'good luck'."

Marburger concluded: "And so I will not this time wish you luck. Instead I wish you fortitude and resourcefulness, and above all, the will to take responsibility for your own life, and not to trust any other than yourself."

The 1991 H. Lee Dennison Valedictorian Award, which is the valedictorian award for a transfer student, was given to Ronny Bachrach.

The 1991 Ward Melville Valedictorian Award, granted to the graduating senior with the best academic record during the four years at Stony Brook, was given to Michelle Stephens.