California students, faculty take action against state budget cuts

Katelyn Sweigart
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All 23 California State University (CSU) campuses will take part in "Class Action," a rally to bring a voice to students, faculty and staff who are opposed to the recent and proposed education budget cuts. The rally, put on by the California Faculty Association (CFA), will commence April 13 statewide.

Sociology junior and rally organizer Giovanni Prinzivalli said the purpose of the rally is to inform the state and federal government that it is not OK to cut education.

There is a proposed student increase, estimated to be another 30 percent next year. According to Prinzivalli, the increase is for students, staff and faculty because the Academic Senate is proposing an 18-day furlough, and a 10 percent faculty pay cut in an effort to cut costs.

"Focus on education is first and foremost," Prinzivalli said. "Classes for kids, jobs for teachers and quality education for everyone, regardless of their economic status." Glen Thorncraft, a Cal Poly mechanical engineering professor and the Cal Poly CFA chapter president, who will speak at the rally said it is proposed that $1 billion could be cut.

"Right now the state only gives us $2.7 billion. So they are talking about a 40 percent cut in what the state contributes to the (system)," Thorncraft said.

The new budget will affect approximately 43,000 students and 43,000 faculty members statewide. Despite this, Thorncraft said he doesn’t want the rally to be seen as "us against them," but more as a positive message on the importance of funding higher education.

"If you have smart people who by accident of birth happen to be poor and they can't get educated, then they can't contribute as much as they possibly could," Thorncraft said. "We're missing a huge talent pool out there. We want to tip the balance in favor of the talented and not just the fortunate."

CSU chancellor Charles B. Reed has been put on the table to find a way to deal with the "crisis," including furloughs, pay cuts, layoffs and tuition increases.

How to eat healthy in the happiest place in America

Amanda Sedo
AMANDASEDO.MD^MAIL.COM

With the many different activities college students are involved in, it is no surprise many do not have the time or energy to cook healthy meals each and every night of the week.

When going out to eat, there are a variety of healthy restaurants fit for the college students' palette as well as wallet.

Lauren Matthews, a kinesiology junior and member of H.E.A.T (Health Enrichment Action Team) with P.U.L.S.E (Peers Understanding Listening Speaking Educating) at the Cal Poly Health Center, said there are a few restaurants in San Luis Obispo that serve nutritious, fresh meals, including The Natural Café, Matthews said.

"They have a lot of different things for you to choose from," Matthews said. "They don't really use a lot of extra stuff to flavor the food."

The Natural Café boasts a diverse menu featuring poultry, fish, vegetarian and vegan choices. According to its website, the soups, salads, sandwiches and entrees are prepared fresh every day with good health and taste in mind.

"The Natural Café is also a great place to eat because the food is mostly organic."
Erik Fallis, the CSU media relations specialist, said CSUs have been doing everything they can to stay in contact with the government about the issue.

"We are active in Sacramento and we have been advocating as an individual CSU system as well as higher education in California," Fallis said.

Attendees at the rally can march with signs, conduct video interviews, write postcards to the Board of Trustees and sign petitions to send to Sen. Sam Blakeslee. The rally will also have a short speech portion with several guest speakers from faculty, students and staff, since they cannot have sound amplifiers.

Lanz Nalagan, a political science senior and rally organizer said the most important part of the rally is to get the students to mobilize in support of their rights.

"The right to education is a fundamental right," he said.

However, Nalagan said hosting any rally at Cal Poly has "really low salience," because of low student participation.

"I don't think people understand that this does negatively affect them," he said. "It ultimately decides how their education plays out for the rest of their academic career."

The event will also have free pizza, soda and T-shirts for students. Cal Poly's CFA chapter will host the event in the University Union from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
President Barack Obama will call Wednesday for shrinking the nation's long-term deficits by raising taxes on wealthier Americans and requiring them to pay more into Social Security, drawing a bitter contrast with a Republican plan to save money by deeply slashing Medicare, Medicaid and other domestic spending.

Obama will offer some spending cuts, including trims in Pentagon spending, but at heart, Wednesday's speech seems likely to outline the law-and-order debate straight through the 2012 election.

The debate has little middle ground and poses substantial political risk for both sides. Democrats hope to repeat their 2009 success in getting an election-year Obama to agree on toppling the debt ceiling, a move Republicans say will eliminate the need for spending cuts in the next election.

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Andrea Kasserman, a House Republican leadership aide said on Monday, “We strongly disagree with the lack of balance in Congressmen Ryan’s approach,” said Kasserman. “It simply is not appropriate and it would not be supported by the American people to have a fiscal plan that relies on dramatic restructuring, reform of the kind of programs that provide security and health care to seniors and to poor people, and that taxes the wealthy Americans.

Republicans, for their part, hope to gain traction against Obama by painting him as a left-wing liberal intent on raising taxes.

Every time I think of giving up our political adversities this massive political weapon to use in the next campaign.

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National insurance company must pay back $350 million to customers

Terrence Stutz
THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

State Farm Insurance owes nearly $350 million to the customers it overcharged dating back to 2003, a state judge ruled on Monday, siding with the Texas insurance commissioner.

State District Judge Tim Sulak found that state Commissioner Mike Geeslin acted properly when he ordered State Farm Lloyds, the company's homeowners subsidiary, to reimburse an estimated 1.2 million customers for overcharges as well as penalty interest.

"There is substantial evidence to support the commissioner's decision and the decision is upheld," Sulak said. He ruled quickly after listening to two hours of oral arguments from attorneys for State Farm, the Texas Department of Insurance and the Texas Office of Public Insurance Counsel.

State Farm indicated it will appeal the ruling, the latest twist in a case that has dominated debate over the state's insurance market for nearly a decade.

"We knew no matter which way the judge ruled, an appeal from either party was highly likely in this case," said Kevin Davis, a spokesman for the company. "State Farm Lloyds' rates are, and always have been, fair and competitive — and we remain confident the commissioner's order will be reversed."

The commissioner's order for refunds was handed down in November 2009. In it, Geeslin called on State Farm to either issue refund checks or provide a credit on policy renewals. Refunds for long-time customers were expected to range between $200 and $300.

Geeslin, who has been battling the state's largest insurer throughout his tenure, welcomed the court's decision.

"Simply explained, the 2009 order is a function of law and evidence, and the court agreed that there was substantial evidence in support of its findings," he said. "This is a major step towards bring­ing this issue to a conclusion."

During oral arguments before Sulak on Monday, State Farm attorney Susan Conway said the refund ordered by Geeslin would wipe out a third of State Farm Lloyds' capital and threaten the finances of the state's largest property insurer.

"This refund would be disas­trous and irresponsible," Conway told the judge. "The commissioner failed to consider the impact the re­funds would have on the financial stability of State Farm Lloyds."

However, a new report from the insurance department indicates that State Farm had a very profitable year in 2010, after paying out just 52 percent of its premiums to cover property losses. The 52 percent "loss ratio" was close to the state average of 48.6 percent for the 20 largest companies and significantly better than the 60 percent loss ra­tio that is considered a benchmark for profitability in Texas.

Last year, State Farm Lloyds collected nearly $1.7 billion in homeowners premiums in Texas. Conway also suggested that the commissioner levied about $75 million in penalty interest against State Farm because it appealed his rate de­cisions — including his initial find­ing that State Farm was overcharg­ing customers by 12 percent.

Beck argued that State Farm had a choice in the matter — to either reduce rates as the com­missioner ordered or continue to charge excessive rates.

"State Farm elected to roll the dice and continue to charge exces­sive rates," she said, noting that she believed that even Geeslin's 2009 order fell short.

"It is woefully short on what State Farm owes its policyholders," she said.

A leading consumer group said the judge's ruling in the nearly eight-year-old legal battle points to one conclusion: State Farm needs to "pay up."

"State Farm has abused its policyholders through overcharges and years of legal wrangling," said Alex Winslow of consumer-advocacy group Texas Watch, who attended Monday's hearing. "Every day that State Farm dodges this truth, the abuse continues. The insurance commissioner knows it, the court knows it, and certainly State Farm's customers know it."

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Healthy
continued from page 1

"(Natural Café) prepares the food differently than other places, like by baking the shells for tostadas," Murray said. "They use organic ingredients, good oils and overall good quality ingredi­ents."

"It is a good place to eat because they use organic ingredients, good oils and overall good quality ingredi­ents," Matthews said. "They use local ingredients and fresh food is key.

Matthews also stressed the impor­tance of moderation when eating out.

"If you're going to eat out, just do your best to avoid fried food or any­thing that is super oily and greasy," Matthews said. "Excessive meat and cheese should be avoided and try to look for things like fresh fruit and vegetables to add to the meal."

Hamilton also said avoiding fast food is key.

"It doesn't cost that much more to get quality food," she said. "And you can even bike downtown to all of the restaurants so you can pos­sibly consume a few more calories."

Matthews encourages students to save leftovers and eat them at a later date.

"Instead of trying to eat it all, go get a to-go box at the beginning of the meal and place a portion to take home inside of it," Matthews said. "That way you have a meal for days to come which is an eco­nomical way to eat out."

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Libyan rebels reject cease-fire proposal offered by African Union and Gadhafi

Ned Parker
Los Angeles Times

Libyan rebels delivered an emphatic "no" to an African Union proposal for an end to the fighting in their country, and insisted that Muammar Gadhafi must step down from his position as part of any diplomatic solution.

The opposition council's announcement after closed-door talks with an African Union delegation in the rebel-held city of Benghazi quashed hopes for an early end to the nearly 2-month-old conflict between Gadhafi's forces and opposition fighters in eastern Libya.

South African President Jacob Zuma said late Sunday after meeting with Gadhafi in Tripoli, the capital, that Libya's leader had endorsed the African Union's roadmap for peace.

The proposal includes a cease-fire, the establishment of safe corridors for the delivery of humanitarian aid and a dialogue on reforming Libya's political system, which Gadhafi has ruled for more than four decades.

Zuma's comments hinted at a possible diplomatic opening for ending Libya's stalemate, but the head of the opposition's political council Mustafa Abdul Jalil summarily dismissed the proposal after the closed-door talks with the African Union delegation.

"The African Union initiative does not include the departure of Gadhafi and his sons from the Libyan political scene, therefore it is outdated," Jalil said. "We will not negotiate on the blood of our martyrs. We will die with them or be victorious."

Jalil said the proposal had been around for more than a month. Rebels also complained that the initiative did not call for Gadhafi to withdraw his military forces from besieged cities and did not allow protests, the latter a key opposition demand.

Gadhafi lost control of eastern Libya in February when anti-government demonstrations, inspired by the ouster of the presidents of Egypt and Tunisia, sparked a full-fledged revolt against the autocrat's leadership. The eastern rebels were skeptical of the African Union even before the delegation arrived on Monday morning. A crowd of more than 2,000 demonstrators greeted the authority's arrival on Monday morning. A crowd of more than 2,000 demonstrators greeted the party as it pulled up to the Tiberly Hotel, a dark pyramid-shaped building in central Benghazi.

Members of the crowd waving rebel flags and shouted slogans against Gadhafi and made clear their distrust of the delegation, which included the heads of state of Mali, Mauritania and the republic of Congo, along with representatives from South Africa, Uganda and Algeria.

Gadhafi has long wooed neighboring African states with public works projects and has also hired African fighters for his militias, which are now fighting the rebels.

NATO also greeted the news of Gadhafi's openness to a cease-fire with suspicion. Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen told a Brussels news briefing that Gadhafi's forces had previously demonstrated that they "did not keep their promises," Reuters news service reported.

A key Western ally agreed with the rebels. Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini told French radio Monday that no deal to end the crisis in Libya could include a future political role for Gadhafi or his sons.

"Gadhafi's children, family cannot take part in the political future of Libya," Frattini said.

Italy maintains strong economic connections to Libya, its former colonial war.
Green Drinks to have lasting effect in San Luis Obispo

“People should continue to focus on environmental issues to preserve the beauty of SLO because this is our home,” said event organizer Alison Cebulla, who brought the event to San Luis Obispo in December 2010.

The outcome of Tuesday's presentation will decide whether or not the organization will continue in the city of San Luis Obispo.

"We ran informal meetings from December through March, so this is our first event," Cebulla said. "The success of this event will determine if it's an ongoing thing. If there's a big community turnout, then (it shows that) there needs to be more discussion about the environment.”

Members of the community are looking forward to the event to learn more and understand the marine wildlife in San Luis Obispo. Electrical engineering junior Kelli DeVlugt is an advocate for sustainability. She said she hopes the event will provide information about the city she's lived in for the past three years.

"I think it's really important to be exposed and learn more about the community we live in," DeVlugt said. "This event is really beneficial and will open our eyes to the marine life in SLO, which not many people know about."

With talk about what goes on in San Luis Obispo, Cebulla said she hopes "the big turnout" will capture the attention of both Cal Poly students and the community.

"Even if you don't work in the green field, it's still good to come out,” she said. "And it's good for students to network with the environmental profession and to come out and see what businesses they want to start or work for in the future."

Speakers will include Roxy Carter from the Otter Project, a Monterey non-profit organization that recovers endangered sunfish and Cal Poly marine biology graduate student Anniken Lydon, who will discuss her graduate research on how genetic techniques can be used to see Green Drinks, page 8

Quick. Fresh. BOLD.

The all-new Noodle Bar at Sage features such favorites as Vietnamese Pho, an intensely flavorful noodle soup. And the best part? Only 19.50 for a large, steaming bowl.

Another Noodle Bar specialty you won't want to miss? Chinese Buns! Perfectly steamed buns, filled with such things as ginger, chicken or spicy beef. For just over a buck. Yup, bao for a buck.

Quick service. Fresh and filling. It's the Noodle Bar.
Protecting your valuables
The pros of renters insurance

Erik Hansen is a graduate student pursuing a Master of Public Policy and the "When I was a Mustang..." columnist.

Few things can screw with your day like Bishop Peak inexplicably blowing its top and washing all of your belongings away in a glorious tide of molten hot magma.

Far less exciting, though still annoying, is coming home to see that your computer has been stolen, drawers rummaged and piggy bank emptied.

While it can't replace the porn you've been methodically downloading to your computer for the past three years, if you're a renter, renters insurance can help defray the cost of replacing your pinched Justin Bieber memorabilia that's now being hocked at the Nipomo Swapmeet.

If that alone doesn't have you running to a local insurance agent, here are a few more reasons why you should consider covering your assets.

Renters insurance protects your stuff. Imagine for a moment that you have pissed off Zeus, he tosses a light-
Insurance

continued from page 7
ning belt at you, it strikes your house and it catches fire and burns down. Totally plausible, but who really cares, right? You don’t own the house and technically it wasn’t your fault. But what about your television set? That’s something that you do own and now it’s a pile of ashes. No worries, renters insurance will help you pay for a new one so that you can watch the Dodgers live all season long.

Renters insurance protects your way of life. From acts of the Gods to ungodly acts, imagine now that a honey badger sneaks into your apartment one night and pillages. While your home is completely torn up and now it’s a pile of ashes. No worries, renters insurance can protect you from legal action.

Renters insurance can also protect what you say. While we’re on the topic of lawsuits, suppose you have a blog where you callously rank all of your past girlfriends/boyfriends by appearance, performance, etc. Maybe you include pictures and contact information just because you are the very definition of a jerk. You’re just asking for a defamation lawsuit. Have renters insurance! Well then, while the blog will probably have to come down, renters insurance can prevent them from touching your bank account.

Luckily, the insurance is cheap. You can get basic coverage for as low as $10 a month, which is partly due to the relatively safe area we live in. You might also be eligible for certain discounts — much like drivers insurance — if you are a good student, employed or have good credit. Even better, you can get a policy and add your roommates to it. For just a couple bucks more, all of your stuff will be covered and you can split the $12 a month premium between the four of you.

If your parents have home-owners insurance, you might even be able to get coverage for your rental property — as a rider — on their policy.

If you do decide to purchase renters insurance, consider adding coverage for loss due to earthquake, tsunami and flooding, as we live in an area “prone” to such events and they probably won’t be covered under a basic plan.

In addition, make sure you know the difference between “cash value” and “cost to replace.”

While you can get coverage under either scheme, cash value will only pay you the value of your items at the time of loss, while cost to replace will pay you the entire cost to replace your lost items.

In summary, you might want to start looking into renters insurance before a honey badger finds its way into your apartment.

Green Drinks

continued from page 6

to guide ecosystem managements coastally and in California.

Lydon is in the process of identifying DNA fingerprints for individual algae and using those DNA sequences to try and track a population. She said she anticipates a large crowd dedicated to the marine lifestyle as well as those who want to learn more.

“I’m hoping that a lot of the publicturns out for the event and get an idea and educate themselves about marine conservation,” Lydon said. “It’s really important for the community, not just the students.”

Lydon hopes exposure of the topic will increase awareness of what’s going on.

“In hope people get into the subject and raise interested questions and (I want to) interact and meet the community,” Lydon said. “I also want someone to address concerns that we can bring back to Cal Poly for enhancement of our research.”

The event is free, but there is a suggested donation of $2 to $5. All proceeds will benefit ECOSLO, a local nonprofit supporting healthy and natural living in San Luis Obispo.

Chair of ECOSLO Client Slaughter will attend and speak about Coastal Cleanup Day, where volunteers collect trash from beaches and lakes.

“Last year, we picked over 20,000 pounds of trash in 59 miles,” Slaughter said. “We’re very proud, and we want to (present) what we’ve accomplished and have been doing for the community.”

The group also wants the community to show up and leave with a new perspective.

“I just want people to come and have a good time,” Cebulla said. “I want them to be able to meet and be inspired by other environmentalists in SLO and realize that good things are happening here. We need to work on sustainability issues, and I hope people learn a little bit about this work and are inspired.”

The event will feature live music by local singer Meredith Hobbs, and Sunstone Cooking Studio will provide appetizers. Local wineries will also be pouring samples of their sustainable wine.
Words are fascinating things. They are symbols that allow minds to evoke ideas and emotions in the minds of others. Humans are social creatures and we place a great deal of value on the thoughts and actions of those around us, seeking to influence them in our preferred direction. We expend a great deal of effort using our word symbols to manipulate and condition each other and ourselves.

While any act of communication might be understood as manipulative — simply by the introduction of concepts and emotions into the minds of others — there is an important difference between healthy communication and manipulation; the one elevates the processes of thought and analysis while the other attempts to subvert them. In addition there are many directions in which the problem can be analysed, the two most interesting aspects of word-manipulation that I see involve misrepresentation and distraction.

To misrepresent something is to describe it falsely, to drive a wedge between perception and fact. Our human process of understanding is slow and error-prone; there is no guaranteed method of obtaining un­derstanding (though science is a pretty darn good in its own sphere). We have used the learning process by means of communication: books, classrooms, nearly every facet of life conveys covert or overt information. There is so much to learn today that we rely more on each other than on ourselves; how much of what you know is what you know from your own experience, and how much is second-hand? We’re exposed to obtaining information from others — it is far more normal than piecing it together for ourselves.

We’re used to obtaining information from others, and when we hear it and over and over again without information of our own to compare it against, we tend to believe it. When we hear something that reinforces the beliefs we already hold, we tend to believe it. When we hear what we want to hear, we tend to hold it against a lower standard of evidence, because, hey, it sounds so good.

To distract is to shift attention from a true point of interest to a false one. By identifying false or peripheral conflicts as pivotal, we deflect inquiry away from the actual point of conflict — guaranteeing that the true elements of our position will remain unad­ressed and unchallenged.

I recently watched "Tangled," the Disney retelling of the Rapunzel tale. The villainess of the story was interesting in that she maintained her power over by controlling the perceptions. By constructing false perceptions, the person can be controlled without the use of force. Force reduces people’s choices against their will; misrepresentation warps people’s choices by deception.

There are a few sets of words we use for misrepresentation. "Hate" is a powerful example; it solicits powerful emo­tions and knee-jerk reactions, piling the accused on the defensive. How often does it accurately describe the internal state of the accused? "Un­justified" is another illustration. By framing the issue, the person, the event, any attempt at response is reac­tive and necessarily weaker.

Gay marriage and abortion are two big conflicts laden with distraction, or attempts at it. How often do the opposing sides ever argue about the same thing? Does anyone actually dis­cuss the central points of conflict, or do they simply rush to engage the en­emy somewhere else, somewhere safe, full of noise and very little light? When we use words to manipulate other­ers, how much more do we use them to manipulate and massage ourselves? If we can describe our bad behavior with a word that has fuzzyperfor­mance/associations, we can do what we want while praising our virtue. "Pa­triotism" is good (and so is "Patri­otism is the last resort of scoundrels"). "Security" is a juicy one. "Tolerance" and "broadmindedness" attract a lot of this.

We have a vested interest in self-deception because we like to hold values that cannot all coexist. We want to have our philosophical cake and eat it too. To acknowledge a contra­diction is to suffer, and so we rationalize it away. To disre­spect ourselves and everyone around us by using it is to dis­grow a person’s capacity for error and self-deception — and you must learn it deep. Sur­round yourself with people who will hold you mentally accountable — it will teach you self-reliance. Meet lots of people who intelligently disagree with you. The value on the thoughts and actions of others is far more important than on ourselves; how much do we really want while praising our virtue. "Par­ticipation" is good (and so is "Patri­otism is the last resort of scoundrels"). "Security" is a juicy one. "Tolerance" and "broadmindedness" attract a lot of this.

If we use words to manipulate others, how much more do we use them to manipulate ourselves?

— Eric Baldwin
Liberalian columnist
Oberhelman continued from page 12

forward in a positive direction."

Head football coach Tim Walsh said he also noticed Oberhelman's positive energy when they met, and is looking forward to what Oberhelman plans to bring to the department.

"The very first impression you have on him is that he's outgoing and he's got a great personality, and that usually equals energy," Walsh said. "I think in the position he has here, as much as we need leadership, visibility and all those things, we need some energy — some positive energy."

Q: Do you think playing sports in high school and going through sports management training shaped you?

A: "No, I really think I was shaped more where I've been after that point. I almost consider the years in which I developed as a person were more my adult years. Being the athletics director at Cal Poly is less about me playing tackle and more about me being touched by Richard Giannini, the athletics director at the University of Southern Mississippi who taught me so much about the development of an athletic department."

Another reason Oberhelman is expected to succeed at Cal Poly is because of his work ethic, in addition to his extensive experience, Sork said.

"(Oberhelman) has number one great integrity, number two tremendous work ethic and number three he cares about the people and the departments, including the coaches and student-athletes," he said.

Oberhelman is known as the kind of employee who is the first one in and last one out of the office — a quality he said he hopes inspires his colleagues.

Q: What is one piece of advice that has stuck with you since you started working in athletics?

A: "The first thing I have to focus on is a plan. Right now we don't have that plan. I need to spend more time with our staff, coaches and student-athletes to find out where our most immediate needs are and what our long-term needs are."

No one would know such needs better than a head coach, and Walsh said he is looking forward to seeing how Oberhelman will prioritize what needs to be done.

"There is no question as a coach, and probably speaking for all of our coaches, we are looking for somebody that can come in here and do a great job internally as well as across campus with the students and administration," Walsh said. "But most importantly, (do the job) externally — the ability to raise money and help us to improve the areas that we need improvement in."

Outworking others and not being afraid to try new things are qualities that Steve Fisher, San Diego State men's basketball head coach, said Oberhelman has.

"He's a tireless, relentless worker who will always tell you how he feels, and he will be quick to say, 'Let's try (something new),'" Fisher said. "He's someone who is willing to listen and say, 'How can I think out of the box to make it work?'

Oberhelman always looks to help, especially coaches, and sees what he can do to make others succeed, Fisher said.

Q: When looking to gain more resources, what's something you will focus on for fundraising at Cal Poly?

A: "The first thing I have to focus on is a plan. Right now we don't have that plan. I need to spend more time with our staff, coaches and student-athletes to find out where our most immediate needs are and what our long-term needs are."

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Q: San Diego State had about a $30 million budget, and Webb said Cal Poly had about a $12 million budget last year. What do you hope to do with that, and how do you hope to disperse it?

A: "It is a little deceiving going from a Bowl level (FBS) football team versus Championship level (FCS) football. We play in the Big Sky and (NDSU) plays in the Mountain West, just that alone is probably a $4 to $5 million difference in terms of what they have to spend. So it is a little misleading, but true, it is less. It is more of just trying to manage those resources and making sure we are wise in how we're allocating them because there is not enough to do what we want to do right now. We want to have all our sports competing for championships, and that's a hard thing to ask when you have a budget like ours, but we're going to ask it."

Webb said when looking at the budget and resource allocation, fundraising is going to be key for the athletics department. In fact, he said it is becoming more of a requirement than a luxury.

Q: You mentioned interviewing with President Armstrong. As the new president, he has stressed the importance of making decisions with the students' best interest in mind. Would you say you share that?

A: "I could not agree more, and that is one of the reasons I'm very excited to be here. He and I are so in sync with that philosophy. The students are what drives the atmosphere, the energy, the enthusiasm, the passion (at games) — without the students, everybody's interest, and it's a nice, sunny Sunday afternoon. When students there, they are up screaming and yelling, and that's what makes the atmosphere of college athletics so much fun."

This is something Webb agrees is an important part of college for all students, and that he looks forward to working with Oberhelman to make sure the experience athletic events create is memorable and keeps alumni coming back.

"The student fan base is critical," Webb said. "The more enjoyment students have at that event, the more likely they are to come back, so we have to make it a good experience."

Oberhelman stressed the importance of students, not just student-athlete, participation in athletics. He said he has experienced other athletics departments that put too much emphasis on the staff and gaining revenue, but he feels this is not what the department is there for.

"(The departments sometimes) just lose sight of why we are here," Oberhelman said. "It's not for me, it's about the rest of the student body and the athletes. Watching the students storm the court and just go crazy with their student-athlete, that's a very special thing to be able to see."

Since Oberhelman has only held his position for a week, many of his long-term goals are still a vision. He still has a lot of planning and talking to do with the athletic department before any significant changes take place, he said. Until then, Fisher summed up Oberhelman's long awaited position as an athletics director:

"I always told (Oberhelman) that he was an athletics director waiting to happen."
Oberhelman officially takes reign of Cal Poly athletics

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Athletics director Don Oberhelman admits he wasn’t the best athlete growing up in Kansas. What he lacked on the field, he made up for in effort. He played for the love of the game, but he never expected to have a career in Division I athletics.

It wasn’t until a friend told Oberhelman he could make it to the NFL, not through a position on the field but rather a position in an office, that Oberhelman realized he could have a career in athletics, specifically at the collegiate level. It was at this point that he enrolled at Florida State to get his master’s in sports management, with the hopes of working in a university athletics department one day.

Now, Oberhelman looks at home in his new office on the second floor of Mott Gym overlooking the Recreation Center. Even if he is only in his first week as director of athletics, Oberhelman appears enthusiastic about taking on the role and future of Cal Poly athletics.

Q: How does it feel to be sitting here as a director of athletics for the first time in your career?
A: “Great. It’s wonderful, and it is even better that it can happen at a place like Cal Poly.”

The current director of athletics at San Diego State, and Oberhelman’s former boss Jim Sterk, said the position of an athletics director has five main areas to focus on: the student-athlete experience, facilities, personnel, garnering resources and politics.

Stern said he felt Oberhelman will be able to handle all five areas after seeing him “steer the department (at SDSU) through a $2 million deficit to having a positive operating side” while he served as interim AD. When Sterk took over, he said Oberhelman had straightened out the department to go in the right direction.

Q: Why do you think you are a good fit for Cal Poly?
A: “After I read the university mission and the concept of ‘Learn By Doing,’ I loved it ... I believe athletics is the very embodiment of this mission, so why wouldn’t I want to be a part of that? Just by participating (in athletics) you learn about leadership, teamwork, dealing with success and failure. Those are hard lessons to learn, and athletics teaches those better than anything I’ve ever been around.”

Cal Poly associate athletics director Phil Webb said the athletics department was looking for a new AD who would bring energy and excitement to recharge the program, and Oberhelman fit that criteria.

“In terms of résumé, character, energy, vision and drive, Don met the profile of what we are looking for,” Webb said. “We are looking forward to getting the show on the road and really reinvigorating the coaches and staff and moving the department.”

see Oberhelman, page 11

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