



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.

UA swimmer Jeff Dash introduced Livengood and mentioned his accomplishments as athletic director.

"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 athletes' academic performance.

While 54 percent of the student body graduates eventually, 45 percent of student athletes graduate on average. The graduation rate dips down in 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.

But that might change soon.

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. But throughout his speech, Livengood said he doesn't know how much longer he'll be at the university.

"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.

Other universities facing similar ticket shortages have spent huge amounts to add a few thousand seats only to find that the arena didn't fill up any more, Livengood said.

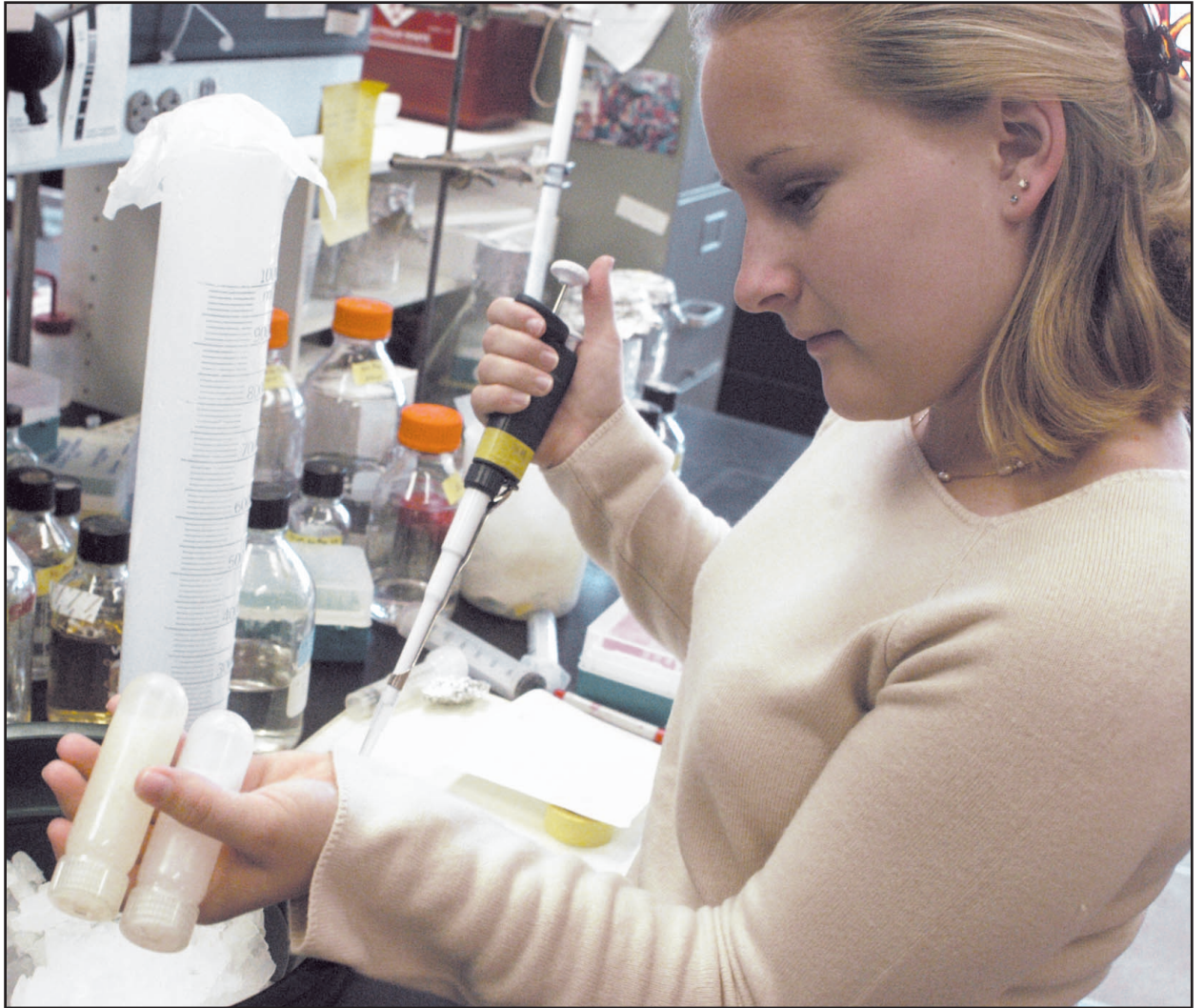
It is difficult to please all sides — alumni, students, and the general public — in regard to ticket availability, he added.

Livengood suggested that juniors or seniors who had



Jim Livengood
Athletic Director

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KEVIN KLAUS/Arizona Daily Wildcat

Molecular and cellular biology senior Julie Bordowitz works in a biology lab in the Life Sciences building. Bordowitz spent last summer in Germany studying heat-shocked proteins as part of a study abroad program.

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, Nanibaa' 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: Vistas 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."

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

BY BRITTANY MANSON
Staff Writer

The Arizona Legislature has a message for younger students who enjoy heading down to the casino to drop their paychecks into the slots: Enjoy it while it lasts.

Starting June 1, the minimum age to gamble in casinos, bet at racetracks or buy state lottery tickets will increase from 18 to 21 because of legislation passed earlier this year.

The reason the legislature passed the law was because young adults were "exposed to gambling at too early an age," said Arizona Lottery Executive Director Geoffrey E. Gonsher.

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 21)" with advertising cam-

paigns, Gonsher said.

Revenue 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.

Undecided freshman Amy Manzo 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 danger," 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 specials.

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

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KEVIN KLAUS/Arizona Daily Wildcat
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.