

North Texas Students Now Eligible to Attend North Texas University for Free

By Nihit Aurora

A significant number of American students resort to financial assistance to fund their educational needs. This includes a variety of sources, such as loans, grants, and savings. College education in the United States can cost between \$10,000 and \$30,000 per year. This usually does not include costs such as accommodations, travel, and other living expenses. Many students seek employment while attending college to defray their education-related expenses.

The United States economy has not been performing well lately. Rising costs coupled with a slump in the housing sector are making it extremely difficult for parents to pay for college. Many in the U.S. consider higher education unaffordable due to high costs.

According to Dr. Gretchen Bataille, president of the University of North Texas, a number of people believe they are not worthy of college educations because they cannot afford them. She has therefore conceived a new scholarship program at the University of North Texas called the “Emerald Eagle Scholars (EAS)” program that aims to provide four years of annual tuition fees to needy North Texas students. Tuition fees will be paid by a combination of funds from state, federal, and institutional resources. Unlike other similar programs, the EAS program requires students to enroll in a mentorship program and work on campus.

The University of North Texas is already required by law to aid financially needy students. Financial aid provided by the university amounted to nearly \$5.4 million last year. Authorities at the University of North Texas estimate that an additional sum of \$1.4 million will be added to this figure in September. During an inauguration ball on April 13, Bataille also raised more than \$350,000 for the EAS program.

It is expected that more than 400 participants will take part in the scholarship program beginning in the fall of 2007.