Organization sends graduates back to school — to teach

Kelly Cope

Graduating students of all majors and backgrounds at Cal Poly will get the chance to serve their country — but in another way than in the military. Thanks to Teach For America, those recent graduates will enrich the lives of other, younger students — in the classroom.

Teach For America is an organization that trains and places recent college graduates as teachers in low-income area schools in 25 different regions of the United States, from California’s Bay Area to Connecticut and the Miami-Dade area, in both urban and rural communities. These teachers serve a two-year stint; most are placed in their first-choice region.

“I joined Teach For America because it’s a good way to spread some love and serve others who don’t get to grow up with a quality education like many of us do,” said Eric Martin in an e-mail, a TFA participant who is teaching in the Bay Area. He graduated from Cal Poly in June.

At the time, I was not sure what the next two years would bring, but I knew I wanted to make a difference in the lives of students who did not have access to a good education. Teaching for a year was a great opportunity to improve my teaching skills and to gain experience working with children.

The experience has proved to be difficult yet extremely rewarding for many of the teachers. Erica Weybright, a 2005 graduate of Cal Poly and TFA participant teaching in Houston, Texas, described in an e-mail her struggle to deal with a particularly difficult student to inspire last year, and the unexpected gift he gave to her: “He would often be asked to leave...”

Schwarzenegger announces plan to cut greenhouse gas emission by 10 percent

California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger announced an ambitious agenda in his State of the State address Tuesday. Among the items the Governor introduced is a mandate to reduce greenhouse gas emission from motor vehicles, making California the first state in the nation to adopt such strict emissions laws.

Schwarzenegger issued an executive order to slash the carbon content of all passenger vehicle fuels sold in California by 10 percent by the year 2020. While details of the motion are still in the works, administer...
Andrew Taylor
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The Democratic-controlled House Thursday passed a bill bolstering embryonic stem cell research that advocates say shows promise for numerous medical cures.

But the 253-174 vote fell short of the two-thirds margin required to overturn President Bush's promised veto, despite gains made by supporters in the election that would give them a new majority come January 2007. The White House said the bill — the third bill the Democrats' first 100 hours agenda to pass the House — "would use federal taxpayer dollars to support and encourage the destruction of human life for research."

At stake was whether research on cells derived from human embryos would be considered by scientists to be the most promising approach to developing new medical cures. Its backers say it might one day provide treatments for dozens of diseases — should be underwritten with taxpayer funds. The debate rages passionate because the research typically involves the destruction of frozen embryos created for in vitro fertilization. It draws fierce opposition from anti-abortion lawmakers and like-minded constituents who believe their taxes should not fund such research. Proponents of the research say it is done on embryos that would otherwise be discarded.

"I support stem cell research with one exception — research that requires killing human life," said Minority Leader John Boehner, R-Ohio. "Taxpayer-funded stem cell research must be carried out in an ethical manner in a way that respect the sanctity of human life. Fortunately, ethical stem cell alternatives continue to flourish in the scientific community."

Democrats countered with Rep. James Langevin, D-R.I., an anti-abortion lawmaker who is paralyzed from the chest down, who said back during an accident that occurred when he was a teenager. The research, Langevin said, offers "tremendous hope" that one day stem cell research might lead one day to a cure for spinal cord injuries but one day a child with diabetes will no longer have to endure a lifetime of painful shots and tests."

Dr. Robert Lanza, a top stem cell researcher at Advanced Cell Technology, Inc., said that stem cell biology would have been replaced with opponents of the measure.

As a result, House embryonic stem cell research proponents have gained only 15 votes over the high-water mark of 233 the prior GOP-controlled House.

If every House member votes, it takes 250 votes to override a veto; and both the House and Senate must override a veto for a bill to become law without a president's signature.

Scientists still say, however, that embryonic stem cells so far are backed by the most promising evidence that one day they might be used to grow replacements for damaged tissue, such as new insulin-producing cells for diabetes or new nerve connections to restore movement after spinal injury.

The legislation would lift Bush's 2001 ban on federal dollars spent on deriving new stem cells from fertilized embryos. Bush's veto of the bill last year was the first veto of his presidency.

Embryonic stem cells are able to morph into any of the more than 220 cell types that make up the human body. Bush on Aug. 9, 2001, restricted government funding to research using only the embryonic stem cell lines then in existence, groups of stem cells kept alive and propagating in lab dishes.

But those 21 stem cell lines have many problems, and researchers say 300 newer lines, culled from fertility clinics left over after in-vitro fertilization. Bush's veto of the bill last year was the first veto of his presidency. Embryonic stem cells are able to morph into any of the more than 220 cell types that make up the human body. Bush on Aug. 9, 2001, restricted government funding to research using only the embryonic stem cell lines then in existence, groups of stem cells kept alive and propagating in lab dishes.

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Bush’s Iraq plan draws confrontational opposition from Democrats, some Republicans

Tom Raum

WASHINGTON — President Bush’s plan to send more troops to Iraq ran into a wall of criticism on Capitol Hill on Thursday as administration officials drew confrontational, sometimes mocking challenges from both Democrats and Republicans.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates said in response that the administration might abandon the increase if the Iraqi government doesn’t do its part, but he provided no timetable. "I think most of us, in our minds, are thinking of it as a matter of months, not 18 months or two years," he told the House Armed Services Committee.

Bush and top members of his national security team sought to rally support for the troop buildup a day after he unveiled his plan for turning around a conflict that has lasted nearly four years and cost more than 3,000 American military lives.

Instead, Gates and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice found themselves embroiled in the first pitched exchanges in a battle that is likely to dominate Congress for months or longer and is already shaping the 2008 presidential election.

"I think this speech given last night by this president represents the most dangerous foreign policy blunder in this country since Vietnam, if it’s carried out," Sen. Chuck Hagel of Nebraska, a potential 2008 presidential contender, told Rice. While he is a Republican, administration officials were defending the plan for the first time to the Democratic-controlled Congress.

Bill Nelson, D-Fla., noted his own past support for the administration on the war but said he could not continue. He declared, "I have not been told the truth over and over again by administration witnesses, and the American people have not been told the truth.

A new AP-Ipsos poll found approval for Bush’s handling of Iraq hovering near a record low — 29 percent of Americans approve and 68 percent disapprove.

Bush, visiting with troops at Fort Benning, Ga., cautioned that the troop increase "is not going to yield immediate results. It’s going to take awhile.

His plan, outlined in a prime-time address to the nation on Wednesday, would raise troop levels in Iraq by 21,500 — from 132,000 to 153,500 — at a cost of $5.6 billion. It also calls for the Pentagon to start pulling out of Iraq by 92,000 troops over the next five years.

He also said the Pentagon would recall to duty sooner than planned some National Guard and Reserve troops who have served yearlong tours in Iraq or Afghanistan.

As Rice testifies to the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Rep. Howard Berman, D-Calif., likened Bush’s plan to a “haul Maliki pass” — jokingly combining Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki’s name with the football “Hail Mary” desperation pass.

The U.S. led a coalition that invaded Iraq in March 2003, despite failing to win U.N. Security Council support. The government of Saddam Hussein quickly crumbled and Bush declared major combat operations over two months later.

Bush’s war effort initially had strong support, both in Congress and among other Americans. Yet that support has eroded as violence has continued.

"In choosing to escalate the war, the president virtually stands alone," Reid said.

The Senate’s top Republican, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, threatened a filibuster — a delaying tactic — to block any legislation expressing disapproval of the buildup plan.

McConnell conceded that GOP lawmakers as well as Democrats are troubled by Bush’s new policy, but he said, “Congress is completely inca­pable of dictating the tactics of the war.”

Options for critics of the war to try forcing an end are limited, given the slim margins of Democratic control, especially in the Senate. But votes stating symbolic opposition to the troop buildup could embarrass many Republicans leery of supporting Bush’s plan.

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Assistant News editor: Rachelle Santucci
Golden Globe nixes celebrity gift basket

Sandy Cohen
AP Entertainment Writer

The Golden Globe gift basket is no more.

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association, which presents the annual Golden Globe Awards, announced Wednesday that it had reached an agreement with the Internal Revenue Service to satisfy past tax obligations on the plush gift packages given to award-show presenters.

The end result: No such swag will be handed out at this year’s show, to be presented with swanky gifts.

No alternative thank-you gifts are planned, Academy spokeswoman Leslie Unger said.

The IRS isn’t trying to put an end to celebrity gifts, said spokeswoman Beth Tucker.

“All we want to do is make sure the organizations and the recipients understand their tax responsibilities,” she said.

“But if it’s a gift, why does the IRS call it income?”

Intent, Tucker said: “They’re not being given out of affection or disinterested generosity. They’re being given in exchange for appearing at an event.”

Last year, Golden Globe presenters got gift boxes worth more than $20,000. Each package included a $2,000 gym membership, a $1,200 diamond pendant, an $865 Chopard watch and a $475 camera phone, plus handbags, MP3 players and a slew of gift certificates.

But Berk said presenters don’t come for the gift bags.

“It was a nice little something extra for them to look inside and maybe find one or two items they like,” he said. “I don’t think anybody really takes it as an incentive.”

Besides, opportunities still abound for stars to collect swag, especially during awards season. Each big show usually has a “gifting suite” associated with it — a room stocked with designer purses, clothing, jewelry, sunglasses and other freebies for celebs to snap up. Suites also have stuffy press on hand to primp, powder or pedicure famous folks, free of charge, of course.

Gift-suite swag is taxable too. Tucker said, and another focus of the IRS outreach, which began over the summer.

Vendors should issue 1099 tax forms to each person who collects free products from the suite, she said, adding that “at the end of the day, the recipient is responsible for reporting it as income.”

Golden Globes gift baskets have long been a part of the show. The HFPA presents two gift suites to each year’s presenters, which, in exchange for appearing at an event, they’re expected to thank the HFPA in some way.

The HFPA’s president Philip Berk told The Associated Press, referring to the film “Tenacious D,” that the Globe presenters got a small something extra after they performed a song on stage.

“They wanted us to thank the HFPA. We were right behind them,” Berk said. “They wanted us to have a little token of appreciation. They approached us and said, ‘Can you do it?’”

The IRS isn’t trying to put an end to the Globe presenters’ agreement with the Internal Revenue Service.

“All we want to do is make sure the IRS understands what they’re being given in exchange for appearing at an event,” Tucker said.

The HFPA president Philip Berk echoed that sentiment.

“Without question, we’ve followed suit,” Berk told The Associated Press, referring to the film “Tenacious D.”

“We deal so much with the nuances of things that you need something to help you not get distracted,” he said. “Our dog has never seen the best concentration coach possible.”

Even Berk’s dog, Franny, has been helpful and supportive.

Spiller mentioned that when meeting the noisy distractions Franny makes actually helps him on stage.

“This is not new tax law,” Berk said.

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“All we want to do is make sure the IRS understands what they’re being given in exchange for appearing at an event,” Tucker said.

While the preparation is done onsite, she said, adding that “at the end of the day, the recipient is responsible for reporting it as income.”

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HOLLYWOOD GOLD: MUSTANG DAILY PICKS FOR 2007 GOLDEN GLOBE WINNERS

Devan McClaine

This is a very powerful lineup. Bobby probably saved Emilio Estevez's career and serves as one of the best political epics since "JFK." "Blood Diamond" was a bit vague but powerful by all accounts. Anyone who saw "The Departed" was absolutely leveled by its intensity. In this case, the critics and I agree, "The Departed" in a landslide.

Best Actor (Drama)
Leonardo DiCaprio
-Blood Diamond and The Departed
-Venus
-Will Smith
-The Pursuit of Happyness
-Forrest Whitaker
-The Last King of Scotland

DiCaprio who made audiences mustachioed, anti-Semitic journalist likewise for "Pursuit." Whitaker made a murderously powerful character just one performance giving Whitaker a deserved shot at some Hollywood hardware.

Best Picture (Comedy or Musical)
Boat
-Dream Girls
-Little Miss Sunshine
-The Devil Wears Prada

"Dream Girls" has the star power. Sacha Cohen was milk-out-of-your-nose funny in "Borat." I haven't seen "Devil Wears Prada," but as soon as I get a girlfriend, I'm sure I will be faced with either watching this or "The Notebook," so I hope it's good. "Little Miss Sunshine" was touching, and further confirms the absolute scrumptrulesence of Steve Carell. "Thank You For Smoking" was also very good with Aaron Eckhart playing a sarcastic and slimy tobacco lobbyist. I will go with "Little Miss Sunshine" because it is a great film with an excellent cast. However, most experts are going with the mustache-d, anti-Semitic journalist from Kazakhstan. Let's hope he shows up in character just one more time.

Best Television Series (Drama)
-"24"
-"Big Love"
-"Grey's Anatomy"
-"Heroes"
-"Lost"

Kiefer Sutherland is stoic and touching, and I will go with "Big Love" because it is under the radar and has no shot. The experts at TV Guide mirror the public and predict "Grey's" will take home the Globe.

Best Television Series (Comedy or Musical)
-The Office
-"Desperate Housewives"
-"Entourage"
-"The Devil Wears Prada"
-"Thank You For Smoking"

I'm not gonna lie, "The Office" is the coolest show I have ever seen. The geniuses at TV Guide predict either an "Office" or a "Desperate" victory. Keep an eye out for Clint Eastwood who is up for best director for two epic World War II films "Flags Of Our Fathers" and "Letters From Iwo Jima." Actor Warren Beatty will be presented with the Cecil B. DeMille award, which is cumulative to a lifetime achievement award. The Golden Globes will air next Monday at 5 p.m. on NBC.
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Actions speak louder than shouts

Dear Brian Eller,

It was with mounting anger that I read your hate-filled, overly judgmental letter about the homeless. You have obviously never been homeless, or you would not have written that letter. For all you know, the homeless person you stopped to talk to might have been a former U.S. Army major. Your letter is callous and lacking in compassion.

Other cities dump their homeless here too, sending them here with a one-way bus ticket. Maybe you should research who homeless people are before you comment on them.

City Hall and the shelter system have been working hard to help homeless people. Many homeless people are doing just fine on their own. Many others are taking advantage of the services and resources available to them.

The Mustang Daily staff takes pride in publishing a daily newspaper for the Cal Poly campus and the neighboring community. We appreciate your feedback and encourage you to provide your comments. Please send your correction suggestions to mustangdaily@gmail.com.

Michelle Worley
Copy editor
David Beckham didn't even start only five of 25 games for Real Madrid this season, but will be a player on the planet — fashion, film, and music — make it rock. The most recognized soccer player on the planet so far is David Beckham. "There are so many kids that play baseball, apart from America, so that's where I want to make a difference with Invisible Children," he said. It goes around the world, he explained, and to raise awareness of the AIDS crisis in Africa, he started a soccer team called "Beyond Shelter," and has been named one of the top 25 Bribe Smilers in America. Today, he is in Los Angeles to try out for American soccer and bring free kicks, glitz and his fading skills left him on the bench.

"I want to make a difference with Invisible Children," Beckham said. "There are so many great sports and activities, and the best is soccer. I think it's the most rewarding sport," he said. "I want to bring awareness to the HIV crisis in Africa, and help raise money for Invisible Children."

Invisible Children is a non-profit organization that raises awareness about the AIDS crisis in Africa. They have already raised more than $20 million for the cause. Beckham is a huge supporter of the organization and has been involved with them since 2004.

He has also been involved with the Hollywood Film Festival, and has appeared in several movies, including "The Da Vinci Code." Beckham has a net worth of over $300 million, and is one of the highest-paid athletes in the world.

He is also an investor in the new LA Galaxy soccer team, and is expected to make his debut for the team in the next few months. He is currently training with the team and is expected to play a key role in their success.

And Beckham is not just a soccer player. He is also an actor, having appeared in films such as "The Da Vinci Code." He has also been involved with the Hollywood Film Festival, and has appeared in several movies, including "The Da Vinci Code." Beckham has a net worth of over $300 million, and is one of the highest-paid athletes in the world.

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Mustang men’s hoops squad hangs on for 72-68 win over UCD

Lafe, Cal Poly sophomore guard player Titus Shelton (35) goes up for a layup. Above, Cal Poly senior wing Derek Stockel (25) reacts to defensive pressure from UC Davis freshman guard Gussey Ellis. The host Mustangs (7-8, 1-5 Big West Conference) won the nonconference game 72-68 Thursday night in Mott Gym. Senior power forward Tyler McGinn led Cal Poly with 14 points. Vanessa True Clark, Dawn White and Stockel added 12, 11, 10, respectively. The Mustangs led 37-23 at halftime before the Aggies tied the game 52-52 late in the second half. UC Davis (2-12), which is independent, will officially join the Big West next season.

Cal Poly concludes its two-game, nonconference home stand against Sacramento State at 7 p.m. Tuesday.

 Mustang men's hoops squad hangs on for 72-68 win over UCD

Sports Editor: Tristan Aird • mustangdaily@mustand.net

Friday, January 12, 2007

41-14: No freakin’ way!

Tristan Aird

It’s the most wonderful time of the year.

Not because of the holidays, but because of sports — NFL playoffs, bowl games, Division I-AA playoffs, the prelude to March Madness and even some regular-season NBA games to boot.

Here’s one point of view on some of the recent hot-button issues:

• Florida 41, Ohio State 14.

Huh?

How much impact did a 51-yard field goal between games have on Ohio State’s state-wide showing?

Where does this leave Boise State, which, by the way, finished the season as the only undefeated team in Division I-A, but didn’t even get a shot at the national title game?

There is one unavoidable answer to both questions, one that will end the purposeless controversy and give much-needed integrity to the I-A universe.

Primetime.

• There is definitely some poetic justice to the fact that Jeff Garcia is currently leading Terrell Owens’ old team through the NFL playoffs.

Now, you won’t find non-stop anti-T.O. speech in this column like you will in virtually every other media outlet. Although he is often a questionable teammate and drops far too many passes to have such an elevated image of himself, he is still only one football player. As such, he should not be the lead story on any college football game.

But should they have been 27-21?

How much damage did that 28-point loss between games have on Ohio State’s state-wide showing?

With that said, the way Owens demeared and insulted Garcia — then a Pro Bowl quarterback — in San Francisco and continued to badmouth him after being traded to Philadelphia was inexcusable. What would Garcia ever do to Owens other than throw him dozens of touchdowns?

Mustang women’s tennis opens at Cal Winter Invitational

The Mustangs have five top-25 opponents this season.

Tristan Aird

Cal Poly women’s tennis head coach Hugh Bream knows his team has a difficult schedule this spring season, with five opponents ranked in the top 25.

So why not hit the ground running?

The Mustangs open their spring schedule at the Cal Winter Invitational today.

“Cal is one of the contenders for the NCAA title this year along with Fresno State and St. Mary’s,” Bream said Monday at a weekly press conference of the tournament field. “It’s a great way to prepare us, for our first dual matches of the season the following weekend with USC and Pepperdine.”

After the Cal Winter Invitational ends Sunday, Cal Poly will take on USC on Jan. 19 and Pepperdine on Jan. 20. Those matches are followed by a contest at UCLA on Jan. 23.

“What’s exciting about our schedule is we’re going to be playing five of the top 25 teams in the country,” said Bream, who is 69-40 in his six years at the helm. “USC, UCLA, Pepperdine, Arizona State and Berkeley. We’re going to get a great opportunity to immerse ourselves in that culture early. See what we’re doing well and find out those areas we want to improve as well.

Cal Poly was 12-10 and third in 5-2 in the Big West Conference last season. The Mustangs will be gunning for their first NCAA Tournament appearance since 2003.

At the forefront of that effort will be senior Carol Erickson, who was 20-9 last season.

“Carol is one of the most unique players I’ve had in 21 years of coaching,” Bream said. “She’s put in a lot of extra time outside of practice. She’s improved every aspect of her game, especially her serve and her ability to be aggressive. I feel like she’s a level up right now above any time she’s been in the past. She’s going to really step up at the top of the (singles) lineup.”

Erickson, who was 7-4 with Sanamath Waller in doubles last year, will pair with freshman Steffi Wong this season. Erickson and Wong were 7-3 during the fall portion.

Bream said his recruiting class was recently ranked No. 3 among mid-majors and 29th among 310 Division I programs overall.

Leading the newcomers is freshman Brittany Blalock, who won the first collegiate tournament she played in during the fall season when she took the Fullerston Invitational. She had a 12-2 record in the fall.

Others Bream will be counting on include sophomores Maria Malec and Shannon Brady and freshman Diane Filip.

“We have a great young group this year,” Bream said.

Cal Poly visits three-time defending Big West champion Long Beach State on March 3.

The Mustangs’ home opener in the spring season is a nonconference date against St. Mary’s on Feb. 9.

Poly women’s tennis opens at Cal Winter Invitational

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“The Wild Pitch

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There is one unavoidable answer to both questions, one that will end the purposeless controversy and give much-needed integrity to the I-A universe.

Primetime.

• There is definitely some poetic justice to the fact that Jeff Garcia is currently leading Terrell Owens’ old team through the NFL playoffs.

Now, you won’t find non-stop anti-T.O. speech in this column like you will in virtually every other media outlet. Although he is often a questionable teammate and drops far too many passes to have such an elevated image of himself, he is still only one football player. As such, he should not be the lead story on any college football game.

But should they have been 27-21?

How much damage did that 28-point loss between games have on Ohio State’s state-wide showing?

With that said, the way Owens demeared and insulted Garcia — then a Pro Bowl quarterback — in San Francisco and continued to badmouth him after being traded to Philadelphia was inexcusable. What would Garcia ever do to Owens other than throw him dozens of touchdowns?