Athletics boss concerned by low grad rates

BY RYAN JOHNSON
Staff Writer

Athletic director Jim Livengood addressed athletes' lower-than-average graduation rates, the high demand for basketball tickets and emphasized the self-sufficiency of the athletic department during the faculty fellows speaker series yesterday.

"He’s had great success. We’ve been in the top 10 in the Sears Cup (a ranking of the top athletic departments in the country) the last 10 years and he was named 1999 A.D. of the year," Dash said.

But while Livengood’s athletes have had success on the field, he said he is concerned with athletics’ academic performance.

While 54 percent of the student body graduates eventually, 45 percent of student athletes graduate on average. The graduation rate dips down for football and plummets with basketball. Athletes are the victims of traditional stereotypes, Livengood said.

"The general impression is that they don’t do very well (in class). Most of their attention is diverted to sports," said business economics senior Pooja Kedia.

"I love U of A and it has been good to myself and my family, but at the same time you have to look at new challenges," he said. "These are the kinds of jobs you can fall in and out of favor really quickly."

When he asked attendees for questions, students asked about basketball tickets and the possibility of expanding McKale Center to accommodate more students.

"I think they are doing an amazing job," said undecided senior Russell Means. "A lot of it is marketing. We have had success on the field, but we don’t have that much on the court."

New NCAA rules will hold athletes more accountable. This week, the NCAA created new guidelines governing the rate at which athletes have to finish their graduation requirements. Improving graduation rates is one of Livengood’s main goals during his tenure at the UA, he said.

"The NCAA wants to make sure the student-athletes are better prepared when they graduate," said business management junior Alejandro Gutierrez.

The typical lottery player is college-educated, 47 years old and most likely male, according to research from WestGroup Research, a group hired by the Arizona Lottery Commission.

The lottery “has not pursued the age group (under 25)" with advertising campaigns, Gonsher said.

"Severe loss from the college-aged crowd will be minimal and the number of lottery ticket buyers among the affected group is “virtually insignificant,” Gonsher said.

Garrison, a molecular and cellular biology senior, was given that very opportunity. Garrison, whose mother is Navajo, chose to unite her Navajo heritage with the French culture, naming the gene Bil Nahoomas.

While not everyone has been able to name a gene, over 100 other UA students have had the opportunity to travel overseas to do research in foreign labs through a program known as “Biomedical Research Abroad: Voices Open,” or BRAVO.

The program is run through the undergraduate biology research program as a way of promoting international understanding and advancing students’ research skills, said the program director Carol Bender.

"BRAVO gives students a much greater appreciation for what it means to do science," she said.

"While scientific method is the same world round, the conditions under which one does science vary considerably from one country to another."

New horizons of learning

Whether it’s naming genes or having tea with prime ministers, overseas program is memorable experience for students and a research advantage for the university

BY KEREN G. RAZ
Staff Writer

Not many students get the chance to name a gene. But at the end of her research experience in Paris, Nambaa Garrison, a molecular and cellular biology senior, was given that very opportunity.

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State bumps up legal gambling age from 18 to 21 for casinos, lottery

BY BRETTEY MANSON
Staff Writer

Arizona state legislature passed legislation last year to raise the minimum age for gambling, including the state lottery and Indian casinos, from 18 to 21.

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Undecided freshman Amy Mancini said the lottery is entertainment.

"It’s stupid to not be able to buy tickets," she said.

Another freshman was less upset by the new law.

"By 18 you understand (the risk of gambling) and we don’t have that much money to lose anyway, so it’s not a dauter," said undecided freshman Russell Means.

Proposition 301 in the November general election may also affect the state lottery.

If the proposition passes, the lottery...

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Union unveils plans for February grand opening week

BY JAMES KELLEY
Staff Writer

With the completion of the Student Union Memorial Center rapidly approaching, student union directors have announced plans for a February grand opening that incorporates veterans, international food, films from long, ago and children.

Starting with the noon ribbon cutting and official dedication on Feb. 17, there will be celebrations from Feb. 17 to Feb. 22.

After more than three years of construction, the student union will be completely ready for use next semester, officials said.

The union’s construction deadline is Dec. 15.

While specific plans for the grand opening week have not been finalized yet, general themes for each day have been outlined, said Dan Adams, director of Arizona Student Unions.

Tuesday, Feb. 18, called “Involvement Day” will be a day of art openings and student showcases, site dedications and entertainment and restaurant special.

On Wednesday, Feb. 19, “Memorial Day,” veterans will be remembered, a time capsule dedicated and...