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University of Illinois at Chicago receives $14.2M in grants for tobacco research

By Associated Press

3:02 AM CDT, October 11, 2011

CHICAGO (AP) — The National Cancer Institute has awarded $14.2 million in grants to the University of Illinois at Chicago for tobacco research.

The funding announced Monday goes to two research projects. In one, scientist Sherry Emery and her colleagues will measure how media messages — including on the Internet and in social media — affect smoking behavior and attitudes.

In another, Frank Chaloupka and his colleagues will look at the effect of taxes and price reductions on tobacco purchasing. They'll examine whether consumers will avoid paying taxes on tobacco by crossing county or state borders, or by buying tobacco online or by phone.

The two five-year studies at UIC's Institute for Health Research and Policy build on previous research conducted by the institute to better understand what factors influence smoking behaviors.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.
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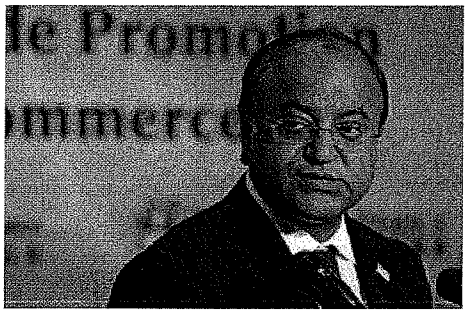
India's Half-Hearted Welcome for Foreign Universities

Suresh Kumar, a U.S. Commerce Department official who is in New Delhi this week on an education-focused trade mission, says India needs to open up to foreign universities to accommodate its own ambitious plan of sending 30% of graduating high-school kids to college by 2020, up from 13% now.



Pichi Chuang/Reuters

U.S. Commerce Department official Suresh Kumar says India needs to open up to foreign universities.

The problem is, the proposal India's Parliament is now batting around isn't going to help attract U.S. universities, he says, and might actually scare them away, because it imposes too many restrictions on their entry.

India's proposed higher education bill would create a route for foreign universities to legally set up in India, as opposed to some unofficial partnerships with Indian universities that are happening now. But it would prevent them from repatriating profits back to their home countries. The government could regulate tuition fees to keep them low, but foreign colleges would still have to ensure what they offer is of "quality comparable, as to the curriculum, methods of imparting education and the faculty employed," of what they offer on their main campuses.

Mr. Kumar, Assistant Secretary for Trade Promotion in the U.S. Commerce Department, says such provisions are counter-productive. Top U.S. universities that charge $120,000 to $160,000 for two-year M.B.A. programs, he says, would likely never come to India if the government were going to dictate how they run their businesses.

"If you suddenly think you can get a Harvard M.B.A. degree in India for $20,000 – it's just not going to work," he said. "You can't impose a Western system in India. But India also can't expect to have the Harvards come here under the current construct."

Mr. Kumar said reforming education is a must for India if it hopes to maintain heady economic growth numbers over the long term. The bill is "a step in the right direction," he said, and he'll be making his case about how to tweak it in discussions this week with Indian Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal. Mr. Sibal also will meet U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in Washington on Thursday as part of the US-India Higher Education Summit.

The education law isn't exactly on India's front-burner. Mr. Sibal, who is also India's telecommunications minister, has had his hands full ushering through sweeping policy changes in that sector and dealing with the fallout from the 2008 "2G" spectrum scandal.

Mr. Sibal is traveling to the U.S. for the education forum and neither he nor a spokeswoman could be reached for comment. Proponents of the approach in the government's bill say allowing too freewheeling an environment for foreign colleges, with no strings attached, would commercialize higher education and adversely impact government institutions.

U.S. universities may not be setting up shop in India yet, but they're already attracting Indian students in droves – mostly graduate students. Last year, 105,000 Indian students were studying abroad in the U.S., the second most behind China's 127,000.

At a college fair Monday organized at New Delhi's Shangri-La Hotel as part of the trade mission, 21 U.S. universities were recruiting and the high enthusiasm of Indian students to go abroad was on display.

Neiha Pandey, a 12th grader who spent time chatting up an official from the University of Pennsylvania, her first choice, says she wants to study in the U.S. because of the less rigid curriculum options in liberal arts colleges. "It's a different thing than India – there are so many variations, you can switch streams in the middle. It's flexible," she said.

Mr. Kumar is an India native who once was a high-profile news broadcaster for Doordarshan television in the 1980s (he says he earned 100 rupees, about $2, per broadcast in those days) and had a 30 year career in business and academia. He says one of his goals as a representative of the U.S. government now is to "convey to the Indian population the range of universities we have" so people are familiar with more than just the costly, high-profile schools.

At the fair, relatively better-known schools like Arizona State University and Hofstra had set up booths alongside others that had some attendees scratching their heads – Savannah College of Art and Design, University of the Incarnate Word and Life University, for example. UPenn, the best known school, had the biggest crowd at its booth.

"I wish bigger universities would come here," said Rubina Singh, 25, who is looking to enroll in a psychology graduate studies program. "There are universities here I've never heard of."

Elenora Haag, who was representing the University of Illinois at Springfield, said the school has already had surprising interest from Indians with almost no marketing – of its 200 foreign students (out of a student population of 5,000) 80% are Indians. "It's entirely by word of mouth," she said.

But she added that the school is hoping to diversify the kind of Indians it attracts. All its Indians now are computer science graduate students and, interestingly, all are from Hyderabad. "I guess some of them came and told their friends back home in Hyderabad to come," Ms. Haag says.

Mr. Kumar says the Indian interest in U.S. colleges is promising, but he says if U.S. universities were allowed to more freely establish campuses and partnerships in India, they could handle a much larger base of Indian students, something India sorely needs. India has capacity to handle 28 million undergraduate college students now, but by its own calculations will need to add another five million seats by 2015 and then keep rapidly expanding in future years.

Another element of Mr. Kumar's trip has been aimed at exploring what kind of collaborations Indian universities are looking for with U.S. institutions. He met with officials from engineering institute BITS Pilani, Kurukshetra University and Amity University and tried to assess what they're interested in.

"You need to understand your demand before you can fill it," Mr. Kumar says.

You can follow Mr. Sharma on Twitter @AmolSharmaWsj. Follow India Real Time on Twitter @indiarealtime.

Chicago Tribune
October 11, 2011

Kirk report diagnoses Illinois' debt

Senator's advisory board makes case for pension reform in state

By Becky Yerak
Tribune reporter

Henry Feinberg has bipartisan bona fides.

The venture capitalist and former chief executive of Skokie-based Rand McNally has been the fundraising chief for such Democrats as Mike Quigley and Forrest Claypool, and was on a transition team for Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel that looked at pension issues.

But about three months ago, Feinberg accepted a request from U.S. Sen. Mark Kirk, R-Ill., to lead a three-member sovereign debt advisory board that looks at Illinois' "unsustainable" debt levels and how they're hurting the state's competitiveness.

On Tuesday, Kirk will issue a 32-page report prepared by his staff with the advice of the advisory board, making a case for pension reform in Illinois.

"If you ask me what I am, I'm a reformer, and I support reformers," Feinberg, also chairman of Chicago-based Maxim Revenue Management Solutions, said in an interview Monday. "What's happened is that Illinois' political leadership has ignored the obvious in recent history and, as a result, has plunged Illinois into this self-perpetuating cycle of debt."

Illinois' financial troubles mean that it has to pay more for every dollar it borrows at the state and local level, the report said.

CHRIS WALKER/TRIBUNE PHOTO

U.S. Sen. Mark Kirk, R-Ill., is to issue a report Tuesday on the statewide impact of "unsustainable" levels of debt.

It cites a May report from Illinois State Treasurer Dan Rutherford. Rutherford's report said Illinois borrowed $3.7 billion earlier this year to help fund a pension payment, and because of the state's low credit rating, taxpayers are saddled with $1.28 billion of interest. That's 17 percent more than Kentucky, 34 percent more than Michigan, and 41 percent more than Washington have to pay on similar bonds issued this year, Rutherford's report said.

Kirk also cites an August 2010 report from the Civic Federation. The Chicago-based government research group said Illinois will spend $550 million in additional interest on its debt beyond what comparable issuers might have been charged for the Build America Bond program, which the state used to fund a capital program.

Also detailed in Kirk's report is the impact of the state's declining credit rating on the borrowing costs for individual communities, called the "halo effect." That happens because states with less cash are less likely to make timely payments to local governments, which increases the risk to the municipalities' lenders.

"This means municipalities, even fiscally responsible municipalities, must pay more because of the diminished Illinois credit rating," Kirk's report said.

Also on Kirk's sovereign debt advisory board were Ronald Bernardi, president of Chicago-based municipal bond firm Bernardi Securities Inc., and David Malpass, a former Bear Stearns chief economist who's now president of New York-based Encima Global LLC.

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U. of C. reclaiming its field

Institute for Law and Economics aims to enliven combined legal study that it started 8 decades ago

BY AMEET SACHDEV
Tribune reporter

The University of Chicago Law School is the birthplace of a legal movement that uses the tools of economics to understand the law. This approach has enormously influenced many areas of law, from antitrust to contracts.

Now that the movement has reached middle age and is part of the course offerings at nearly every U.S. law school, the University of Chicago wants to reinvigorate teaching and scholarship in the field.

The law school plans to announce Tuesday that it will establish the Institute for Law and Economics to promote research and teaching among the law, business and economic faculties of the university. The dean of the law school hopes that the new organizational framework around law and economics will create the kind of innovation the school has been known for.

"We're trying to re-create the same bubbling caldron of ideas that gave rise to the first law and economics movement," said Michael Schill, who became dean in January 2010. "It's a very exciting moment for the school."

The institute is the centerpiece of a broader initiative Schill calls "Law and Economics 2.0" that signifies the aspirations of the school.

Schill said the law school can be a leader in teaching lawyers and professors in other countries where the law and economics movement has yet to take hold.

The application of economics to the study of law began in the early 1930s at the University of Chicago but did not become a central part of its curriculum until the 1950s and 1960s.

Scholars began studying how laws create incentives for people to behave a certain way. The big triumph of law and economics was in the antitrust area. The courts in the early 1900s took a very narrow

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U. of C. institute looks to enliven field it created

Continued from **Page 1**

view of how much control manufacturers could exercise in the retail arena. But the Chicago school of thinking showed that there were many good reasons why manufacturers would want to impose restrictions on retail sales.

The reshaping of antitrust law has made it possible for companies like Apple to have vertically integrated operations where it sells iPods and also music for those devices at its iTunes online store, said Randy Picker, a law professor at the University of Chicago.

The law school's reputation was built almost exclusively on its work in law and economics by professors such as Ronald Coase, Gary Becker, Richard Posner and William Landes.

Some of Chicago's legal giants have retired or moved on, and people in legal education suggest that other law schools have caught up in scholarship and influence.

"It's good to see Chicago paying attention to it again," said Henry Manne, the dean emeritus at George Mason School of Law who received his law degree from the University of Chicago in 1952. "I think it can be a sparkplug for the rejuvenation of law and economics."

Schill would disagree that the law school's reputation in law and economics has waned. He points to new scholars who are exploring areas as diverse as the economics of criminal law, anonymity on the Internet and medical malpractice.

"There is a tendency to be cloistered in the ivory tower of Hyde Park and expect everyone to appreciate how great we are," said Schill. "There's nothing wrong with letting the rest of the world know about it."

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News

Closing Time in California

October 11, 2011

The 38-year-old California Postsecondary Education Commission will not be getting a funeral when it is laid to rest next month.

When the state coordinating board closes its doors for the last time on Nov. 18, few will be there to pay respects to the once-touted agency that served as a check on the governor and on institutions of higher learning.

California Gov. Jerry Brown nixed funding for the agency in the state's latest budget. In his veto message, the governor said that "while I appreciate the importance of coordinating and guiding state higher education policy, I believe CPEC has been ineffective." H.D. Palmer, California deputy director of the department of finance, said that while the dollar amount for one commission may be small, the governor was staring down a $25 billion budget deficit. Eliminating CPEC will save $927,000 in the budget next year.

But some say the agency -- born from California's lauded 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education -- played an important role in recommending policies to the governor, aggregating student data to identify trends, and conducting studies on facility and programmatic changes at public institutions of higher education across the state. Most experts agree that the 1.6 billion data records collected and maintained on its website is a treasure trove of information that should not be tossed aside. (A rescue appears to be in place.)

Others aren't convinced about the organization's overall influence on state leaders.

"CPEC was designed to be ineffective, and at that it excelled," said Bob Shireman, who spent an eventful year leading the Obama administration's Education Department before returning to California to head a nonprofit group on higher education competitiveness in the state. "I think California is living on the fumes of its past. It desperately needs vision and leadership in higher education."

Although there will be few letters of condolence or bouquets of flowers, CPEC's demise is a small piece of a larger, faltering higher education system in California, some experts say.

Waning Support

California's 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education was a road map for building one of the best public education systems in the world. It was ahead of the curve, recommending universal access and low costs for students.

The master plan also recommended creating CPEC, a coordinating board to oversee the three public education systems in the state: the California Community Colleges, California State University and University of California systems. CPEC advised the governor, coordinated long-term planning, reviewed new degree programs and evaluated budget requests from state-supported colleges and universities. It was also responsible for awarding the Improving Teacher Quality Program grant, as part of the No Child Left Behind Act. With the agency's closure, this function will be shifted to the California Department of Education.

The master plan did not set the agency up for success during a time when some political and institution leaders decided to stop listening to it, according to many of those who have watched its work.

The agency was designed to give informed recommendations and advise, not to vote, veto or dictate, said Karen Humphrey, CPEC's executive director. She said that in recent years few recommendations were totally ignored by institutions, but there were times when "the politics of the proposal were already well in place by the time CPEC was involved and our recommendation was overridden."

In 2007, for example, the University of California at Irvine proposed creating a law school, which the commission reviewed and advised against because of a preponderance of law schools already saturating California higher education. The university went ahead with the law school, however, with the backing of policy makers.

A year and a half ago, CPEC produced a study identifying whether the University of California at Riverside needed a proposed medical school. CPEC concluded there was a need for the medical school, but advised delaying the opening until adequate funding was secured. However, the university opted against the recommendation and went ahead with the construction of the school.

"CPEC did carry out its statutory role, which was to provide an informed recommendation to policy makers; the ultimate decision rested in their hands," Humphrey said in an e-mail message.

From one institutional leader's perspective, losing CPEC is a great loss to the state. Lawrence T. Geraty, who represents California's independent colleges on the CPEC board and is president emeritus at La Sierra University, said that there has been a butting of heads on certain projects, but that the data and analysis CPEC provides are invaluable.

"This is just one small commission, but it provided data that were very helpful in making policy for higher education," he said. "I don't see how the state can get along without it."

Melinda Guzman, a California State University trustee and the system's CPEC representative, said the success and growth of the systems forced a shift in how the system leaders and CPEC officials interacted. In years past, institution presidents would attend CPEC meetings, but once the colleges and universities grew in size and clout, communication among the specific institution leaders and CPEC wavered.

"Certainly there is a role for a CPEC-type institution with regard to program review and educational institutional review, but in terms of being an oversight commission for all of higher education, that role really changed over the years and became more questionable," she said.

Many education leaders agree that the agency's strength was in its aggregated student data that spans decades. It tracks students through their time in the higher education system, including demographics and graduation rates. This data collection and analysis helped CPEC inform the governor, with quantifiable measures, what was happening in higher education in the state.

But with its defunding, "California is losing its single source of independent research and evaluation of higher education," Humphrey said. "It's frustrating because people didn't see why we did it, didn't see what we could offer," she said.

Patrick Callan served as the executive director of CPEC from 1978 to 1986. It's bittersweet to see the agency close, he said, but it's not a shock.

"Whatever the agency might have done right or wrong didn't matter," said Callan, who is now director of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. "There has been a remarkable lack of interest on the part of the governor and the legislature in higher education in California in recent years."

Callan said CPEC no longer had the ear of the governor and public institution leaders, with dire financial problems putting the final nail in the coffin for CPEC.

And the agency has been on its deathbed for several years, said Christopher Cabaldon, a principal partner with Capitol Impact, a California education consulting firm.

"The capacity of the agency to give support has been eroding for some time, gradually starving [it]," said Cabaldon, who is also the mayor of West Sacramento. "CPEC has been somewhat hollowed out over the last several years."

CPEC lost supporters in the legislature and at colleges and universities. Without people championing its work, the agency lost relevance, Cabaldon said.

And while some would disagree, it is a sad day to see CPEC closing, said John Douglass, senior research fellow at the Center for Studies in Higher Education, at the University of California at Berkeley.

CPEC was an outgrowth of the master plan, and an integral part of this idea of a coordinated higher education system, he said. This move, he said, is a "significant disinvestment in higher education."

"Lots of pieces of this grand design are eroding quickly," he said. "Public higher education will continue without having CPEC but it does relate to larger questions of how we can fashion a strategic model in the future to increase education attainment rates."

Master Planning

Balancing the state budget is certainly no easy task, but the continuous chipping away of investment in higher education is alarming, Douglass said.

"This isn't about thinking rationally about how to move forward and address the challenges of the future," he said. "It's more about emergency cutting and looking down at your feet instead of the horizon."

CPEC's closure, some say, is symbolic of the erosion of the master plan. Higher education policy making seems to have been driven by lobbyists with personal or institutional interests, rather than the master plan's statewide or public interests, said David Longanecker, president of Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.

CPEC's closure is another knock to an ever-eroding vision, but an overhaul of the master plan could be just the boost California higher education needs, said Longanecker. The master plan called for low tuition, easy student access and quality student aid. But now, Longanecker said, many of California's public institutions are shifting their focus to research and over-expanding programs and facilities. For example, he said, California State University at Monterey Bay opened in 1994, but has never pulled in high student enrollments. It has nearly 5,000 undergrads enrolled this year, compared to nearly 30,000 undergraduates at many of its fellow system institutions.

Simply put, California has lost its vision for higher education, Callan said. It lacks an entity that knows the whole is greater than the sum of its parts; a steward of public interest on higher education policy is nowhere to be seen, he said.

Last year, the California legislature held hearings to assess the Master Plan, adopting a **resolution** that highlighted some of its shortcomings.

"The State of California has no articulated, comprehensive statement of goals for California's system of higher education," the resolution states. "The lack of these goals makes it difficult to develop sound systems of criteria for advancement or clear systems of accountability."

On the Horizon

Humphrey, who is now retiring in the wake of CPEC's defunding, predicts that a new coordinating board of some sort will be put in place in California in a few years. Student access to higher education in a state with a **booming population** has to remain an important agenda point, and she said she believes legislators will see that an autonomous coordinating board can help bridge any knowledge gaps.

However, Palmer said, the state still faces between a deficit of between $1.5 billion and $3 billion over the next three years. Given that, opening a similar coordinating board in California does not look likely in the short term. The onus is on the state system segments to pick up where CPEC has left off, he said.

In one small step, a repository of the electronic data will now be hosted on the California Community College System's website. Older historical materials will be placed in the state library and state archives.The data follows student transfer trends, pathways from community college to public institutions, graduation rates and demographics, among other things.

"It's really kind of a banana republic not having an entity that can provide some analysis of data collection," Douglass said. "If you do think higher education is important for socioeconomic mobility and competitiveness, then you would say the state of California needs some sort of coordinating board."

— Elizabeth Murphy

INSIDE HIGHER ED

News

'Last Day on Earth'

October 11, 2011

When Steve Kazmierczak calmly walked onto the stage in Northern Illinois University's Cole Hall on Feb. 14, 2008, people listening to an ocean sedimentology lecture were puzzled, not scared. But then he started shooting, and an eerily quiet chaos broke out. Those who thought fast enough darted for the doors, everyone a moving target.

In the months following that day, when Kazmierczak **murdered 5 students, wounded 18 and killed himself**, nobody understood what had happened. He seemed all right; as an undergraduate at Northern Illinois, he had made good grades and won the Deans' Award. His teachers and friends said they never saw any warning signs. But David Vann, an associate professor of creative writing at the University of San Francisco, uncovered a lifetime of clues while investigating Kazmierczak's life for a feature published in ***Esquire***. Being a student at Northern Illinois was probably the best thing Kazmierczak could have done to redirect his life – which up to that point had been marked by depression, prescription drug abuse, death, suicide attempts and unstable relationships, especially with family members. But despite the positive influences of Northern Illinois and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where Kazmierczak went to graduate school, Vann argues that all colleges could do more to prevent such tragedies.

In ***Last Day on Earth: A Portrait of the NIU School Shooter*** (University of Georgia Press), out Oct. 20, Vann recounts Kazmierczak's life and shows how in some ways, it was not so different from his own – or from many others. Vann responded via e-mail to questions from *Inside Higher Ed* about what all colleges can learn from Kazmierczak's story.

Q: What is the significance of the book's title, "Last Day on Earth"?

A: "Last Day On Earth" is **a Marilyn Manson song**, the final song on Steve's "Final CD" that he had in his car and presumably listened to right before the shooting. As I describe in the book, Manson spoke to much of Steve's life, including his mental health history and medications and his desire to murder and commit suicide. Steve also saw neo-Nazis at a Manson concert a week before the shooting, and thought that one of Manson's symbols looked like a Nazi symbol. And he liked Manson's androgyny (and shaved his own pubic hair and eyebrows). Manson is also visually linked to the red, black, and white man-witch **Billy-the-Puppet** mask in the "Saw" movies, which were Steve's favorite movies. Manson celebrates mass murderers, and so it makes sense that they should like him.

Q: Steve was successful in keeping secret his state of mental health. You imply that it's understandable that his friends and professors didn't see warning signs. What lessons does his story hold for college counselors and mental health practitioners? What about for the faculty members who work closely with disturbed students?

A: If universities want to know about mental health history, they have to require a background check of mental health history that will go all the way back (not limited to five years, as with the firearms identification card Steve obtained in Illinois). You can't rely on self-reporting, and it's difficult to know whether to trust the anecdotal reporting of others. When Steve arrived at Northern Illinois as an undergraduate, it seems that everyone around him recognized that he was severely disturbed. They called him "Strange Steve" in the dorm, he ate his meals alone, he talked incessantly about Hitler and other murderers, etc. There were a ridiculous number of warning signs available, but that didn't lead to any reporting or intervention. And although he was suicidal then, he didn't kill during that time period. It was later, after years of success, that he sank down again and headed toward murder. And he was no longer a student at NIU then (he was at UI, a few hours south, and returned for the shooting).

In the U.S., we don't want to demonize the mentally ill. And we have good reasons for this. Encouraging students to seek counseling for depression can reduce suicide, for instance. And there's often not much of a divide between those who are "depressed" or mildly mentally ill and those who are "normal." Sometimes someone is just under a lot of pressure for a limited period of time. And these students won't want to be recorded as having a mental health history that will show up in a background check.

All of this is to say that there's no easy solution. And mental health practitioners are not reliable. One asked Steve whether he wanted to kill but didn't ask whether he owned a firearm, for instance.

So if universities really want to limit shootings, they'll have to take a lot of steps that I can't imagine them taking:

1. They'll have to group together to fight the NRA and push for gun control, including the elimination of all handguns, since handguns are made to kill people.
2. They'll have to require mental health background checks.
3. They'll have to flag anyone who has served in the military or been in the prison system.
4. They'll have to use metal detectors, more police at campus borders, etc.

These measures would all help, but the effort to guard against campus shootings is very much the same as the Homeland Security Effort: expensive and almost entirely incapable of preventing a swift attack. So the best that universities can do, in my opinion, is to invest in fighting the pro-gun lobby.

Q: Why can't you imagine them taking those steps?

A: I think universities will wring their hands at school shootings, do what they need to do to cover their own liability, and not take any of the important steps, because the important steps all seem un-American. It seems ungrateful and unpatriotic, for instance, to flag veterans as potential risks, even though they've been taught to kill people without emotional or psychological response. It will seem politically unpopular and impossible to fight for gun control in many parts of the country. Background checks on mental health history will seem like an invasion of privacy and also will seem counterproductive to improving access to mental health providers. Universities already do spend more on campus police and are already installing more metal detectors, but this last line of defense is of course the least effective. We tend to want to buy solutions to our problems in the U.S. instead of dealing with the larger issues. What I'd like to see universities do is work together to lead the country toward gun control, because these shootings have offered them a moral imperative, but I think that's only a hope, not something that will happen.

Q: Virtually all college administrators oppose guns on campus, but there's no real concerted effort among institutions of higher education to fight the gun lobby (even as that lobby has been successful in getting campus weapons bans overturned in Colorado and, just last month, Oregon). You say the best thing they can do is to band together on this issue. So why aren't they? What would this require? And how much power do they really have to harness?

A: When you think of how many universities there are in this country, and how important they are in their communities, and when you add all the community colleges and high schools and think about the political power they could wield if they came together clearly on an issue such as gun control, that's an enormous amount of power. It's enough power, certainly, to unseat any politician who would be stupid enough to still say "guns save lives" in the face of the facts. And it wouldn't be hard to do. All it takes is a willingness to be clear and uncompromising in the message, with a commitment to communicate that message to elected representatives until they produce effective change. What's difficult in the end game is the Second Amendment. At some point, we have to decide to be sane instead of following a document that's unclear and outdated. And this could happen, with enough unified political pressure. Americans could decide to stop being ruled by insanity. But I'm not holding my breath. I have residency in New Zealand, and I'm spending only a couple weeks in the U.S. this year.

Q: You discuss in the book your father's suicide, and say that contributed to your desire to write a more sympathetic piece about Steve. (Though you also acknowledge that this was before you discovered that he wasn't just a sweet graduate student who suddenly snapped.) How did the suicide influence your initial perspective on the Northern Illinois shooting, and how did that perspective change throughout the course of your reporting?

A: I still believe we should think of school shooters as suicides. I believe suicide is usually the primary motivation. What this means is that when we look for warning signs, we're not looking for a sadistic killer but instead for someone whose life is falling apart, someone who is suffering. We can look for them using risk factors such as poverty, depression, former military service, mental health history, sexual despair, isolation, gun ownership, interest in death and killers, racism, libertarianism, falling grades, etc. The combination of risk factors that I would most want to flag would be poverty, libertarianism, and time spent in either the military or the mental health system. I don't think schools currently think of shooters as suicides, and I think they should. Mass murder is such an extreme act, it

erases everything else, and that's why we don't think often enough of mass murderers as suicides. But if we think of them as suicides, they become easier to find and change.

Writing about Steve as a suicide rather than as a mass murderer made it easier for me to talk with his professors and friends. It also helped me to understand all the pressures in his life that built toward making his final action possible. If I had thought of Steve only as a murderer, I would have missed most of the narrative.

Q: Steve was in many ways successful in college; he won the Deans' Award, and had friends who considered him close. But were there ways in which the institution of higher education -- not necessarily Northern or Illinois, but the broader system of higher education as a whole -- contributed to Steve's falling apart and, ultimately, his decision to commit mass murder?

A: Steve's life improved greatly as an undergrad at Northern Illinois. His transformation was remarkable, really, from being barely functional, overmedicated, and suicidal in the mental health system to winning the Deans' Award, getting good grades, being off medications, etc. He was even helping other students as a tutor. In tutoring other students, Steve found something engaging and helpful to do with his life. He became part of a community. Shooters become isolated, unengaged, angry, and limited in their options. Universities open up options and connections. He's a testament to the great positive change a university can make in a student's life. But he had trouble with transitions, as many with mental health issues do. Moving from Northern Illinois to Illinois caused enormous stress because he was losing his community of professors and friends, had to restart in a new environment, and also was dealing with the death of his mother. The transition was what made him regress to his high school and junior high life, a life perfectly shaped for mass murder, but universities nearly succeeded in keeping him from being a killer.

Q: In the book you ask, "How much have things really changed" since 1966, when the Texas tower sniper murdered 16 people from atop the administration building at the University of Texas at Austin. Almost immediately after the Northern Illinois shooting, the Illinois legislature struck down a bill that would have limited handgun purchases. Wisconsin and Mississippi recently passed laws allowing concealed carry of weapons on campuses. It seems that after every major school shooting, including the one at Virginia Tech, where 33 people died, there is a lively debate about gun control that ultimately results in no changes. How would you answer the question you posed? What role -- if any -- have these shootings played in public and political opinion of gun control?

A: It's important to understand that the pro-gun lobby in the United States has as its basis the paranoid belief that the federal government wants to enslave us all and is going to take away our guns as their first step. This is insane, and it shouldn't be a mainstream force in our national politics, but it is. After a school shooting, there's a lot of hand-wringing and grief and reassertion of our goodness, helping each other out. We want to forgive and understand, etc. But instead, we should get very angry and demand gun control. That could actually prevent future shootings. Steve was someone who was afraid of breaking the law. He was always very nervous about getting in trouble. So I don't believe he would ever have bought a gun illegally. In our country, though, it was legal for him to buy multiple pistols, ammunition and spare clips, holsters, etc. all in a short period of time, much of it online. He bought from the same online supplier that the Virginia Tech shooter bought from, and this supplier gave a lecture at Virginia Tech two months after the Northern Illinois shooting supporting student concealed carry of weapons on campus. When do we stop being insane? The only really surprising thing about school shootings is that they don't happen far more often. As I write in the book, it's an American right to buy a Glock 19 with extra clips and ammo to go shoot a bunch of people. Why do we allow this? Do we really believe we need militias for defense, or any of the other hogwash of the pro-gun lobby?

Universities in this country have the power to change this. They should have banded together in 1966 to fight for gun control, and it's a crime that they didn't. But starting now is better than starting next year or never.

— Allie Grasgreen

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Brown U. Is Ordered to Hand Over Donor Records to Lawyers of Former Student Accused of Rape

By Ben Gose

A federal judge has ordered Brown University to turn over fund-raising and donation documents sought by lawyers in a case involving a former student who says he was falsely accused of rape and pressured to leave the university.

Judge John J. McConnell Jr. of the U.S. District Court in Providence, R.I., ordered Brown last week to release the documents.

The former student, William McCormick III, was suspended in 2006 following "sexual misconduct" charges and later agreed to leave Brown permanently, but he says in a lawsuit that he did so under duress. In 2009, he sued Brown, the student who accused him, and her father, a wealthy Brown alumnus and donor, arguing that his accuser's father had used his sway at the university to influence how administrators handled the allegations.

Brown has objected to the order to release the fund-raising and donation documents involving the father, saying that the father should produce the records, according to the Associated Press. Brown was closed on Monday, and a spokesman for the university could not be reached.

The Chronicle has a policy of not naming alleged victims of sexual assault; to protect the identity of the female student the paper is also not identifying her father.

Peter Lake, director of the Center for Excellence in Higher Education Law and Policy at Stetson University College of Law, said he was unaware of any previous cases in which a private university has been ordered to turn over fund-raising documents. "This is a very unusual request in a discipline case," Mr. Lake said.

In at least two cases in recent years, the foundations of East Stroudsburg University and Iowa State University—both public universities—have been ordered to make some donor records available to the public under open-records laws.

Mr. Lake said fund-raising records are "some of the most sacrosanct files" that universities possess and that any university would be reluctant to share such information. He said he expects Brown to do as much possible to keep such information sealed or under protective order so it could not be accessible to the public.

But he said the strategy by Mr. McCormick and his lawyers might herald a new strategy for some students who are accused in college sexual-misconduct cases. Experts are already expecting more such cases to be investigated by colleges, following new guidance from the U.S. Education Department in April that urged more protections on campuses for victims of sexual assault.

Historically, students who have contested a college's finding of sexual misconduct have argued that they didn't receive due process or the proceedings were fundamentally unfair. Mr. McCormick and his lawyers are reaching for broader information—including fund-raising records—to show the proceedings were biased.

Mr. Lake said colleges that mete out punishments in such cases in the future should brace for similar requests for fund-raising records and other confidential information. "When the genie is out of the bottle," he said, "you can only cork it so much."