Kansas needs

poll workers

Sedgwick County may recruit high school, college students to fill open positions

WICHITA (AP) — Several Kansas counties could have a shortage of poll workers for the coming elections.

Bill Gale, Sedgwick County election commissioner, said polls are fully staffed for August primaries, but about 330 more workers will be needed for the November general election.

"The bad thing about that is, when we're short, that means more work for those that are there," Gale said. "Especially with a busy day that we're expecting this November, we'd really like to have those positions filled."

Brad Bryant, state election director, said many Kansas counties could experience a shortage.

"It might be worse this year because we're expecting a larger turnout, so some counties might be beefing up their staff," Bryant said.

He said counties are getting creative to fill the positions. Counties have the option of hiring 16- and 17-year-olds, and Gale said that Sedgwick County may recruit at high schools and colleges if the positions are empty when school starts in the fall.

This spring, Douglas County's election office tried to recruit University of Kansas students via e-mail. The message, signed by University of Kansas Chancellor Bob Hemenway, invited students to participate in this "important civic endeavor" by staffing the polls.

Kansas isn't the only state hurting for workers. About 2 million poll positions are open nationwide. Bryant said young people have a lot to offer as workers.

"They have strong backs and, technologically, they're not intimidated by the equipment," he said.

With the average age for poll workers in Kansas at 62, Bryant said changes in technology may also contribute to fewer people willing to work the polls.

State laws have increased pay for workers and offered half-day shifts as an alternative to the 16-hour days. The pay was about 50 cents an hour when Dow M. Summers Jr., 70, started working election days 26 years ago. A full-day shift now pays $120, about $7.50 an hour, but Summers says he would do it for free.

"My main goal is to get people out to vote — everybody I see," Summers said.
High tuition keeps students close to home

BY CAROL BRONSON
lifestyles@pratttribune.com

High school graduation is supposed to mark the ending of one phase of life and the beginning of another. Some students will leave school days behind, but the majority will continue in studies for a few more years before they're ready to settle into a more or less permanent, full-time job. Many of them, however, are not spending a final summer at home before “going off to college.”

Of 117 May graduates of Pratt High and Skyline School, nearly 60 plan to enroll next fall at Pratt Community College. Half of that number have expressed plans for transferring to a four-year college after that.

““It's economically responsible — it makes sense,” said Jillian Aramowicz, who will live at home and enroll at PCC this fall as a sophomore, having already earned her first year's credits during her junior and senior years at Pratt High. The emphasis during the next year will be to “get classes out of the way,” she said, having made sure everything she takes at PCC will transfer to Kansas State University, where she expects to major in photojournalism. Once at K-State, the plan is to share an off-campus apartment with a friend and get involved in campus life.

She’s counting on scholarships, two summer jobs, and employment during the college term to hold off the need for a student loan as long as possible.

“College is just incredibly expensive,” said Cynthia Aramowicz, Jillian's mother. “We did encourage her to go to PCC for a year, but we've tried to leave that up to her. If we can save this year and help more next year when she needs to go somewhere else to get the classes she needs, that will be to her advantage.”

While she is saving money by attending PCC, tuition is increasing by 5 to 6 percent at Kansas Board of Regents universities, hiking a student's bill by as much as $200 per semester.

Tuition enhancements were necessary to maintain the quality of education Kansans deserve and demand, and were kept near inflation levels, according to Donna Shank, the newly-elected chair of the Board of Regents.

A Regents survey demonstrates that state universities in Kansas “remain a great buy,” according to a June 12 news release. Students at the
College costs in Kansas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Tuition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pratt Community College</td>
<td>$1110.00*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Hays State University</td>
<td>$1677.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emporia State University</td>
<td>$1963.00</td>
</tr>
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<td>Pittsburg State University</td>
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<td>Wichita State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Kansas</td>
<td>$3299.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newman University</td>
<td>$7911**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethany College</td>
<td>$8,105**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethel College</td>
<td>$8350**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Room and board at PCC varies from $1768 to $2223 per semester, depending upon residence hall and meal plan selected. Residence hall and maximum meals per week ranges from $2422 at PSU to $3514 at KU per semester, according to 2006-07 information provided by PCC.

*A Pratt County High School Senior Grant entitles a student to a maximum of $350 per semester, not to exceed a total of $1400, provided a GPA of 2.0 or higher is maintained.

**2006-07 rates

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Tuition...

From page 1

state’s three research institutions, Kansas State University, the University of Kansas and Wichita State University, pay $822 or 14 percent less than residents in neighboring states to attend similar institutions. Tuition at the three regional institutions, Emporia State University, Fort Hays State University and Pittsburg State University, is $722 or 20 percent less than at similar schools in surrounding states.

KU led the way in tuition increases for fiscal year 2009 at 6 percent, but is the only Kansas school to give incoming freshmen a tuition rate that remains fixed, with no increase, over four years.
LOCAL STUDENTS EARN HONORS AT KU

The following students earned academic honors for the 2008 Spring Semester at the University of Kansas. Junction City: Troy Joseph Cowan, son of Sandra Powers, senior in business; James Thomas Craig, son of Thomas and Brenda Craig, junior in liberal arts; Morie Shea-Lynne Dotson, daughter of Raymond and Yughonda Dotson, senior in allied health; Emily Christena Heldstab, daughter of Randy and Chris Heldstab, senior in education; Cole Angus Mutz, son of Matthew Mutz, sophomore in liberal arts; Joseph Andrew Pinaire, son of Richard and Margie Pinaire, senior in liberal arts and Nicole Laverne Robinson, daughter of Patsy Robinson, sophomore in liberal arts.

Milford: Bradley Alan Schmidt, son of Kay and Ray Schmidt, sophomore in liberal arts.

Chapman: Joanna Linn Hamel, daughter of Greg and Julie Hamel, sophomore in liberal arts; Emily Elizabeth Markley, daughter of Joe and Sheila Markley, junior in fine arts.
Critics of tuition break for immigrants vow to fight

BY JOHN HANNA
Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA - Critics of a law giving some illegal immigrants a tuition break at state universities and colleges are promising to keep challenging it, despite a recent legal setback from the U.S. Supreme Court.

The high court has refused to consider the appeal of six parents and 18 non-Kansas students who had attacked the law in court. They had hoped to reinstate their lawsuit after a federal judge dismissed it.

Kris Kobach, a University of Missouri-Kansas City law professor who has represented the parents and students, said Wednesday that other court challenges still are possible. And some legislators haven't given up on repealing the 2004 law, which allows some immigrants to pay the lower tuition normally reserved for legal Kansas residents.

"I think it will continue to be an issue before the Legislature," said Rep. Lance Kinzer, an Olathe Republican who opposes it. "It's almost inevitable that the issue will be raised if the opportunity presents itself."

Kobach, who's also chairman of the Kansas Republican Party and a former adviser to the U.S. attorney general on immigration law, said challenges in other states also could undercut the Kansas law. He's involved in a case pending in California's appellate courts.

According to national groups, 10 states, including California and Kansas, have such laws. The others are Illinois, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Texas and Utah.

"I think once one of the 10 states falls, I think eventually the others will roll over like dominoes," Kobach said.

But supporters of the law are confident that it will withstand either court challenges or legislative attacks. Opponents in Kansas have failed repeatedly to persuade the Legislature to pass a repeal bill.

Josh Bernstein, director of federal policy for the National Immigration Law Center, said such laws help immigrants who come to the U.S. as young children, then stay and attend school.

"It's not really in our interest to have educated these kids and then to have them leave," Bernstein said. "The reality is, they're not going to leave."

The Kansas law allows illegal immigrants to qualify for lower in-state tuition at state universities, community colleges and technical schools if they attend a Kansas high school for at least three years and graduate or earn a general education development certificate in Kansas. Also, they must actively be seeking legal immigration status or plan to do so when they are eligible.

The tuition break can be significant. For example, the tuition and fees paid by an undergraduate from Kansas taking 15 hours at the University of Kansas were $3,300 per semester for 2007-08. For out-of-state students, the figure was $8,053.

The Board of Regents said 243 students took advantage of the provision in fall 2007. But 193 of them, or 79 percent, attended community colleges.

The law passed in 2004 with bipartisan support and the backing of Democratic Gov. Kathleen Sebelius.

"Governor Sebelius has always been confident in this law, which makes college accessible," spokeswoman Nicole Corcoran said. "Those eligible for in-state tuition must prove they're pursuing citizenship and must pay their own way and are not eligible for state or federal financial aid."

Opponents contend the law discriminates against legal residents of other states and endorses illegal behavior. They also argue that the Kansas statutes and others like it conflict with federal immigration laws. Supporters contend that such laws are drafted carefully enough that there isn't a problem.

The federal court rulings hinged on whether the parents and students who objected to the law could sue state officials.

A federal judge dismissed the Kansas lawsuit in July 2005, saying the students and parents who filed it couldn't show they were harmed. The judge noted that even if the law were struck down, those students would still pay the same out-of-state tuition rates.

The 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver reached the same conclusion. In declining to review the students and parents' appeal last week, the Supreme Court gave no explanation.

Kobach said such a decision is not surprising because the high court considers about 1 percent of the appeals filed with it and concentrates on resolving conflicting rulings from lower courts.

"Once we get to the merits of the issue, I'm confident that we'll win at the end of the day," Kobach said.

While said the high court's action makes a federal lawsuit unlikely, Kobach said he believes some aggrieved students -- such as foreign students who have a valid U.S. visa -- might be able to sue.

Both agreed that such an issue is less of an obstacle in many state courts, though Bernstein still believes a lawsuit would fail there as well.

In 2006, a superior court judge in Yolo County, Calif., upheld that state's law, but that case is on appeal.

The case is Day v. Kirsten, et al. v. Bond, Richard, et al., U.S. Supreme Court no. 07-1193. The case number in U.S. District Court was 04-cv-4065.
STUDENTS USING IMMIGRANT TUITION LAW

TOPEKA — Here are figures for the number of students, by institution, who have taken advantage of a state law on tuition rates for illegal immigrants.

That law allows some illegal immigrants to qualify for lower rates normally reserved for legal Kansas residents.

The figures are compiled by the state Board of Regents each fall. The latest are from September 2007.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Johnson County Community College</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seward County Community College</td>
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<td>Kansas City Community College</td>
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<td>Butler Community College</td>
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<td>University of Kansas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Garden City Community College</td>
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<td>Wichita State University</td>
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<td>Emporia State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fort Hays State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kansas State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hutchinson Community College</td>
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<td>Cowley County Community College</td>
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<td>Highland Community College</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas City Area Technical School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pittsburg State University</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pratt Community College</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen County Community College</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barton County Community College</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flint Hills Technical College</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neosho County Community College</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salina Area Technical School</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>243</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>TYPE OF INSTITUTION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Community Colleges</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>79.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Universities</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech Colleges, Schools</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
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Public universities include the six state universities and Washburn University in Topeka.
Tuition break for some illegal immigrants stands

TOPEKA (AP) — A law giving some illegal immigrants a tuition break at Kansas universities and colleges has withstood a legal challenge.

The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to reinstate a lawsuit against the 2004 law filed by six parents and 18 out-of-state students attending Kansas institutions.

The law allows illegal immigrants who qualify for the lower tuition rates reserved for legal Kansas residents.

It has the support of Gov. Kathleen Sebelius. According to national groups, nine other states have enacted similar laws: California, Illinois, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah and Washington.

"Governor Sebelius has always been confident in this law, which makes college accessible," spokeswoman Nicole Corcoran said Wednesday. "Those eligible for in-state tuition must prove they're pursuing citizenship and must pay their own way and are not eligible for state or federal financial aid."

Opponents contend the law discriminates against legal residents of other states and endorses illegal behavior. Despite the Supreme Court's action, they are promising to continue their attacks on the law.

Critics have tried repeatedly — but unsuccessfully — to persuade the Legislature to pass a bill repealing it.

"You're going to see the illegal alien legislation on a regular basis until we get something done," Rep. Brenda Landwehr, a Wichita Republican, told The Topeka Capital-Journal.

Kris Kobach, a University of Missouri-Kansas City law professor who represented the students and parents, said it might be easier to challenge the law in state courts.

"It is a problem whenever a state has a statute on the books that is clearly in violation of federal law and violates the rights of U.S. citizens," said Kobach, who also is chairman of the Kansas Republican Party. "Eventually, it will become clear."

The Kansas law allows illegal immigrants to qualify for lower in-state tuition at state universities, community colleges and technical schools if they attend a Kansas high school for at least three years and graduate or earn a general education development certificate in Kansas.

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A federal judge dismissed the Kansas lawsuit in July 2005, saying the students and parents who filed it couldn't show they were harmed by the law.
KU announces spring 2008 honor roll

• LAWRENCE — More than 4,900 undergraduate students at the University of Kansas earned honor roll distinction for the spring 2008 semester.

Greeley County students on the KU honor roll include Bradford Lee Cardonell, son of Randy and Tracey Cardonell, Liberal Arts Undergraduate Senior, and Elijah C Tuttle, son of Linden and Genia Tuttle, Business and Liberal Arts Undergraduate Senior.

These students, from the Lawrence campus and the schools of allied health and nursing at the KU Medical Center in Kansas City, Kan., represent 101 of 105 Kansas counties, 42 other states and the District of Columbia and 39 other countries.

The honor roll comprises undergraduates who met requirements in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and in the schools of allied health, architecture and urban planning, business, education, engineering, fine arts, journalism, nursing and social welfare.

Honor roll criteria vary among the university’s academic units. Some schools honor the top 10 percent of students enrolled, some establish a minimum grade-point average and others raise the minimum grade-point average for each year students are in school. Students must complete a minimum number of credit hours to be considered for the honor roll.
This Week in Congress

By Jerry Moran
- Welcome to “This Week in Congress.” Kansans remain frustrated by the high cost of energy, including gasoline, and the lack of progress toward finding solutions. Like Kansans, I am bothered by the partisan politics that prevent Congress from finding solutions to these critical problems. I hope you find this newsletter useful.

Disaster Declaration Requested for Chapman, Manhattan and Other Communities

On Thursday, Governor Sebelius formally asked the federal government to provide disaster assistance to 49 Kansas counties that suffered damage from severe storms and tornadoes beginning May 22 and ending June 16. I have urged President Bush to quickly approve the assistance so that public buildings and infrastructure can be repaired.

The day after tornadoes and strong storms rolled through central and northeast Kansas, I visited Chapman and Manhattan to view the damage. I returned to Chapman the following day to encourage residents. The destruction was great in these two communities, but many other Kansas towns have also suffered. The request for federal assistance is welcome news to Kansans that live in these storm-damaged communities.


Pressing Air Force Officials to Rebid Tanker Contract

After upholding Boeing’s protest last week of the Air Force’s decision to award the aerial refueling tanker contract to Northrop Grumman and Europe’s EADS, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) said Wednesday that Boeing would have likely won the bid had significant errors not been made. The findings of the GAO report are disturbing. It is critical the Air Force start this competition over and work to make it right.

Together with other Members of Congress, I asked the Air Force Acting Secretary to take into account all of the GAO findings and re-open a fair competition in a manner that corrects the significant errors identified by the GAO. According to the GAO report, the Air Force failed to judge the competitive bids based on the Air Force’s own evaluation criteria, made significant mistakes in considering the life cycle costs of each of the two aircraft and “conducted misleading and unequal discussions with Boeing.” I also joined Congressman Todd Tiahrt this week in introducing legislation that directs the Department of Defense to begin a new competition on the tanker contract if the Air Force fails to award the contract to Boeing. The legislation calls on the Department of Defense to take into account national security, industrial base concerns and foreign subsidies in the new competition.

Supporting the Americans with Disabilities Act Restoration Act

This week, I supported House passage of legislation that will ensure the right for all people to be evaluated on their job performance. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Restoration Act restores the law to Congress’ original intent by harmonizing the ADA with other civil rights laws and requiring the courts to interpret the law fairly. Overly broad court interpretations have weakened the law by allowing employers to say a person is “too disabled” to do the job but not “disabled enough” to be protected by the law. The ADA Restoration Act will correct this problem.

I spoke on the House floor about the need for these reforms and was able to share the thoughts expressed by former Senator Bob Dole, a true disability rights advocate, on the passage of the original ADA in 1990.

Emergency Grazing of CRP Acres Approved for Kansas Counties

Producers in eight Kansas counties received good news this week when the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved a request for emergency grazing of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres. Producers in Grant, Hamilton, Haskell, Morton, Sherman, Stanton, Stevens and Wallace Counties are now eligible to begin sign-up for emergency grazing of CRP acres. Producers in these Kansas counties are enduring months of drought. Allowing producers to graze CRP acres will help them maintain their herds during this time of extreme conditions.

Emergency grazing is allowed through September 30, 2008. All livestock must be removed by the end of the grazing period. According to the Kansas Farm Service Agency (FSA), producers must not graze at least 25 percent of each field or contiguous CRP fields or graze no more than 75 percent of the stocking rate. Producers participating in the emergency grazing will also face a 25 percent reduction in the annual rental payment for the grazed acres. Producers should visit their local FSA office for information about the restrictions on use and to begin the sign-up process.

Celebrating the University of Kansas School of Pharmacy Expansion

I was in Wichita on Monday to participate in the ceremonial signing of state legislation that will allocate $20 million in bonds plus an additional $39 million for the expansion of the University of Kansas School of
Pharmacy. The funding will also allow the School of Pharmacy to conduct more pharmaceutical research. With the expansion of the school, nearly 200 more students will be able to enter the pharmacy program at the KU School of Medicine-Wichita and at a new building on the main campus in Lawrence. At a time when pharmacists are struggling to keep their doors open, the pharmacy expansion is a ray of hope for the profession and our state.

KU has a strong record for retaining graduates within our state. Sixty-three percent of KU Pharmacy graduates live and work in Kansas. Increasing the educational capacity will give more students an opportunity to learn and will also help address the pharmacist shortage in Kansas. I would like to commend the leadership and faculty at KU and the Kansas State Legislature for having the foresight to invest in such a worthwhile project. Being with KU officials also allowed me the opportunity to encourage additional enrollments within the School of Medicine in order to better help Kansans meet the need for physicians, especially primary care doctors.

Before attending the ceremony, I attended a meeting of the Downtown Rotary Club in Wichita. It was good to join fellow Rotarians for a discussion of current issues.

Contact Me
It is an honor to serve you in Washington, D.C. Please let me know how I can be of assistance.