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Students cut back spending

BY DIANA CALLE
THE PARTHENON

As the government begins a bailout of the financial system, some students are cutting back on spending in fear of the economy getting worse.

Meg Oldman, English graduate student from Harrisonburg, Va., said she is trying to control her money as best she can.

"I'm doing a lot of online banking and balancing my checkbook more than I usually do," Oldman said. "I'm making sure what I'm spending is for necessity and not for leisure."

Michael Newsome, economics professor at Marshall, said students should be prudent about their spending habits.

"Students should not build up their debt load unnecessarily and should not buy frivolous things on credit cards," Newsome said. "It is important for each student to think about what is the appropriate mix of debt and savings given his or her income, needs and risk preferences."

Eventually, the fact that money is tight will begin to affect the ability of the average person to access credit, making it more difficult to get loans for houses, cars and educational expenses, Newsome said.

Oldman said she has cut back on shopping and going out to eat in order to save money for the future.

While some students are cutting back, others have only made small changes to their spending.

Ashley Kennedy, senior elementary education major from Teays Valley, W.Va., said she has not been affected much by the economic crisis.

"I haven't been able to go home as much because of gas prices but since my parents pay all my bills, I get to keep the money I make from work, so I still shop a lot and still go out to eat a lot as well," Kennedy said.

The situation is different for Oldman. She said every time she is going to spend money she has second thoughts.

Newsome said students should know sound financial management, always considering their future needs, their risk preferences and their resources.

"It is a very good idea to have a financial buffer in case of emergencies," Newsome said. "This means students should save enough money to feel comfortable should their liquidity (money flow) get tight."

The United States government has developed many safeguards that keep the recession under control and the country is nowhere near the difficulties experienced in the Great Depression, Newsome said.

"Don't get too excited when things are going well," Newsome said. "Remember to make good decisions, not get in too much debt and don't get too worried when things are going poorly. The economy will get better."

Diana Calle can be contacted at calle@marshall.edu.

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Congressman Rahall speaks to Students for Barack Obama



AUDREY HAMOY | THE PARTHENON

Congressman Nick Rahall speaks to Students for Barack Obama in the Memorial Student Center Monday about the importance of politics and voting.

Rahall supports Obama because of his son's influence

BY JESSICA WINTZ
THE PARTHENON

U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall, D-W.Va., encouraged the importance of voting and explained why he supports Democratic candidate Sen. Barack Obama for president in an address to the Marshall University Students for Barack

Obama on Monday night in the student center. Rahall said that he was not familiar with Obama until two years ago when his son showed him a bumper sticker that he had not seen before.

"The bumper sticker said: 'End Hatred toward America. Vote for Change.' And at that time, change was not the buzzword and certainly no one had heard of Barack Obama," Rahall said. "But I got to asking him, 'What's this mean?' and he said, 'It means that a lot of people want to see change in America.'"

Rahall said it was when he saw how excited his son was for supporting Obama that he felt he should support a candidate who

could get others just as excited about politics and voting. He formally endorsed Obama on March 6.

"There is certainly a down attitude and a low sense of confidence in the presidency, in Congress and in everybody in public office," Rahall said. "Barack Obama offers that wind of change that can instill in everyone faith in themselves and in their country."

Rahall said he supports Obama on a number of issues, including veteran's affairs, education, social security and clean coal technology. He also said that Obama's views on

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Police wait for DNA test results in Hickman case

BY ERICA J. DUFFIELD
THE PARTHENON

Analysts at the mitochondrial DNA laboratory in Phoenix, Ariz., are testing crime scene evidence from the disappearance and death of Marshall student Leah Hickman in hopes of linking suspects to the incident.

Huntington Police Sgt. John Williams, lead investigator for the case, said he could not disclose what evidence was being tested, but common trace evidence includes things such as fibers and hair.

Terry W. Fenger, director of the Marshall University Forensic Science Center, said mitochondrial DNA testing differs from nuclear DNA testing.

"Nuclear DNA tests focus on chromosomes, while mitochondrial DNA tests focus on mitochondria and DNA sequencing," Fenger said.

Mitochondrial DNA testing can be conducted when nuclear DNA does not exist. "If a hair is broken off and has no root, no nuclear DNA exists," Fenger said. "However, the hair shaft does contain



HICKMAN

mitochondrial DNA." The mitochondrial DNA laboratory is one of four of its kind in the United States and has a long waiting list of cases.

It is unclear when the results of the tests will be returned. "We hope to have the results of the tests soon," Williams said. "It's one of many for this lab. We're at the mercy of the lab before we can proceed much further into the case."

Williams stresses that this is not a cold case. "This is a high priority case and will remain as such," he said. "The case has not been put up on the shelf. It's still on my desk, and we act on any leads that come in."

There are three things that help solve cases: confessions, witnesses and physical evidence, Williams said. No one has confessed, and there are no known witnesses.

"The physical evidence is the only thing

we have to go on," Williams said. "That slows up the process."

Hickman, 21, was last seen alive Dec. 14 and found strangled Dec. 21 in the crawl space at her apartment building at 403 Eighth Ave.

Williams would not release the names of any suspects or persons of interest, but did confirm that the police believe the suspect to be someone with "close knowledge of the victim."

Williams said anyone with information regarding Hickman's death or any odd occurrences surrounding the time of her death should contact him.

"We want anyone with information, even if it seems small or trivial, to call us," he said. "I think some people assume the information they're holding is insignificant or that we already know it, but they may be holding key information."

Williams can be contacted at 304-696-4420.

Erica Duffield can be contacted at duffield@marshall.edu.

Program offers travel opportunity

BY KATLYN GOOTS
THE PARTHENON

For the cost of Marshall tuition, students can study in the mountains of Colorado, the deserts of New Mexico or on the beaches of Hawaii.

Marshall University's National Student Exchange is a student exchange program for undergraduates. Students complete one to two semesters at a different school for the cost of Marshall tuition. There are more than 200 schools involved in the program, located across the U.S., Puerto Rico, and Canada.

Any financial aid or scholarships students may have received through Marshall will transfer to their new school, Kendra Bolen, developmental advising specialist in the University College, and program coordinator, said.

"If a student received the Promise scholarship, for example, this payment will transfer to their new school," Bolen said. "This is an opportunity for students to experience life from a different point of view, to meet new people, and to see new places."

Schools involved in the program vary in size and location, Bolen said. "The University of Hawaii is the most popular place students request," Bolen said. "We also currently have three students studying at Marshall from other schools who are enjoying experiencing W.Va."

Kristian Cofresi, a physical education major from Puerto Rico, began studying at Marshall this semester. Cofresi said she would recommend the program to everyone.

"This is without a doubt something that has helped me grow as a person," Cofresi said. "Marshall is totally different than my home campus, the people are totally different, and it is an entirely different culture."

Dillon Smith, an economics major from El Paso, Texas, studying at Marshall, heard about the program his senior year, and knew he wanted to be involved.

"I went to school at New Mexico State in Las Cruces," Smith said. "I only lacked four credits to graduate, and once I found out about the program I knew I had to act fast before I graduated and an opportunity like this was lost forever."

Smith said he has enjoyed Huntington and the state of West Virginia, and like Cofresi, notices a difference in culture.

"I would recommend the program to everyone as a vacation, if nothing else," Smith said. "I have learned that wherever you go, there is a tradition and personality to that place. So if a place looks interesting to you, use the program to check it out."

Students involved in the program at Marshall have bonded together and have even taken vacations together, Zabeth Runyan, a sophomore restaurant tourism and management major from New Mexico studying at Marshall, said.

"The other National Exchange students and I have been doing a lot of activities like camping, hiking, and rafting, and enjoying the nightlife downtown," Runyan said. "I am so glad I got involved in the program, it's a great experience that doesn't cost anything more than going to your original university. I am planning on doing it next year in Montana or Colorado."

In order to be accepted into the program, students must have at least a 2.5 GPA and a good financial and social standing with the university, Bolen said. Application deadline for Fall 2009 is Feb. 15, 2009.

For more information on the student exchange program contact Kendra Bolen at 304-696-3252.

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