

Continuing Education

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Higher Education Quote of the Week:

"I'm assuming that's the counsel he gave to Governor Jindal that resulted in so many mid-year budget cuts ." - Governor John Bel Edwards on LABI President Stephen Waguespack's recommendation to delay a second special session. Waguespack previously served as Jindal's Chief of Staff.



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Greetings!

The first major TOPS bill to land on the Governor's desk is expected to be signed right away. Senate Bill 154, which was sponsored by Senator Jack Donahue, would no longer have TOPS payments automatically increase alongside college tuition increases. The TOPS program currently serves more than 50,000 students and will cost the state about \$300 million this year.

[NOLA.com, 05.04.16](#)

The Advocate Editorial Board wrote this week that they would like to see even more changes to TOPS, including adjustments in the qualifications necessary to receive a TOPS award. "The sad truth is that many TOPS students are not ready for college work...the Donahue bill does not raise academic standards for the grants over time," wrote the Board. [To read the rest of this editorial click here.](#)

Shreveport-Bossier Higher Education News

- The LSU Tiger football team may hold some practices this June at Independence Stadium in Shreveport. This possibility has arisen because the NCAA recently changed the 50-mile radius rule on practices after April 8th. [Shreveport Times, 05.05.16](#)

Louisiana Higher Education News

- The Chancellor of LSU in Alexandria has opted to call it quits and return home to Florence, Alabama where he will "check in with old friends and family." Chancellor Dan Howard was hired at LSUA in 2014 following a national search. [Alexandria Town-Talk, 05.03.16](#)
- While Governor Edwards is pushing for a special session in early summer to help close the \$600 million budget deficit, the powerful business lobbying group LABI is arguing we should wait until later next year when we know how much revenue has come in from new taxes. "Those numbers are not yet clear and will remain unclear in the weeks ahead," said LABI President Stephen Waguespack. [Baton Rouge Business Report, 05.05.16](#)
- A measure that would have reduced the five boards overseeing higher education to a single board has failed in

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the legislature. Some of the opposition among legislators was due to fears not all schools would be seen as equal by the new board. "LSU will be the guiding force on a single board, forcing out HBCUs and slowly minimizing their funding," said Representative Patricia Smith. ***The Shreveport Times, 04.28.16***

National Higher Education News

- Some graduates of Howard University this spring received a surprise graduation gift: half their spring tuition was returned. The gift was part of an incentive plan from the University to push students to graduate on time. Some students received more than \$5000 back from the school. ***Washington Post, 04.28.16***
- The White House is hoping 2 million Americans with student loans will soon enroll in debt relief programs where repayment is tied to income. According to an article in the Wall Street Journal, "More than 40% of Americans with federal student loans are not making payments or were behind on more than \$200 billion owed." ***Wall Street Journal, 04.28.16***

For more information on higher education in Northwest Louisiana, please visit our website at www.sbba4he.org

Sincerely,

***Johnette Magner, Ph.D., Executive Director
Shreveport-Bossier Business Alliance for Higher Education***

You are welcome to forward this newsletter to others in your network who are interested in higher education.

For more information on becoming a member of the SBBA, or providing direct support for our work, please contact Dr. Johnette Magner at jmagner@sbba4he.org