



# August Newsletter

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- Take Action!
- NEA Applauds the Senate
- Benefits of Student Membership

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## No More Student Loans for Amherst

Amherst College, the highly selective liberal arts college in western Massachusetts, has announced that it is eliminating all loans from its financial aid packages and replacing them with scholarship grants. The program, which will go into effect in the fall of 2008, will include all incoming and current students.

Tom Parker, dean of admission and financial aid, noted, "Students who graduate from college with debt feel compelled to make career choices based in part on their need to pay off student loans. Now graduates from low- and middle-income families will be able to make career and life choices free of the specter of debt."

*-The Journal for Blacks In Higher Education Reports*



## Victory in the Senate

Efforts To Ensure No One Is Denied Access to Higher

### Education

#### *U.S. SENATE SEEKS TO HELP MORE FAMILIES AFFORD POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION*

WASHINGTON—NEA President Reg Weaver believes several provisions under the Higher Education Act recently approved by the Senate would help more families who are struggling financially pay for their children's postsecondary education. The provisions were approved on July 19 and relate to a section of HEA that deals with financial assistance for students pursuing postsecondary degrees. The Senate will consider HEA in its entirety in the near future.

Weaver said HEA underscores this nation's commitment to ensure, as a matter of basic fairness, that no one is denied a college education because of his or her financial circumstances. HEA has helped millions of students attend institutions of higher education by offering them financial assistance. The new changes aim to help college students and their families by:

Increasing the Pell Grant maximum from \$4,050 to \$5,100 next year and to \$5,400 by 2011;

Simplifying the process of applying for federal student loans;

Increasing income protections for working students by raising the amount they can earn without reducing their financial aid awards; and

Capping monthly loan payments at 15 percent of discretionary income.

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*“This is important legislation to professions like teaching.”*

*Reg Weaver*

# Student Leader Talks About Her Experience Abroad

As excitement grows inside me with the realization that my senior year is about to begin, I look back on the opportunities that I had during my college career. This summer I had the opportunity to travel to the University of Brighton, England and participate in a three week study abroad program specialized for education majors. The program was a partnership between my university in the United States and the University of Brighton. It allowed me the chance to experience education from a different cultural perspective and presented me with a great chance to better myself as an educator. Credits were earned for two collegiate level classes which were necessary for me to graduate from the College of Education at Illinois State University.

Working with British professors has been a very rewarding and gratifying experience. I have had the opportunity to visit the local high school and elementary schools in both urban and suburban areas. Highlights of these visits include: observing academic classes, having lunch with the children, watching the students perform their year end play, attending recess with the children, interviewing students about their school system and meeting with British teachers and school administration. In addition to these experiences I have been able to meet other future educators from around the world and learn about the differences and similarities between our cultures. By actually living in a different culture and learning first hand about the differences and similarities you have, allows you as an individual to gain a new global perspective. While the cost may seem daunting I truly feel that this was an investment worth making. Not only have I grown as an individual but as an American educator. I can't wait to return to the United States of America and share the information and knowledge that I have learned as a result of this summer's study abroad.

*Kimberly Gray*

*Student Illinois Education*

*Association Chair*

*“ I can't wait to return to the United States of America and share the information and knowledge that I've learned as a result of this summer's study abroad.”*



## Victory in the Senate

### NEA Applauds Efforts To Ensure No One Is Denied Access to Higher Education

#### *U.S. SENATE SEEKS TO HELP MORE FAMILIES AFFORD POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION*

*The following statement can be attributed to Weaver:*

*“This is important legislation to professions like teaching.”*

*Reg Weaver*

"This is important legislation to professions like teaching. I have talked to many college graduates who have studied to become teachers or want to teach, but can't. They are drowning in student loan debt and can't earn enough income doing what they would love-teaching the next generation. This not only reinforces the fact that educators need to be paid more, but also our young people, especially those who are at a financial disadvantage, need more help shouldering the growing cost of getting college and university degrees. HEA has a proven track record of helping millions of students get the financial help they need to attend postsecondary institutions. NEA looks forward to continuing its work with lawmakers to extend the future of this crucial piece of legislation."

# # #

**The National Education Association is the nation's largest professional employee organization, representing 3.2 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators and students preparing to become teachers**