A Glimpse of Columbia History . . .

By Ellen S. Smith

State Budget Debates on Student Aid Remain Unresolved

State budget discussions are likely to continue until the end of June or mid-summer. Hope for restorations of student aid, the Tuition Assistance Plan and Higher Education Opportunity Program, and the new Capital fund will need further negotiations.

At the federal level, annual funding committees have held hearings on the agencies under their jurisdiction, but the non-binding budget resolution, which assigns allocation numbers, is not yet complete. In other areas, Congress hopes to complete the large Transportation Authorization bill prior to adjournment. This bill will likely be of assistance to New York City as its agencies address the West Harlem and Manhattanville transportation needs.

At federal agencies, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge has been pleased with universities around the country (including Columbia) for their rapid implementation of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). SEVIS is a new data system that tracks international students. Its use was being considered even before 9/11, but the impetus to move forward quickly gained ground in 2001. The SEVIS system is well funded. Ridge also offered to work with universities to encourage international students to attend college or university in the U.S.

Peer review of research is the topic of a White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) April 15 draft bulletin. The guidelines continue to give federal agencies discretion in their methods of conducting peer review and facilitates the release of public health and medical risk information. These guidelines were developed after Congress passed legislation in 2000 directing the federal agencies and OMB to improve the quality of scientific information prior to its public release or use by agencies in developing regulations.

New Pulitzer Board Chair Named

Andrew Barnes, chairman and chief executive officer of the St. Petersburg Times, has been elected chair of the Pulitzer Prize Board, Columbia announced recently. He has served as a board member since 1996. A newspaper journalist for more than 40 years, Barnes has devoted most of his career to the Times, where he has held the paper’s top post since 1988. Before joining the Times, Barnes worked for The Washington Post as a reporter, deputy metropolitan editor and finally education editor, a position he held until 1973. The Times first hired Barnes in 1973 as assistant managing editor and metropolitan editor. He rose to managing editor in 1976 and then editor and president in 1984. Four years later, Barnes became chief executive of the Times Publishing Company and chairman of the Poynter Institute for Media Studies, which owns the Times. In addition to serving on the Pulitzer Prize Board, Barnes is a past chairman of the Newspaper Association of America and the American Society of Newspaper Editors Ethics Committee.

The 2004 Pulitzer Prizes were announced on April 5 and will be presented on May 24 at Columbia. The University awards the Pulitzer Prizes on the board’s recommendation. Members of the board serve a maximum of nine years. For more information, visit the Pulitzer Prize Web site at www.pulitzer.org.

Former Columbia Business School Dean and Mrs. Meyer Feldberg were feted recently at a gala at the American Museum of Natural History, Feldberg will step down in June after 15 years of service.

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