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ARIZONA DAILY WILDCAT

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Monday, May 2, 2005

The University of Arizona, Tucson

SKY WATCHING



CHRIS CODUTO/Arizona Daily Wildcat

Twelve-year-old Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association member Carter Smith sets his telescope on a distant airplane Saturday evening on the UA Mall. Smith has been a member of TAAA for about three years. He was on the Mall as part of the TAAA's annual star party, which helped raise more than \$900 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

Phoenix med school up in air

By Andrea Kelly
ARIZONA DAILY WILDCAT

PHOENIX — As the Arizona Legislature continues to work on the fiscal year 2006 budget, their persistence in not funding the medical school expansion has made the future of the addition uncertain.

The dedication of the site in Phoenix, where the UA Medical School is planned to expand, was canceled last week because of the uncertainty of funding, President Peter Likins said Wednesday.

Though fiscal year 2006 does not start for a few months, beginning July 1 to June 30, 2006, the Legislature and

governor still need to decide on a budget. The process is stalling and leaving those with specific hopes of funding with nothing to do but wait.

Likins said a total of \$7 million is needed to fund the expansion of the medical school to Phoenix. The expansion would require \$6 million for the UA to renovate Phoenix Union High School buildings, pay faculty and open the medical school.

The school would encompass a first-year class of 24 students in the fall 2006 semester as well as the 100 students who are working on their residencies in Phoenix-area hospitals, Likins said.

The other \$1 million would come from Arizona State University's budget

and would fund the bioinformatics part of the medical school.

The rationale

The UA, ASU and the Arizona Board of Regents have agreed to collaborate to create an extension of the UA medical school in Phoenix because of the population of the city and the need to train more doctors in the state.

Gov. Janet Napolitano has also agreed.

Napolitano said in her January State of the State address she wanted to fund the expansion, and she refused to sign the first budget the Legislature sent to her, citing the non-funding of

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UA to add College of Optical Sciences

By Jennifer Amsler and
Natasha Bhuyan
ARIZONA DAILY WILDCAT

TEMPE — The Optical Sciences Center became the College of Optical Sciences last week, gaining academic status as part of President Peter Likins' Focused Excellence initiative to cultivate "excellent" programs.

The Arizona Board of Regents approved the move, which will boost the recruitment of top students and increase grant funding for an already strong program with 535 students, 75 teaching and research faculty members and two Nobel laureates. With \$12.6 million research grants in 2004, the program ranks sixth among UA departments in research funding and expects a 5 percent increase in external funding as a result of the change.

"Our new name — the College of Optical Sciences — is a reflection of our commitment to provide the world's highest quality graduate and undergraduate education in optical sciences," said James Wyant, dean of the College of Optical Sciences.

Optical sciences at the UA was identified for expansion in 2003 under the Focused Excellence initiative, which called for the program to receive funding from Proposition 301 revenue, now known as Technology and Research Initiative Funding.

Funding sources for the program will not change in the College of Optical Sciences, including state funds, TRIF funds, indirect cost recovery funds, external grants and contracts, and designated funds. The College of Optical Sciences has a yearly budget of \$20.26 million, with \$3.5 million coming from state funds.

While the number of undergraduates and graduates is expected to remain the same, the number of distance learning students will double because the college will increase the number of courses in the program.

Expansion of the Meinel building, home of optical sciences, will also be completed next year. The "west wing" will add 47,000 square feet of classroom, office and research space.

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Poker tournament deals out fun

By Troy J. Acevedo
ARIZONA DAILY WILDCAT

Amid the sullen calm shortly before the raging storm that is finals week, 28 students were invited to attend the end-of-year championship poker tournament.

This year, more than 200 students have participated in the games that take place every Wednesday and Friday night during the regular academic year at

the Games Room in Wilbur's Underground in the Student Union Memorial Center, said Simran Nirh, Games Room manager.

"All throughout the semester student response has been outstanding," Nirh said. "At first everyone comes just for fun, prizes don't weigh in until the very end."

Now, those lucky few who accumulated the most points have gathered to

compete for a prize pool worth more than \$2,200.

"Sponsors were solicited from across campus and from local donors, who have always been supportive of university activities," said Adnan Qadri, Games Room student manager and tournament director. "All of our sponsors were very generous in their donations, especially STA Travel, Replay and Pepsi."

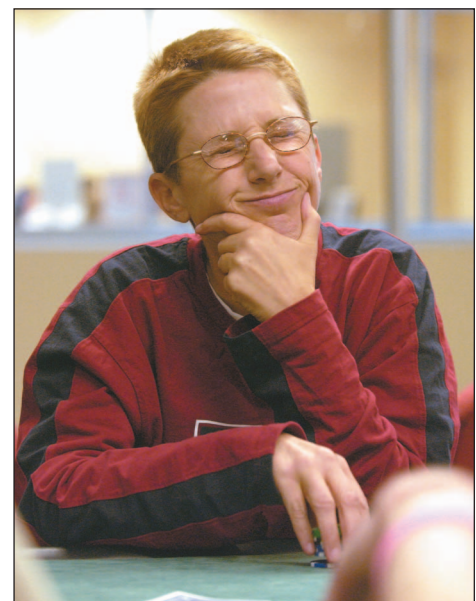
Nine students from the UA, Games Room poker

champions, went to the Association of College Unions International games championships Feb. 17 and placed first in poker and ping pong and placed third for chess and pool, Nirh said.

The top contenders from this event will be invited to attend the national championships, Nirh said.

Observer Dave Morehouse, an education freshman, said he was

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Cell biology and anatomy graduate student Allie Hays reacts to an opponent's hand during a round of poker in the Games Room in the Student Union Memorial Center. Hays bowed out in the final round.

EVAN CARAVELLI/
Arizona Daily Wildcat