Candidates discuss plans, issues facing campus

Yesterday, the three Associated Students Inc. presidential candidates participated in a question and answer session in the University Union plaza. Current ASI president Angela Kramer moderated the debate and the candidates were asked to describe their qualifications and experience, visions for the school and what they think their greatest challenge would be, among other questions.

Go to www.mustangdaily.net/hot-topics/asi-elections to see a video of the full debate.

What is your top priority to accomplish during your time as ASI president?

Kelly Griggs: “If we were to enter fall quarter with the issues we are facing now, I think my No. 1 priority would be the affordability on this campus. I think that this is not only affecting our campus but it is the economy as well. Going around and getting student feedback, I’ve been taking in their suggestions and that’s what I’ve heard.”

How does social equality and diversity fit into your platform?

Jacob Alvarez: “There’s things we need to do within ASI to promote an all-inclusive atmosphere so what I plan to do is expand the co-sponsorship base that ASI has with cultural groups on campus and it goes deeper than just funding. I’d really like to see more collaborative efforts within these groups … to have a more effective approach to promoting a campus that is more welcoming.”

What will be your greatest challenge?

Jon McElroy: “Issues with tuition, with money and that the state is giving us less funding this year … If college based fees we recently voted on, if those go through, the biggest thing (will be) for the president to understand the CSU (and) how it works with state legislature to make sure CBF fees go to the two things we ask for: class available and the teachers we want.”

3 probable cases of swine flu in SLO county, 30 more being tested

San Luis Obispo County health officials announced yesterday that they were testing 30 patients in San Luis Obispo County for possible swine flu, and there were three probable cases. The probable cases all came from members of the Grizzly Youth Academy west of San Luis Obispo. About 70 students at the academy have displayed flu-like symptoms, officials said.

Though the cases haven’t been confirmed, 95 percent of probable samples sent to the California Center for Disease Control so far have tested positive and “it is therefore very likely that we will receive positive results soon,” the Public Health Department said in a statement.

Students displaying cold and flu symptoms were given masks during check-in at the Cal Poly health center as a precautionary measure.

Health Center director Marty Bragg advised students to maintain standard hygiene habits including coughing one’s hands, keeping one’s hands away from one’s mouth and sneezing and coughing into one’s shoulder.

Symptoms of swine flu are very similar to that of the common seasonal flu including coughing, nasal congestion, body aches and joint pain, lethargy and most importantly, fever.

Program uses local students’ school supplies to help students far away

As the end of the quarter awaits, Cal Poly students who normally stash away school supplies have the opportunity to help students in Namibia, Africa, carry books in something more secure than plastic bags on the seven-mile journey they make to school everyday.

Raise the Respect, a Cal Poly Student Community Services program, is hosting a donation for new and used backpacks called “Backpacks for the Bush” on campus. The goal is to reach 500 backpacks by the end of the quarter.

“I talked to my sister, a teacher in Namibia, Africa, last week for the first time in four months and she poured her heart out about having these backpacks,” Raise the Respect director and social science sophomore Kate Gluck said.

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Respect
continued from page 1

ting social justice. The program holds film screenings and presentations at Cal Poly throughout the quarter. Gluck said because AIDS and alcoholism are serious problems in Africa, many of the students are unable to receive sufficient support at home.

"Showing them that they're not alone and that people care is really important," Gluck said.

Social science senior and co-director Lindsey Park said that anyone who donates a backpack in the barrel outside the Student Community Services office (University Union 217) is aimed at who donates a backpack in the barrel outside the Student Community Services office (University Union 217) is aimed at.

"Students in Namibia will send out thank you cards for all the backpacks they're getting so you can see a little kid who school supplies; these kids don't even have that opportunity," Gluck said.

Another campaign that Raise the Respect established this quarter is called Exposed, which highlights problems in criminal justice system to the community. Gluck and Park were inspired to start a series of the criminal justice educational events after attending an Amnesty International Conference in Boston. At the conference they learned about political prisoners, interrogation, torture and the death penalty.

"The conference opened our eyes about the prison system. When we came back we wanted to dispense this information to people at Cal Poly because we felt that they need to know about it," Park said.

The first event of the four-part series, "Exposed: Erasing the Myths," featured professor Chris Bickel outlining the U.S. prison system. The second event, a film screening of "Road to Guantanamo," will be held on May 6 at UU 220.

During the week of May 11, Raise the Respect will bring awareness to Troy Davis, a man who has been on death row for over 13 years. Davis' supporters claim he was convicted of murder with no evidence. Raise the Respect will conduct an on-campus signature campaign and an informational booth will be on display during UIU Hour on May 14.

The program's fourth and final event will encompass projects from the entire quarter. The event will host a prison system panel comprised of professor Bickel, Jane Lehr and a former prisoner, as well as representatives from "Get on the Bus." Poems from Commonwealth Bay will be read by slam poetry artists and a short Troy Davis film will be shown. Visual representations of the U.S. prison system and a photo display of the death penalty from Amnesty International will also be featured in the event, at 6 p.m. on May 20 in UU 220.

Raise the Respect extends an invitation to campus for new members and support. Contributions from new people will allow the spread of more ideas and organization of bigger events, Park said.

Park added the program promotes events at UIU Hour every couple of weeks and holds active meetings with the intention to bring peoples' attention to certain places and groups of people around the world that they may not have known about before.

"Sometimes you don't really think about something until you go see a documentary and it really changes you, which makes you more aware of what's going on," she said.
Ex-Tiananmen convicts still struggling to survive

Alexa Olesen
Associated Press

For some imprisoned in the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown, getting out of jail has not meant freedom.

Imprisoned at 21 for destroying a videotape of clashes between soldiers and Beijing residents, Zhang Yan was sentenced to nearly 14 years in prison before his life sentence was commuted in 2003. He served another five years of parole, barred from media interviews, publishing, free speech or travel.

Now he's out of prison, but he cannot find steady work and shares his elderly mother's apartment and meager pension.

Finally able to tell his story at 41, Zhang says: "Most of us were in our 20s, just starting out, and then our lives were ruined, just like that. Now, after so many years we get out and no one cares. There is no one to look after us."

While most Chinese have moved beyond the events of 1989 — either because government taboos prevent discussion or because they're wrapped up in the boom that has brought unprecedented prosperity to many — Zhang lives with his decision every day.

He cannot find steady work because he was a convict, and scarps by on his mother's $150-a-month pension. His niece and nephews don't know he was in jail; they were told he was in the army. The Beijing of his youth is gone.

Unfamiliar buildings and the sea of new cars left him disoriented when he first got out, he felt lost and frequently scared in his old neighborhood. "People had changed too. We were all very much the same back then. Nobody was better than anybody else and people put other people's feelings first," Zhang told The Associated Press at a cafe near his apartment. "That feeling of camaraderie, of helping each other is all gone. Now when chatting, someone says 'Can you help me with this or that?' The first response is 'How much will you pay me?'"

Zhang has none of that. He was released from jail with stern warnings to avoid trouble and nothing else, he said.

Like many of those given the harshest sentences for the Tiananmen protests, Zhang was not a student or a protest organizer. He was one of the working-class youths who burned army trucks, fought with soldiers or stole equipment.

In the early hours of June 4, 1989, he stole a video filmed by paramilitary guards that showed Beijing residents trying to block the army's advance on democracy demonstrators occupying Tiananmen Square, and tossed it into a burning army truck.

Zhang said he thought that by destroying the videotape, he might save someone from jail or possibly death. "They called us thugs and said we were against the government," Zhang said, speaking in a whisper at times so other cafe patrons would not hear him. "We weren't anti-government. But we were against what they were doing, their methods. Why were they using the army to crush their own people?"

Hundreds, possibly thousands, of people are believed to have been killed when troops stormed into the center of Beijing on orders from top party leaders to break up the pro-democracy protests.

Zhang said he and others rounded up after June 4 are "history's sacrificial lambs."

"The students didn't face any serious consequences. They went back to school and were dealt with there, with reeducation classes. But we were punished for the students to see... because the government needed to restore social order," he said.

Sun Liyong, a former Beijing police officer, was arrested in 1990 for criticizing the government's Tiananmen response. He spent seven years in prison with Zhang and about 130 other so-called "June 4 thugs," and recorded his experiences in an unpublished memoir titled "Crossing Ice Mountain."

WORD ON THE STREET

"Do you think that officials within the last Bush administration should be punished for authorizing waterboarding?"

"No, because when I look at all the tactics used around the world by countries that adhere to the Geneva Convention...I don't feel like it's very subversive."

- Beau Harris, business senior

"I guess they should be punished but I think they should make sure that it doesn't occur in the future. We should recognize that it happened but not dwell on it."

- Samantha Bloustein, business freshman

"No, no one deserves to be punished."

- Chase Parni, communication studies junior

"Yeah, I kind of think they should be punished because it was a violation of human decency."

- Taylor Lutzker, communication studies sophomore

Cal Poly presents the 15th Annual LANTERN FESTIVAL
Hosted by Chi Delta Theta & Omega Xi Delta

Enjoy an evening full of ethnic food, cultural performances, games, a fashion show and more!
FREE Admission! skokemfest@gmail.com

SATURDAY MAY 2, 2009 in the UU Plaza
5:00 - 9:00 PM
Anti-torture activists arrested at White House

Hooded protestors dressed to resemble prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, march past the Justice Department Thursday in Washington.

Nafeesa Syeed
Associated Press

Dressed in an orange jumpsuit, Kent Crowley stood silently facing the White House.

On Crowley's back, a black sign printed with the name of a Libyan man read, "Cleared for Release.

The Washington, D.C., resident, who was among 61 people arrested during an anti-torture demonstration Thursday, said he wanted to bring attention to the plight of detainees held in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

"Everywhere I go and I talk about Guantanamo, people say, 'Oh, that's closed,'" said Crowley, who is in his 60s. "This movement is important because it brings awareness."

More than 100 protesters solemnly marched from the U.S. Capitol to the White House, with many of them clad in jumpsuits and black hoods. They claimed to represent Guantanamo prisoners who have been cleared for release, but remain in custody, as well as those who have died at the facility.

Doomsday scenarios called for a criminal inquiry into claims of torture against terrorism suspects under the Bush administration, including abuses committed at Guantanamo and other U.S. prisons. President Barack Obama's administration has been reluctant to begin such an investigation, they said.

Tom Parker, policy director for counterterrorism and human rights at Amnesty International, said no steps have been taken to prosecute those responsible for torturing people in U.S. custody. By not taking action, Parker said terrorists can fuel anti-Americanism by showing recruits how authorities used torture and get away with it.

National

WASHINGTON (AP) — Riding a crest of populist anger, the House on Thursday approved a bill to restrict credit card practices and eliminate sudden increases in interest rates and late fees that have ensnared millions of consumers.

The legislation, dubbed the Credit Card Holders' Bill of Rights, passed by a bipartisan vote of 357-70 following lobbying by President Barack Obama and members of his administration. The measure would prohibit so-called double-cycle billing and retroactive rate hikes and would prevent companies from giving credit cards to anyone under 18.

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — A wealthy Russian-American car exporter has pleaded guilty to sex crimes involving three Russian girls. However, a U.S. judge won't decide whether to accept the negotiated plea from Andrew Mogilyansky until his July 30 sentencing.

Federal prosecutors on the 38-year-old Columbia University graduate traveled to his homeland to procure young teens from orphanages and have sex with them at his St. Petersburg apartment.

The plea calls for him to serve 76 to 97 months for "sex tourism" and three related counts. Defense lawyer Jack McMahon says Mogilyansky was a customer of the prostitution service but did not run it.

International

CAIRO (AP) — An 8-year-old Saudi girl has divorced her middle-aged husband after her father forced her to marry him last year in exchange for about $3,000, her lawyer said Thursday.

Saudy Serbia has come under increasing criticism at home and abroad for permitting child marriages. The United States, a close ally of the conservative Muslim kingdom, has called child marriage "clear and unacceptable" violations of human rights.

The girl was allowed to divorce the 30-year-old man who she married in August after an out-of-court settlement had been reached in the case, said her lawyer, Abdalla al-Jabri. The exact date of the divorce was not immediately known.

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico's top media officer voiced optimism Thursday that the wave that has slowed in the nation hardest hit by the virus, but the World Health Organization cautioned there is no evidence the worst of the global outbreak is over. The U.S. caseload rose slightly to 109 as hundreds of schools nationwide shut their doors, and the crisis even reached the White House, which said an aide to the secretary of energy apparently got sick helping arrange a presidential trip to Mexico.

WE ARE THE MUSTANGS
Flor Y Canto event showcases local song and poetry

This event, held at the Steynberg Gallery, features local Chicano poets and musicians. It is a celebration of Chicano heritage and art. The event will include poetry readings and musical performances, highlighting the rich cultural tradition of the Chicano community.

I think that Chicano poetry is very unique; Chicano and Chicanas are rooted in the old tradition and in the community - Gloria Velasquez, Literatura Professor

issues, although there will also be some musical presentations. She added that she chose the Steynberg as the venue because of its creative atmosphere. As host of the event, Velasquez will open the evening samples of her own poetry and singing. Besides teaching at Cal Poly for 24 years, she is a well-known literary activist and award-winning writer. Velasquez thinks that part of what makes Flor Y Canto special is that it comes from what she calls "old tradition." "I think that Chicano poetry is very unique, Chicanos and Chicanas are rooted in the old tradition and in the community," she said, adding that it also brings up social awareness amongst Chicano people in various places.

Finding where you belong isn't all that hard

If you've been missing that long lost friend, this book is for you. The book reiterates that there are no good-byes. It's almost summer and time for a good beach read. I suggest picking up a copy of "Good-Bye, Chunky Rice". It's sweet, tender, and insightful. It really is a remarkable book. Altogether nautical themed with a healthy dose of charm, wit, sadness, longing and laughs, you won't be disappointed. And if you are, I'm not really sure what your problem is.

After this short detour into the realm of mellow comics, I feel that it's high time, next week, to review a series full of myth, legend and a giant right hand of doom. "Hellboy: Weird Tales," a collection of Hellboy stories written and illustrated not by Mike Mignola, but by many amazing artists in the comic book scene. It's going to be pretty epic.

Jon Monethe is a history senior and Mustang Daily's comic book columnist.
The road less traveled: Broadening horizons from home

It was my first quarter at Cal Poly, and I was sitting in my Geography 308 class learning about Latin America. When the instructor started to show his slides from the summer study abroad program in Peru, I suddenly went from tussling my hair to pining to be one of those lucky beanie-clad students posing for photos in front of Lake Titicaca.

Without hesitation, I quickly applied and was accepted. Many of my friends had studied abroad in countries varying from New Zealand and Spain to China and India. In a way, I was conditioned to view studying abroad as collegiate rite of passage for those who can afford it. All my summer study abroad buddies raved about what an amazing experience it was, but yet, none of them could really explain why it was so incredible.

In the spring, my June departure date neared, I began to sort of dread it. The thought of travelling in Peru for five weeks sounded fabulous, but the thought of 12 units in five weeks and studying with strangers sounded significantly less appealing. So I decided to take the road less traveled and withdraw from the program opting to stay in San Luis Obispo and do school work.

If I were coming across as the antithesis of studying abroad allow me to clarify, I think that the chance to travel and learn in a foreign land is a great opportunity. It just isn’t one that is right or even available to everyone. And believe me, I received my fair share of confusion and flack from my peers regarding my choice to stay and study locally. But I haven’t regretted my decision.

Truthfully, my choice not to go showed me how comfortable I could become with myself. In the past I would have sucked it up and made myself go and probably had a great time, but instead I chose to listen to what I really wanted to do, and honored myself. And I don’t think I would have learned as much if I was sitting in a classroom in Cusco.

It is often said that studying abroad is the “experi­ence of a lifetime,” one that will alter and change you. I have been fortunate enough to have had traveling fairly extensively for my 23 years and don’t feel that any of it has made me a better person. And out of many of my friends I have spent abroad, I can’t pinpoint one that changed my life.

I agree that travel can be enlightening and provide perspective. But I also agree that there are glorior­ous tourists and jet set students that haven’t learned at all. And what about the starving students who don’t have the option of studying abroad? Are they less cultured? Are they lacking perspective? Are they less enlightened? The truth is, being magnanimous and aware of the world comes from within, not from a plane ticket or some exotic classrooms.

Bidget Ullis is a journalism senior and a Mustang Daily reporter.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A request for candidate Jon McElroy

Hi Jonathan,

I’m Nicholas. We shared a newspaper together this week! On April 28 you were on the front page. I was on page nine. Your campaign is the most visible on campus, with sandwich boards, T-shirts, posters and have something to say?

Let us hear it. 5 words

Nicholas Utschig

computer engineering senior

...the road less traveled...
Scott Silvey

The Mustangs' track and field team, which dominates the early portion of the dual, is expected to win two races on Saturday, as she is favored in the women's 1500 and 5000 meter runs.

THE MUSTANGS want to head south for a dual with UC Santa Barbara on Saturday.

Saturday, May 13

The Cailily softball team (34-11) is one of eight programs playing their last games at Baggett Stadium. She is having a banner year, hitting a career-high .330 and is fourth in the Big West Conference with a team-leading 48 hits.

“I don't think it's about being perfect at home. I think it's about winning the games wherever we are.”

Senior third baseman Cristen Lee is one of five players who have been playing their last games at Baggett Stadium. She is having a banner year, hitting a career-high .330 and is fourth in the Big West Conference with a team-leading 48 hits.

Senior third baseman Cristen Lee, shown above making a throw, is having a career year, hitting .310 and a team-leading 48 hits.

Cal Poly baseball team (30-11) will host San Francisco (22-23) at 6 p.m. tonight, beginning a non-conference three-game series with the Dons at Baggett Stadium.

The Mustangs won a marathon 17-16 in 10 innings on Tuesday against defending national champion Fresno State. They came out of it alive and kicking after losing at Saint Mary's 7-4.

Cal Poly came into the week ranked No. 13 in the nation in both the Collegiate Baseball Newspaper and Baseball America polls.

Shortstop Derek Poppert leads the Dons with a .359 average (13 doubles, 31 RBI), followed by outfielder Zach Kim at .335 (23 RBI) and designated hitter Nick Baling (33). 

Cal Poly has won a number of close ballgames at home this season to keep the streak intact. They have won 18 in a row dating back to last year, and all 16 contests this year. Of those 16 games, seven have been one-run wins for Cal Poly.

We've never panicked and our experience has definitely helped us

Considering the accomplishments of the team but said they have more to do.

"It's been a great year," Condon said. "A couple years ago when we won the conference was great. But I think this team has the potential to go to Oklahoma City if we keep playing the way we are.

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"We've never panicked and our experience has definitely helped us

"It's been really fun," Lee said. "I couldn't ask for a better way to go out as a senior. The team is a family and we're having a lot of fun. Obviously when you're winning, it makes everything easier."

Lee said the team came together early on in its attempt to build upon the program that won the Big West championship just two seasons ago.

"We came together right at the end of last year to figure out what we needed to be done," she said. "Every one worked hard to fix what little problem we had and approached this year with a different attitude and I think it's worked."

Despite the teams' consistent play, Condon admitted that the home streak would eventually come to an end.

"The trouble with that is it's eventually going to end. The longer we go, the more pressure there is with that so we need to not really worry about the records or the standings."

Cal Poly looks to be a heavy favorite in the running events.

The Mustangs are expected to win the men's 1300 meter Steeplechase with junior Carl Durgitz running for Cal Poly.

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coming off a couple of hard-fought midweek games, the Mustangs field hockey team (30-11-11) will host San Francisco (22-23-2) at 6 p.m. tonight, beginning a non-conference three-game series with the Dons at Baggett Stadium.

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The Mustangs have some hot hitters of their own. Led by junior Adam Buchman's .385 average, Cal Poly currently has seven hitters over the .350 mark and is hitting .334 as a team.

Cal Poly is currently sitting in second place in the Big West Conference and is attempting to lock up its first ever NCAA Regional bid.