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During a Capitol Hill press conference, the House Education and Workforce Committee's incoming chairman, George Miller, outlined his priorities regarding his new post. Miller stressed the need to strengthen the middle class and discussed the rising cost of college tuition, how to make education more affordable, and how to keep America's workforce competitive. He pointed out that between the 2000-2001 and 2005-2006 school years, tuition at four-year public colleges increased by 57% and that the Department of Education has estimated that roughly 200,000 people each year delay or forego pursuing college degrees because they cannot afford them. Representative Miller also spoke on the No Child Left Behind Act, Pell Grants, and high-quality public schools. He announced that Democrats will be tackling these issues within their first 100 hours in Congress.

Spellings names under secretary

Sara Martinez Tucker has been named U.S. Under Secretary of Education by U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings. Tucker will assist Secretary Spellings with the implementation of changes prompted by the Commission on the Future of Higher Education. She will be responsible for coordinating policies, programs, and activities pertaining to education, postsecondary education, college aid, and the president's reforms to the Pell Grant program. Prior to being named Under Secretary, Tucker was President and CEO of the Hispanic Scholarship Fund (HSF) and was honored as one of the 25 most influential Hispanics in America in a 2005 issue of *TIME*.

Education and Workforce Committee members appointed

House Democratic leader and Speaker-Designate Nancy Pelosi announced that the Democratic Steering Committee has appointed six members of Congress to the Education and Workforce Committee:

Jason Altmire of Pennsylvania, Phil Hare of Illinois, Dave Loebsack of Iowa, John Sarbanes of Maryland, Carol Shea-Porter of New Hampshire, and John Yarmuth of Kentucky. After naming members to various Congressional committees, Pelosi said that the newly appointed individuals will be instrumental in the Democrats' efforts to take America in a new direction that increases security, opportunity, and prosperity, while restoring civility and integrity to Congress.

Indiana University, Bloomington, to assist Pell Grant recipients

Indiana University, Bloomington, has announced a \$1.8-million program that will provide the additional funding required to cover tuition and fees for the university's in-state students who qualify for Pell Grants. Students with scores of 1150 or higher on the SAT and who maintain minimum grade point averages of 3.0 will be eligible for the new program. With more than 500 undergraduate students receiving federal Pell Grants at Indiana University, Bloomington, the initiative will make the university more accessible to Indiana students from low-income families.



New financial aid director at Mississippi University for Women

Dan Miller will begin serving as Financial Aid Director at Mississippi University for Women on January 3, 2007. Prior to this appointment, Miller was Senior Director of Financial Aid at Auburn University, Montgomery. Miller has served in the field of financial aid for more than 30 years and has previously been named Outstanding Financial Aid Administrator by the Tennessee Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. Founded in 1884 as the nation's first public college for women, Mississippi University for Women now has four colleges and approximately 2,400 students from more than 40 states and countries.