



Physical Plant employees Kevin Potter and Kevin Ballanger work in the Physical Plant basement Wednesday afternoon.

Cindy First/Index

Job transfer delays Bright Flight money

New loan agency had difficulties in transition process

Alan Venneman
Staff Reporter

Roughly 1,200 students are missing their Bright Flight scholarships, and they won't get their money until after the middle of September.

The Bright Flight scholarship is awarded to Missouri high school students with a score of 30 or higher on the ACT.

Financial Aid Director Melinda Wood said the Department of Higher Education decided to switch its loan servicer from Guarantec, LLP to American Student Assistance.

A new program was in the works to update the module that controlled updates to prospective, transfer and current students.

The budget cuts reduced the size of the Jefferson City IT staff.

"[The changeover] got sidetracked several times for other issues they had in Jefferson City, so it has taken awhile to get the system up," Wood said. "The module was definitely supposed to go online last year."

Now the Missouri Department of Higher Education uses ASA rather than the former GuranTec, LLP. ASA is one of the largest Federal Family Education Loan Programs guarantee agencies in the U.S., according to the ASA Web site.

"The switchover was

time-consuming for ASA's understaffed ITS team," Wood said.

Some students have said they are finding it difficult to track down their aid, however.

Sophomore Travis Shively said he was confused because he received Bright Flight scholarships without a problem at the beginning of school last year.

"I have several friends who have received scholarships such as Bright

Flight, and if that wasn't given, they would probably have to take [an emergency loan] out," Shively said.

Student Account Supervisor Joyce McVay said emergency loans, or short term loans, can be approved

within a day. Applications are available in the financial aid office.

"We're hoping that [the delay] isn't causing a big problem for most students," McVay said. "... The state has cut funding for other education programs. The students should consider themselves fortunate to have such a good scholarship from the state of Missouri."

Shively said he understands the situation but hopes the loans come in soon.

"I am very grateful that I am from Missouri, and I can receive Bright Flight through the Bright Flight scholarship," Shively said. "It's a real benefit for the state to reward me for my hard work in high school and then also being able to do well on the ACT."

Plant jobs eyed for change

Kyle Hill
Staff Reporter

In an effort to reallocate resources, the University has begun collecting information that will outsource contracting grounds work to an outside company.

At a forum with Physical Plant employees Wednesday, Physical Plant Director Karl Schneider informed about 100 University employees that the University has begun a feasibility study but, contrary to rumors, has not hired an outside company.

"It's the only decision made so far," Schneider said. "If it's not feasible, we won't contract out."

Schneider said he informed the grounds crew and Physical Plant supervisors in meetings the previous week.

The decision stemmed from a call Friday by President Barbara Dixon to reallocate \$4 to \$5 million during the next two to three years with no new money coming from the Missouri General Assembly.

"We are looking at everything in

the University," Dixon said. "We want to be sure that we are operating as efficiently as we can and with the best possible way."

Dixon said of the money reallocated, the first \$2 million would go toward salaries of University faculty and staff.

"One of the things we've realized is that we've had trouble attracting highly qualified faculty and staff," Dixon said.

Dixon said the reallocations would come as the University prepares to update its master plan.

"Everything is on the table," Dixon said. "What won't change is our mission and our core values."

Dixon said grounds was first suggested because the staff has lacked a supervisor since December.

Schneider said a call for applicants still is in progress, but the vacancy is a factor for the prospect of outsourcing.

"If anyone was going to lose their job, it'd probably be the grounds supervisor," Schneider said. "We don't want to place anybody in a position where we're hiring someone and then months later, they lose their job."

Schneider said the first part of the feasibility study will be determining if a company in the area can do the work. If a company were found, he said provisions would be made to ensure jobs of employees.

"If a contractor was hired, we expect them to hire our current staff at the same pay and benefits," Schneider said.

Some employees at the forum were concerned that the action would eliminate jobs. Academic Housekeeping director Dave Robbins said University management showed little concern.

"These people are getting the feeling that people higher up in the admin-

istration don't care about their employees," Robbins said.

Michael McManis, University dean for planning and institutional development told the crowd the University cares for its employees.

"The welfare of University employees is at the top of our list," McManis said. "The president said this morning that we're not going to do something that will mess up anyone's retirement."

McManis said that when jobs within Information Technology Services were contracted outside four years ago, wages did not decrease, and some employees remained employed by the University.

Schneider said nothing else within the Physical Plant is under threat of outsourcing, but he expects announcements outside his department soon.

Dixon said any changes implemented will not be immediate.

"This is a choice that will be done in a gradual manner so that we can keep our focus on instructing students," Dixon said.

"The welfare of University employees is at the top of our list."

Michael McManis
University Dean for Planning and Institutional Development

Planned Parenthood Benefit Art Exhibition & Auction Friday, September 16



NEMO Fairgrounds Multi-Purpose Building Highway 11 in Kirksville Exhibition 6:30 p.m. Auction 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$10 per Person Complimentary refreshments will be served. Tickets available at the door. Something for all tastes & budgets!

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