

STATE AFFAIRS

Executive Order Reductions

On December 10, 2008, the Governor issued an Executive Order to reduce spending in the current fiscal year in the amount of \$145.8 million. Both House and Senate Appropriations Committees approved of the Executive Order by an overwhelming margin. Operations funding for higher education was not reduced in this Executive Order. There was, however, a reduction of \$10 million in the Michigan Promise Grant Program as a result of a lower number of students qualifying for the awards than anticipated.

While operations funding for higher education was spared in this Executive Order, the State Budget Director did indicate that he felt that when he presented the Governor's recommended budget in February, further cuts may have to be presented at that time.

The State Budget Office projected that, even with approval of this Executive Order, the state still faces an anticipated budget shortfall of just over \$100 million for the current fiscal year. Factoring in the anticipated shortfall for the 2010 fiscal year, that number could grow to as high as \$1 billion.

Light Rail Legislation

At the time of this writing, there is legislation in both the House and Senate that will allow for the creation of a nonprofit corporation to operate a light rail system along Woodward Avenue in the city of Detroit. John Hertel, chief executive officer of Detroit Regional Mass Transit, has been the lead proponent of the legislation and has testified in front of both the House and Senate on the matter.

President Jay Noren sent a letter confirming Wayne State University's support of the legislation (Senate Bills 1588-1594 and House Bills 6542-6547) to the leaders of the House and Senate, and to all House and Senate Transportation Subcommittee members.

Both the Senate Majority Leader and the Speaker of the House are supportive of the legislation, and it could be passed by the end of the "lame duck" legislative session.

Property Conveyance Legislation for Wayne State

Senate Bill 1403 allows the State to sell the former Woodward Corrections Center (located at 5801 Woodward Avenue) to WSU for \$1. The former Corrections Center is not currently being used by the State and is adjacent to WSU's Facilities Operations Department (located at 5743 Woodward Avenue). The legislation should be sent to the Governor's desk for her signature by the end of the "lame duck" legislative session.

Revenue Estimating Conference

The Department of Treasury, House and Senate Fiscal Agencies, will hold a Revenue Estimating Conference on January 9, 2009. The Governor will use the estimated revenue figures established at this conference to build her recommended budget for the coming fiscal year. As mentioned above, it is anticipated that there will be another budget shortfall.

2009 Legislative Brunch

On January 24, 2009, the Office of Government and Community Affairs and Alumni Affairs will jointly host the annual winter legislative and alumni brunch. The event will take place in the Alumni House from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. The legislative brunch connects state legislators with WSU alumni to discuss important issues and encourages support for the university.

FEDERAL AFFAIRS

Economy

Economic Stimulus

The Congress is considering enactment of an economic stimulus package before the inauguration of president-elect Obama. Though no agreement has been reached, there seems to be a consensus feeling that an economic stimulus is needed before January.

Auto Bailout

Democratic Aides say that congressional democrats and the Bush White House are not far apart on a proposed bill aimed at bailing out the big three auto makers. It is estimated that the bailout amount will be close to \$15 billion, and will include the following:

- ✓ Appointment of an Auto Czar by the White House
- ✓ March 31 deadline for Big Three to submit detailed plans for cost cutting
- ✓ A government stake in GM, Ford and Chrysler

Wayne State, in conjunction with the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC) and the URC sent letters of support on the proposed economic stimulus package and the federal auto bailout to members of the Michigan delegation expressing the urgency of both measures.

Appropriations

Congress is expected to take up FY09 appropriations legislation when it returns in January, clearing the way for consideration of 2010 appropriations requests in the 111th Congress.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

WSU Combined Charitable Contributions Campaign

The University's 2009 Combined Charitable Contributions Campaign started on October 1, 2008 and ran through November 26, 2008. Dean Sharon L. Vasquez, College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts, chaired this year's campaign.

This year, WSU employees were able to make their contributions through Pipeline. Using Pipeline allowed donors to give by payroll deduction, check, PayPal and stocks and also offered a billed invoicing option.

We are excited and pleased to announce that we surpassed our goal for this year's campaign of collecting \$125,000. Wayne State employees pledged or contributed **\$140,885.58** with more than 900 donors and 238 departments participating in this year's campaign. Given the bleak state of Michigan's economy, we are very proud that the Wayne State employee community exceeded our expectations and reached deeply into its pockets to provide assistance to those less fortunate.

The campaign benefited United Way for Southeastern Michigan (UWSEM) and the Black United Fund (BUF). United Way provides our community with an independent safety net of health and human services by supporting a number of community service agencies. The Black United Fund is a community-based resource center that assists community efforts through referrals, funding, consultation and/or technical assistance. Both organizations provide numerous community service programs through a large network of volunteers and donors. These programs include drug abuse counseling and education, job training and placement, services for the elderly and for victims of domestic violence, recreational activities for children, small business support and services, and many other community outreach activities.

Wayne Cares

Wayne Cares is a university outreach initiative that brings together the university community of the purpose of charitable giving. Its primary goal is to help university units work together and collaborate with each other for the good of the community.

From December 1, 2008 through December 19, 2008, Wayne Cares collected donations for the Coalition on Temporary Shelter (COTS). During this critical needs drive, the WSU community dropped off donated items at various locations throughout campus.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Luncheon

This year's MLK tribute luncheon is on Friday, January 16, 2009. The event will again be held at the Max M. Fisher Music Center and features a strolling lunch prior to the program. Local community students have been invited to attend the keynote speech and program.

Susan L. Taylor, editor emerita of *Essence Magazine* and founder of the National Cares Mentoring Movement, will give the keynote speech. Sponsorships have been secured to allow most of the students to attend free of charge.

Event sponsors for the 2009 MLK Tribute Luncheon include:

- **Pepsi** (Title Sponsor)
- **Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)** (Dream Warrior sponsorship level)
- **GMAC Financial Services** (Dream Believer sponsorship level)
- **Daimler Financial Services** (Dream Believer sponsorship level)
- **State Farm Insurance** (Dream Catcher sponsorship level)
- **Comerica Bank** (Dream Patron sponsorship level)
- **U.S. Census Bureau** (Dream Patron sponsorship level)
- **Brogan & Partners** (Dream Supporter sponsorship level)
- **Fifth Third Bank** (Dream Supporter sponsorship level)
- **ACLU of Michigan** (Classroom Sponsor)
- **Black Family Development** (Classroom Sponsor)
- **Fifth Third Bank** (Classroom Sponsor)

Net proceeds from the event will benefit Adopt-A-Classroom, a nationally recognized organization that invites the community into classrooms to increase opportunity for student success by empowering teachers with community partnerships and funds to purchase resources for their classrooms.

Three Community Leadership Awards will be presented at the event. The awards will be given to an individual and to an organization whose contributions affect our community in a positive way. In addition, we will give one posthumous award to an individual who exemplified the spirit of community leadership and engagement. The entire WSU community was invited to submit nominees for consideration.