

Hakanson catalyzes unemployment bill

College President waits for Senate approval

By Doug Vaughan
Of The Print

Dr. John Hakanson, Clackamas Community College president, has taken an old issue and given it a new meaning as he is urging legislators to pass a proposed bill that will enable unemployed workers to enroll in training programs and still receive compensation insurance.

On Nov. 16 Hakanson sent out a memo purposing an approach to retrain loggers, millworkers, truck drivers, waitresses and many other positions he feels will be eliminated in the near future.

"The newspapers got a hold of the memo and pretty soon legislators called to talk to me about it," Hakanson said. "The next day I had lunch with a group of legislators to discuss bill.

"One of them helped get the bill written up. It got introduced and got a hearing from the House Labor Committee. It had another hearing and finally got passed," Hakanson said. "Now it has to go through Senate. And I feel confident that it will be passed."

Hakanson has a definite concern for these particular unemployed workers because he feels that their jobs will be eliminated even after economic times get better. He also feels that in order to get future jobs they will need a higher level of math, communication, science

understandings and computer literacy.

"It (the bill) does not go as far as I wanted it to, but it helps," the President said. "There will probably be things happening in the future to modify it even more."

One example that Hakanson gives is the timber industry. He says that it is projected that only 70 percent of the timber industry will be revived after the recession.

"That means that three out of every 10 people in the timber industry will not find a job doing what they used to do," Hakanson explained.

The actual unemployment compensation laws vary from state to state, Hakanson said. The way they are interpreted and applied is solely in the hands of the states.

The bill that Hakanson initiated provides eligibility for unemployment compensation benefits for "dislocated workers" (people whose jobs will be eliminated) to participate in training programs.

Welfare has a similar plan, Hakanson said, but the benefits are canceled at the end of 93 days. Hakanson feels it is ridiculous to believe that a mother with children and who is unemployed will enroll in a training course because after 93 days her benefits will be cut and her family will starve.

Hakanson grew up in timber environment and said that many of the people went

right to work after high school. And he says the ones who graduated from high school usually were not the academically inclined students.

"These people will never do the same thing as they were doing," he said. "They need training. Any occupation they go into they will need better math, English and work with computers."

"Right now we are just giving them money and not asking them to do anything except live," Hakanson said. "I did not grow up like that, I never had anyone just give me money."

Idaho has a plan that is now in affect, similar to Hakanson's project. Hakanson flew to Idaho for a day to see how theirs is working and discuss options with them. The one in Idaho does more than the one Hakanson hopes to get passed in Oregon.

"Theirs says if you are offered a job you must stop the training program and take the job," Hakanson said. "Also, if you do not show up for the training program for a good reason you lose your benefits for that week."

The training programs can be taken anywhere, Hakanson feels, but he feels most community colleges currently have programs or are capable of establishing them. He feels that the day after it is passed there will not be 2000 people waiting at the College doors to get an education. He said that it will



Dr. John Hakanson

File Photo

take a while to get rolling.

"It is a sound idea. It has been an interest of people for a long time," Hakanson said. "It has the support of the unions, unemployed people and educators--so I am expecting it will be passed."

The bill has an emergency clause on it so as soon as the Senate passes it and it is signed by the governor it will go into effect.

"I cannot anticipate when it will pass, but I feel it should roll right along."

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Foreign students find trouble assimilating into U.S. culture

By John Sagoe
For The Print

There are 44 foreign students from nine countries attending Clackamas Community College today. These students are trying desperately not only to learn to speak English and cope with school work, but are also adjusting to the drastic cultural difference of the American society.

Many of the students, who mostly come from second and third world countries, generally like the school and admit that they are glad to be in America, but are having a tough time adjusting.

Jay Brown, a native of Korea, who moved here seven years ago at the age of 21, said that there was no way he could fully adjust to the American culture, despite his strenuous efforts. Brown has had to change his name in the process of this cultural transition.

"My real name was Woojai Whan but I changed it because nobody could pronounce it," he said. Brown also served in the U.S. Army for four years (after he became a permanent resident of the

U.S.) because he thought that was a good way to get involved and study English. However, the Army stationed him in Korea and he is still having problems getting used to life in America.

When asked about the most striking incident in his transition, Brown told of how he bumped into a telephone pole and lost his front tooth in Hawaii when he first arrived there. "Where I come from girls don't wear bikinis," Brown said. He also commented on how chauvanistic his people were and admitted that working in the kitchen was one of the biggest steps he had to take in America. In Korea, men demand 90-100 percent of the authority Brown guessed. "Men are the bosses," he said.

Many of the foreign students also contend that Americans were generally very nice people and most foreign students have not encountered any hostilities around or in the school. The cordial student-teacher relationship was also something many of the students did not enjoy in their countries.

Despite this friendly environment it seems foreign students have the worse time making friends with their American counterparts, thus they withdraw from the social scene and confine in their secluded shells. There are less than 20 percent foreign students patronizing the international club or any of the other student organizations on campus.

"They (Americans) only smile and say 'Hi'," one foreign student said. "I can't make myself clear," another added. Commenting on this attitude, Brown said, "They (other foreign students) can learn English better and quicker if they get involved."

An argument that is brought up by the American students is, when foreign students bunch up they usually discuss matters familiar to themselves and it's hard for "outsiders" to get involved.

One problem that arises is foreigners wanting to maintain at least part of their culture. They face a severe rejection from their people when they go back home "Americanized."

