UA gets $360K for HIV/AIDS program

By Natasha Bhuyan

The UA recently received a $360,000 grant to expand its services for HIV/AIDS patients.

The money was awarded by the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act to expand clinical services for HIV/AIDS, adding more patient coverage and more physicians.

The Ryan White Early Intervention Services Clinics in the Arizona Health Sciences Center provide comprehensive primary care for people with HIV/AIDS. Services include blood testing, examinations, dental care, psychiatric treatment and obstetrical support at an affordable cost.

Roberto Castillo, program director for Arizona AIDS Education and Training Center, has been with the program since its inception at Kino Hospital and said the Ryan White funding could possibly increase AIDS research at the UA.

“The university is a research institution,” he said. “So now, we can get into innovative AIDS research, hopefully.”

Dr. Steve Klotz, director of the Infectious Diseases Fellowship Program and family and community medicine professor, said the funding comes at a critical time because there is an increasing number of HIV/AIDS incidents in Pima County.

“The exact numbers nobody knows,” Klotz said. “But we have new patients every year.”

By Jessica Lee

Army Spec. Laura Zdunowski volunteered to go to Iraq last fall because she was in love.

“I got word about the Army taking volunteers to go to Iraq,” Zdunowski said. “I thought, ‘I might see my husband. I might die.’”

She hoped to see her husband, already stationed in Iraq, but never expected the big spiders, 110-degree days and forty-mired soldiers. Above all, she never could have known she would end up sitting in Saddam Hussein’s conference chair in his Baghdad palace at a weapon of mass destruction briefing.

Zdunowski, a 23-year-old Tucson native who has been in the Army over three years, spoke to a crowd of more than 50 last night at the Steward Observatory about her experiences as a communication specialist with the 35th Signal Brigade Corps.

After landing in Baghdad, Zdunowski’s unit took a two-hour convoy to Airborne, where she got to do a little sight-seeing.

“I felt like I was trapped in the Bible,” she said. “But with high-ways, said Zdunowski, who had the job of setting up communication services, such as Internet and phone, for other military units.

It was on this first convoy trip that Zdunowski saw Iraqi women in the fields, children waving and destroyed tanks on the side of the road.

Eventually stationed in al-Kut in southern Iraq, Zdunowski was one of four women who shared a large tent with 60 soldiers.

The women were sectioned off with plywood, although most of the men were tall enough to see over the top.

She remembered that the first night, she rescued her unit from small rats and large spiders because she wanted to show off.

Zdunowski, who is 5-foot-4 with long brown hair, pink fingernails and a large diamond ring, said she had to beat up a few military men who would not leave her alone.

By Holly Wells

Members of the UA community can now access a Web site that identifies two UA students and one UA employee as registered sex offenders.

Sgt. Eugene Mejia, UAPD spokesman, said the Web site, created under the Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act, can be accessed by going to the UAPD homepage, www.uapd.arizona.edu, and clicking on the link “Sex Offender Information.”

“We’ve been working on getting the site up since last week, today was the first day it was fully operational,” Mejia said.

After clicking on the link, viewers of the site can find information on sex offenders and the sex offender law.

The site offers separate links on the three sex offenders, including pictures of each offender and maps of where they live.

Mejia said the Web site also categorizes the level of potential danger for each sex offender.

Sex offenders are registered as a Level 1, 2 or 3 offender, with 3 being the most dangerous.

The three sex offenders identified on the Web site are all categorized as Level 2.

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