

Endowments decline by 16.5 percent during economic crunch

by EVE ATTERMANN
Managing Editor

Contrary to some published reports, Vanderbilt's endowment decreased by a comparatively small amount of 16.5 percent.

According to a press release from the Vanderbilt News Service, the endowment shrank from \$3.5 billion last June to \$2.9 billion.

The loss was smaller than the 22.9 percent decline reported by the 435 respondents of an endowment survey conducted by the National Association of College and University Business Officers. Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs Beth Fortune said it was due to strategic decisions about certain investments. "It owes a great deal of

credit to Vice Chancellor of Investments Mathew Wright, who manages the endowment, and the leadership of Chancellor Zeppos," said Fortune. "It shows that Vanderbilt is in a solid and stable position compared to many other colleges in the country."

The endowment funds about 5 percent of the university's annual operations. Cost-cutting measures have been adapted by the university, among them a halt to new construction products and most departments reducing their budgets to preserve cash. "It is still a time to be prudent and to carefully make decisions," Fortune said.

Earlier reports from The Tennessean estimated the loss of the endowment to be at

ECONOMIC STRUGGLES



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around a billion dollars, almost twice as much as the actual amount. "We knew it wasn't going to be anywhere near what was previously reported," Fortune said. ■

Expelled student sues Vanderbilt

by HANNAH TWILLMAN
News Editor

In an ongoing lawsuit, a former student is suing Vanderbilt University for \$75,000 on the grounds that the Honor Council proceedings that resulted in his expulsion were unfair.

The plaintiff was expelled after being found guilty of a violation of the school's Honor Code in two separate hearings.

According to the lawsuit filed on Jan. 28, the plaintiff was brought before the Honor Council Jan. 16, 2008 for receiving unauthorized aid on a physics test he took the previous semester.

His professor had reported him to the Honor Council for copying the answers to the test from a student sitting at the same table. The plaintiff had answered 13 out of 15 multiple-choice

questions on the exam the same way as the neighboring student, who had a different version of the test. Only two of the 15 questions on the plaintiff's exam were answered correctly.

The first Honor Council hearing found the plaintiff guilty of the violation with a vote of 10-2. According to the student handbook, three "not guilty" votes are required to find a defendant not guilty of a violation.

The plaintiff appealed the ruling and was granted a new hearing by the Appellate Review Board, which ruled that there were procedural irregularities during the first hearing.

The second hearing was held on Aug. 20, 2008 with a new presiding officer. The new officer had reviewed the details of the first hearing and discussed the results with a faculty member prior to the hearing. The

plaintiff was again found guilty by the Honor Council and was sentenced to a failing grade in the physics class and permanent expulsion from Vanderbilt.

After this ruling, the plaintiff again petitioned for an appeal. The Appellate Review Board, however, did not grant the appeal and ruled on Nov. 20, 2008 that it would uphold the Honor Council's decision.

The lawsuit claims the plaintiff did not copy another student's answers during the exam and that he is innocent of all of the Honor Council charges. The suit claims damages both compensatory and punitive, citing loss of future wages and \$40,000 paid per year for tuition as well as other claims.

Since the suit is ongoing, the Office of the General Counsel as well as the president of the Honor Council were unable to comment on the case. ■

VISAGE awarded for innovation

by LAUREN KOENIG
Senior Reporter

The Vanderbilt Initiative for Scholarship and Global Engagement was recognized for its unique approach to studying abroad from the Institute of International Education and NASPA, a professional association for student affairs administrators.

VISAGE received a bronze NASPA Excellence Award in the category "Careers, Academic Support, Service-Learning, Community Service and Related" for combining educational study abroad as well as community service opportunities. Vanderbilt also received an honorable mention in the study abroad category of the IIE's annual Andrew Heiskell Awards for Innovation in International Education.

The program officially started in spring 2008. In its second year, about 40 students are involved.

According to Professor of History Marshall Eakin, the faculty director of the Nicaragua program, planning for the program began in 2006 when Assistant Provost for International Affairs Joel Harrington formed a committee to develop a study abroad program that combined both service and learning.



photos courtesy of ALLIE MORRIS
Professors Marshall Eakin (left) and Waldie Scudlevich (right) dig weeds from a field in the outskirts of Managua, Nicaragua.

"This has been a collaborative effort from the beginning," Eakin said.

VISAGE offers students a yearlong learning experience that begins with a spring semester course in preparation for a four-week summer service project abroad. In the fall semester, students engage in a seminar, capstone research project and community service work in Nashville.

Students said they appreciated the extended experience. Junior Clair Birkhauser went to Managua, Nicaragua last year as part of the VISAGE program that focuses on "Family, Community and Social Justice." She said the semester course before the group's departure helped her to understand the political, economic and social structure of the country before she even arrived.

"VISAGE requires its participants to take this class so that one can become immersed in the culture upon their arrival, or at

the very least be an informed tourist, rather than a typical tourist," Birkhauser said.

"You spend an entire semester learning about the country's history and culture before you even go there, which for me really gave the experience more meaning," said senior Annie Freyman, who also went to the Managua site last year. "Standing in the rundown city center of Managua, I could appreciate and understand what had brought the people to this state. I was more intellectually and emotionally involved in what I was seeing."

"Each VISAGE site is exploring, overall, the same issues of global citizenship and social justice," said Director of the Global Education Office Ara Pachmayer.

The summer 2009 sites are located in South Africa, Costa Rica and Nicaragua. Faculty directors work with students on specific themes geared toward the different locations.

According to Pachmayer, students and faculty evolve their research and local community service depending on the summer experience. This spring, the faculty directors intend to work closely with Hands On Nashville, among other programs.

"On the most basic level, I hope that this combination of service and academics will make (students) take a hard look at their own values, worldview and life — to become aware of who they are, and who they are not. I hope the experience will be transformative for them," Eakin said. ■

***97%**
OF VANDERBILT MEN
agreed that being drunk
is **NO EXCUSE** for forcing
a woman to have sex.

—Lynette Jacobs-Priebe, dissertation, 2006

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