BY JONATHAN KEATING
jkealing@theworldco.info

In just five months, an idea to offer wounded soldiers the chance to obtain advanced degrees at Kansas University moved from concept to reality.

During a ceremony Feb. 6 at Fort Leavenworth, KU Chancellor Robert Hemenway and U.S. Army Secretary Pete Geren announced the first eight soldiers who would be eligible to receive master's degrees at KU, in exchange for agreeing to serve a few more years in the Army. All eight were wounded in combat: some of them lost eyes, while others lost legs.

"Kansas University and the Army have a partnership that goes back decades," Geren said. "It's a great partnership for both institutions."

Geren expressed surprise that KU and the Army could successfully navigate their extensive bureaucracies to bring the program, the Wounded Warrior Education Initiative, together so quickly. Under the announced framework, the eight current and former soldiers will be able to enroll in master's level courses at KU, likely as early as next fall.

The soldiers will pay in-state tuition, covered by the Army, and will be enrolled full time. For every 12 months of education...

SEE KU, PAGE 6A

KANSAS UNIVERSITY CHANCELLOR Robert Hemenway talks with wounded soldiers Feb. 6 at Fort Leavenworth. A new program will allow wounded soldiers to earn their master's degrees at KU while remaining in the Army.
tion the Army covers, the soldiers will be responsible for three years of active service, often as military college instructors. Those soldiers who have retired, often because of their injuries, will be employed by the Army as civilians for three years for every 12 months of education they receive.

"For those of us at the University of Kansas, it’s a privilege and a pleasure to be a partner with the Army in this new program," Hemenway said.

The KU program will serve as a pilot for other universities across the country. It was established about 12 months after a scandal embroiled the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, when it was discovered that wounded veterans were often not getting the care they needed.

The education program, Geren said, was born in part out of the Army’s response to that scandal.

“If there’s a silver lining in the dark cloud of that incident, it’s the awareness of the needs of our wounded warriors that has developed,” Geren said. “It was a tragedy for the Army, but some good has now come of it.” The program was conceived by people already working to promote the relationship between KU and Fort Leavenworth’s Command and General Staff College, according to David Lambertson, a KU instructor and former ambassador to Thailand.

In September, Hemenway took the proposal to Defense Secretary Robert Gates, Hemenway’s friend from Gates’ days as leader of Texas A&M University. Hemenway left Washington with the knowledge that the Army was committed to the program.

For now, the program will be restricted to eight members, but it could grow.

Participant Capt. Gates Brown, a soldier already stationed at Fort Leavenworth, said he was “pretty overwhelmed” by the opportunity. After completing a degree in military history, Brown hopes to remain at Fort Leavenworth as an instructor.

“I want to go to school and get a better understanding of counter-insurgency and how we’ve fought it in the past and how we’ll fight it in the future,” he said.
A Chase County couple has made a $1 million bequest to the University of Kansas, to be used for research into autism. Thomas and Wanda Pyle of Elmdale asked that most of their estate be used for research and service on behalf of children.


The Associated Press
February's Lion of the Month is Jordan Allen, a senior at Columbus Unified High School, daughter of Mike and Michelle Allen.

Her activities and awards include:
- Tennis, Softball, National Honor Society, and Math Team.
- Her awards received:
  - Kansas University Honor Scholar, Honor Roll, Who's Who Among High School Students, and first and second team All SEK in softball.
TOPEKA — The board in charge of Kansas’ higher education system wants to make sure the cost of attending a state university or college doesn’t increase too much next year, but it’s not ready to impose a cap.

The Board of Regents expects to receive proposals for new tuition rates from the universities in May and to vote upon them in June. On Wednesday, the board discussed whether it should give university officials any guidance — or impose a limit on what they can propose.

The regents voted 7-2 to let universities, community colleges and technical schools propose their own tuition rates. But they also strongly suggested that the increases sought be 6 percent or less.

The state’s six public universities have instituted double-digit percentage tuition increases in the last five years. Since 2002, increases have ranged from 42.2 percent at Fort Hays State to 136 percent at the University of Kansas.

Presidents of all six of the universities told the regents their tuition increases would be less than 6 percent next year.

Student leaders who spoke at the meeting said they had been involved in setting tuition at their schools and they don’t want lower tuition if it affects the quality of their education.
Chase County couple give $1 million to KU

EMPORIA — The University of Kansas announced Wednesday that a Chase County couple made a $1 million bequest to the university. The money will be used for research into the cause and treatment of autism.

The money comes from the estate of Thomas and Wanda Pyle, who ranched near Elmdale. Thomas Pyle died in 2001 and Wanda Pyle died in 2006. They had no children, but stipulated that most of their estate should be used for research and service at KU to improve children’s lives.

The Schiefelbusch Institute for Life Span Studies at KU will benefit from the bequest.

In a news release, Steve Warren, director of the institute, said the money will be used to enhance the institute’s efforts to pursue research on the causes and treatment of autism spectrum disorders, which currently affect one in every 150 children in the United States.

— Emporia Gazette
Compiled by Megan Moser
Regents find allies in students

Some say raise tuition; the question is, by how much?

By Tim Carpenter
THE CAPITAL-JOURNAL

Courtney George, Matt Wagner and Hannah Love have no interest in a tuition freeze at state universities in Kansas.

The trio endorses annual tuition hikes as the price of a college education capable of preparing students for the working world. After all, they said, the Legislature hasn’t approved sufficient budget enhancements for the universities and tuition rates at the schools have been historically low.

It is an argument championed by members of the Kansas Board of Regents and by top administrators of the six universities under the board’s control.

But in this case, the three advocates for higher tuition are the student body presidents of Emporia State University, Kansas State University and The University of Kansas, respectively.

George said extra tuition revenue was needed to expand the faculty at ESU, and Wagner believes infusions of cash at KSU helped reduce class sizes on the Manhattan campus. And at KU, Love said, students were the ultimate beneficiaries of each new tuition adjustment.

“A freeze just limits some of our learning opportunities,” George said.

Please see TUITION, Page 13A
Tuition: Limit sought on hike

Continued from Page 1A

The process of setting tuition rates for 2008-2009 at the state universities will receive unusual scrutiny. Some regents recently registered alarm at the cumulative effect of tuition adjustments at ESU, KSU, KU, Wichita State University, Pittsburg State University and Fort Hays State University.

Gary Sherrer, a regents member from Overland Park, said rapid escalation of tuition at the six universities had priced some Kansans out of the market. He worries a three-year decline in enrollment of in-state students may be associated with rising tuition prices.

"I wonder who speaks for the student who couldn’t be at your school because they couldn’t afford to be there," he said. "If we continue to price them out, we’re going to pay a terrible price."

A full-time resident student at KU this year paid $6,600 in tuition and fees, which is 176 percent higher than a decade ago. Among the six state universities, only KSU’s increase of 152 percent over the same period came close to rivaling KU. One leading national index of college costs surged 98 percent in this time frame, while the consumer price index climbed 29 percent. Tuition and fees at Washburn University went up 84 percent over the 10-year period.

The bulk of tuition adjustments at regents universities were imposed during the past six years. Under a program authorized by the regents, increases in tuition alone ranged from 136 percent at KU to 42 percent at FHSU. The rise in tuition at the other schools: KSU, 121 percent; PSU, 74 percent; WSU, 66 percent; and ESU, 64 percent.

It won’t be until June that the regents pencil in final tuition numbers for the upcoming school year. But recent discussions by the regents sent a message to campus administrators that they will be working with smaller increases than in the past.

“We understand that the era of double-digit tuition increases is over," said Jon Wefald, president at Kansas State.

However, there doesn’t appear to be much support among the regents for an outright freeze or a cap on tuition.

At the board’s most recent meeting, Sherrer and regent Donna Shank, of Liberal, failed to convince a majority to authorize a 5 percent maximum increase in tuition for the upcoming school year.

“If we want average schools, we should have a cap," said regent Dan Lykins, of Topeka. “We'd be making a mistake if we put a punitive cap.”

Board chairwoman Christine Downey-Schmidt, of Inman, also failed with a proposal to limit tuition increases to a range of 4 percent to 6 percent. Instead, the board voted 7-2 for a vague motion offered by regent Jill Docking, of Wichita, that expressed "concern over the continuing rise in tuition" and suggested "near-term" tuition requests from the universities come in below those of the recent past.

Bottom line: State university students will pay more this fall when they return to classes.

Tim Carpenter can be reached at (785) 296-3005 or timothy.carpenter@cjonline.com.
Council retreat outlines members' hopes

By Mike Hall
THE CAPITAL-JOURNAL

Topeka City Councilman Jack Woelfel is concerned there is no plan for how to make the city grow.

And Councilman Bill Haynes is concerned there isn’t even a system in place to allow council members to discuss creating such a plan.

But following a four-hour city council retreat Saturday morning, both issues may be addressed in coming weeks.

Afterward, city manager Norton Bonaparte was asked if he planned to call a meeting of the council specifically to address some of the long-range needs identified by council members in the retreat. He was noncommittal but said any council member has the authority to request a meeting be called.

When Woelfel was asked about plans for follow-up meetings, he first replied he would expect Bonaparte to do that. When told of Bonaparte’s response that a council member could request a meeting, Woelfel said, “Then, I’ll do it.”

To which Councilwoman Deborah Swank replied, “Go Jack, go!”

She added, “I think this is just the start of the dialog.”

The retreat was from 8 a.m. to noon at the KU Public Management Center, 715 S.W. 10th. As council members offered their observations on what they would like the city to be in five years, center director Charles Jones wrote them on a dry erase board on the wall.

Some of the long-range needs mentioned by council members were crime reduction, improving deteriorating neighborhoods, expanded public transportation and more opportunities for youths.

One of the questions Jones and Jonathan Morris, an instructor at the center, put to council members was what they wanted to be remembered for. Woelfel said he wanted to be remembered for expanding the tax base and for improving the quality of life in Topeka. In expanding the tax base, he said he meant he wanted the city to grow in population and in job-producing economic development.

When the question came up about how to achieve that, Haynes pointed out the council has no forum for discussing such long-range planning issues. When the council holds an informal work session preceding its weekly business meeting, the topic usually is a specific item on a council agenda that night or in the near future.

No decisions were made during the retreat, but most thought it was time well spent. Besides Woelfel, Haynes and Swank, other participants were Mayor Bill Bunten and council members Lana Kennedy, John Alcala, Sylvia Ortiz and Richard Harmon. Councilmen Brett Blackburn and Jeff Preisner were absent.

“I don’t know what will come out of this,” Bunten said, “but it was good that we were here to at least talk about these issues.”

Among the other responses to the question about their legacies:

■ Kennedy said she wanted to be remembered for helping reduce crime and improving quality of life.

■ Ortiz wants to be known for creating more jobs for youths, increasing the availability of public transportation and providing more fire stations.

■ Harmon hopes to be remembered for a “citywide and commonsense approach to governing” and for the respectful way he conducts himself as a council member.

■ Alcala said he wants honest and open government and a government that produces results.

■ Bunten said he wants to be known for reducing crime, improving deteriorating neighborhoods, and upgrading streets and other infrastructure.

■ Haynes said he hopes to be remembered for getting the new city manager form of government up and running, reducing costs, and increasing efficiency of city government. He hopes the city will support new industry and encourage improvements in the core area of the city, especially the downtown area.
Failing students

Skyrocketing costs threaten to freeze out some students and prompt more borrowing

It’s hard to stop a runaway bus. Just ask Kansans who wanted to see the state Board of Regents put a cap on tuition increases at state colleges.

Last week, the board discussed setting a limit on tuition increases among Regents institutions. But the meeting ended with no firm cap, just assurances by college leaders that they would tap the brakes on tuition increases.

University of Kansas Chancellor Robert Hemenway pledged that KU’s next tuition increase would absolutely, positively be no more than 6 percent.

Kansas State University President Jon Wefald told the board he was aiming at an increase of no more than 1 percent above something called the higher education inflation rate, which was 3.4 percent last year.

In the end, the Regents schools were allowed to set their own tuition increases. Board members strongly suggested limiting the increases to 6 percent, but they didn’t impose a ceiling.

Just a guess, but here’s thinking a 6 percent increase won’t come as much of a relief to Kansas college students and their parents.

Not after years upon years of big increases.

Check out these numbers, as reported in The Lawrence Journal-World:

- Tuition at KU was $2,921 in 2002. Since then, it has increased another $2,923. You don’t need an economics degree to know that’s an increase of a smidgen over 100 percent in just five years.
- In the past 20 years, there’s been more than a fivefold increase in tuition at KU.
tuition was scheduled to go up 14 percent this year for many students at the University of Colorado, 11.6 percent at the University of Illinois' three main campuses and 9.9 percent at Oklahoma State University, to name a few. Spiraling tuition threatens to keep some students from furthering their education and puts more and more pressure on parents to save, borrow or otherwise beg money to keep their children in school.

That's especially true in these uncertain economic times.

Granted, a college education remains a good investment for those who can afford to make it. Compared to workers without degrees, studies show, college students make enough more income to pay for the education several times over.

But as tuition rises, college students are playing more and more catch-up thanks to an increasing reliance on student loans. Studies show about two-thirds of college graduates will leave school in debt, and not just a little. Typically, the amount is about $19,000.

KU officials might argue that the university took a step toward easing the debt load last year by adopting a so-called "guaranteed" tuition rate for incoming freshmen.

The university touted the plan as a bargain, stressing that new students would pay the same tuition rate for four years and would be immune to rate increases over that time.

However, the new rate is 16.1 percent higher than the 2006 tuition amount and isn't optional, meaning it could result in higher college costs for students who don't graduate from KU in exactly four years.

So here's to proponents of the cap — including Board of Regents members Gary Sherrer and Donna Shank — for trying to get a handle on tuition.

No matter how you slice it — or how universities care to spin it — somebody needs to stop this wild ride.
LAWRENCE — The Dole Institute of Politics' study group will focus on "Gender, Race and Religion in Politics" when it meets at 3 p.m. Tuesdays today through April 15, except March 11 and 18, at the Dole Institute.

Scheduled guest speakers include Nicole McCleskey, partner, Public Opinion Strategies, today; Adam Clymer, former New York Times political reporter, on March 25; and Juliana Horowitz, Pew Research Center for People and the Press, on April 1.
University of Kansas football legend Gale Sayers will sign his book "Sayers: My Life and Times," from 1 to 3 p.m. March 1 at the KU Bookstores on level two in the Kansas Union on the KU campus.

Sayers will donate 100 percent of royalties from sales of the book to the Gale Sayers Center, a not-for-profit organization. The KU Bookstores also will contribute a portion of each sale of the book that day.

Triumph Books published the book, written with Chicago Tribune columnist Fred Mitchell, in October 2007. It is illustrated with personal photos and chronicles Sayers' career and philosophy.