

TICUA Policy Update

February 5, 2010

TICUA Arranges for DC Visits

During the recent NAICU Annual Meeting in Washington DC, a number of TICUA presidents made visits to select members of Congress. TICUA arranged for attendance at the “Tennessee Tuesday Breakfast” with Senators Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker, as well as office visits with Senator Alexander’s staff and Representatives Marsha Blackburn and Phil Roe. There were a wide range of topics discussed from the importance of student aid to the challenges of implementing the Yellow Ribbon program.

Higher Education Policy Stakeholders Meet about Lottery Scholarship

Representatives from TICUA, TSAC, THEC, UT and TBR all met this past Thursday to discuss the future of the lottery scholarship program. It has been estimated that the program will outpace the revenue by \$30 - \$43 million during the 2010-11 fiscal cycle. Various ideas were discussed on how to adjust the program in order to align the programmatic requirements with revenue projections. It would take a 13% pro-rata reduction in all lottery scholarship programs to achieve the necessary savings. TICUA put forth a proposal to protect the need-based Aspire supplement and merit-based GAMS supplement while carrying out a pro-rata reduction of all other programs.

Another meeting will be scheduled once the TSAC and THEC staffs are able to determine the individual cost of each scholarship program requirement and determine the cost analysis for the TICUA proposal.

TICUA Meets with Governor’s Policy Staff

TICUA President Claude Pressnell met with Governor Phil Bredesen’s policy staff to discuss student longitudinal data systems. Pressnell reinforced the need to put strict protective measures in place for all data collection processes. He reviewed the recommendations of the Fordham Law School Study entitled, “Children’s Educational Records and Privacy.” The study evaluates all state based data collection systems and offers eight very practical steps of action to secure the data and adequately monitor access and use. The Governor’s staff was very open to the recommendations and asked for TICUA to remain engaged on this issue with them.

Pressnell also noted that SB2793/HB2847 has been filed which removes liability for data that has been submitted to the state by TICUA or any of its member institutions. The policy staff indicated that they were supportive of the measure.

TICUA Annual Meeting February 16 and 17.

“Managing the Modern University” is this year’s theme for the TICUA Annual Meeting. The two main workshops feature scholar Dr. Peter Lake. The event will also include a federal policy update by NAICU Vice President Sarah Flanagan, state policy update by TICUA President Claude Pressnell, and a Legislative Reception. Nearly 60 legislators are expected to attend the event. This year’s meeting will be held in the conference facilities of Waller, Lansden, Dortch & Davis in the Nashville City Center which is located across the street from the Legislative Plaza. The following morning Education Chairs Senator Dolores Gresham and Representative Harry Brooks will join the presidents for a breakfast discussion at the Homewood Suites.

Register today by going to www.ticua.org/annual_meeting

Governor Bredesen’s Budget Revealed

Governor Phil Bredesen revealed his budget plan for 2010-2011 during a joint session of the Tennessee Legislature this past Monday evening. The budget calls for widespread cuts in state government, including a 6% cut in higher education.

On matters close to TICUA members, the budget calls for a 3% reduction in Contract Education but a \$3.2 million **recurring improvement** in the Tennessee Student Assistance Award (TSAA). The Contract Education program has been on the chopping block for years. TICUA has issued a policy paper outlining the cost efficiencies of the program but has failed to gain any traction for support during this economic downturn. The improvement to the TSAA program, while very positive, will only keep the program funded at the same level as last year.

Student Letter Writing Campaign Launched

Under the leadership of TICUA, the Tennessee Student Aid Alliance has launched its THANK YOU email campaign for students receiving the Tennessee Student Assistance Award (TSAA). This is the state’s only purely need-based aid program and serves about 25,000 students attending post-secondary institutions in Tennessee. Over 4,300 students receive \$4,000 grants through this program to attend a TICUA member institution.

Please encourage students who receive the TSAA to begin writing their emails of thanks today!