



Check out our special section on the terrorist attacks on Pages 4,5,6,7



Check out sports on Page 14



Check out our movie review on Page 11

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Fear rises up for international students

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Editor-in-Chief

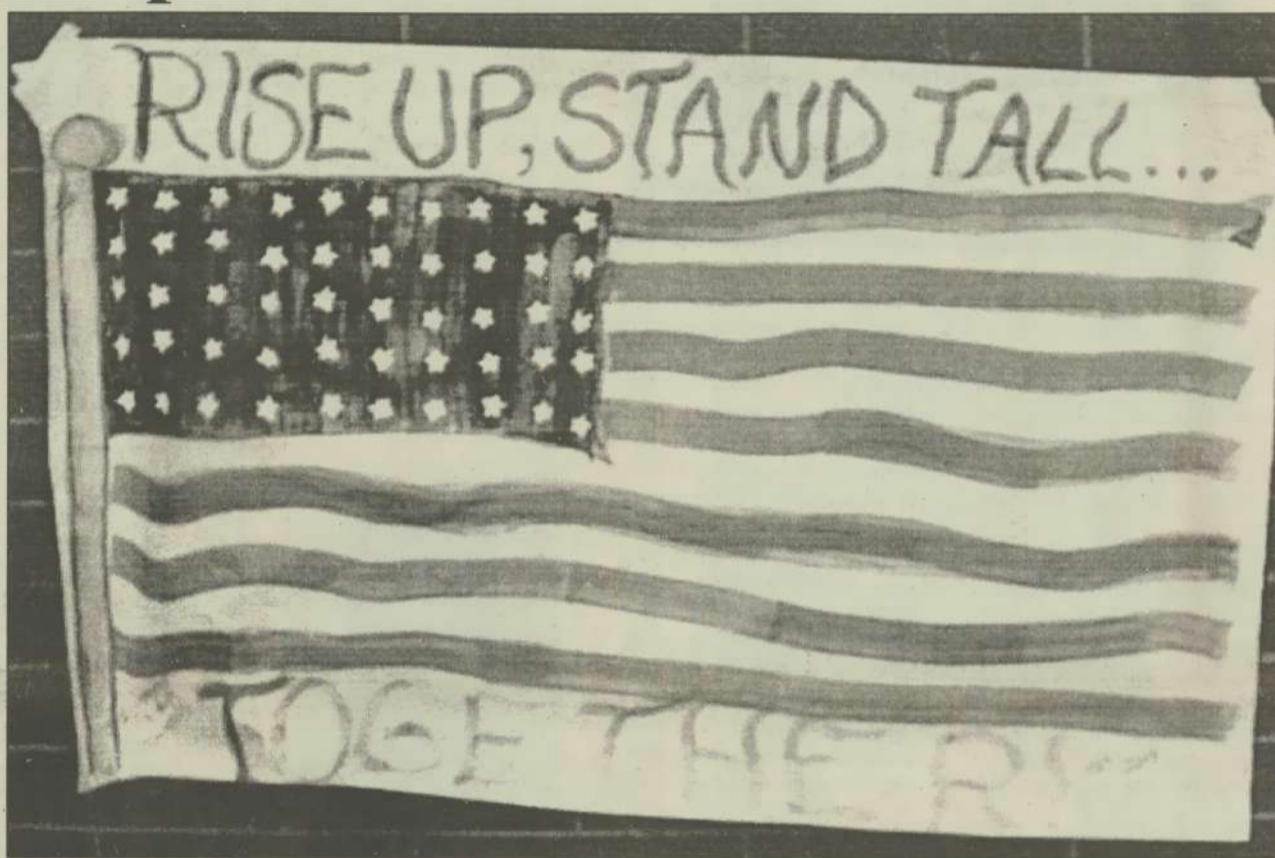
Clackamas' international students from around the world have experienced difficulties since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the United States. Some of them include not getting visas issued on time, being called home by frightened family and living with a daily sense of fear.

Every year students from different countries come to Clackamas for various reasons, such as to improve their English skills, obtain an education not available in their home country and experience American culture. This year, however, many of Clackamas' international students did not make it to the first day of classes.

"We have students who could not come right away because their flights were cancelled and they couldn't make it on time. Instead, they will come next term," explained Shannon J. Forrester, evaluation & international specialist. "Some of them were called back home because their parents got scared. We also have a few new students who did not get their visas issued on time."

One of the reasons why student visas are not being issued on time is the fact that since the attacks, the processing of visas slowed has down immensely.

"We issue I-20 forms to all



MIKE POLLOCK / Clackamas Print

As the fall term began, students were greeted with patriotic posters created by the Associated Student Government

the international students and then take it over to the embassy, but now it takes longer for them to be processed," said Forrester. "Here at Clackamas, we are very open to all international students."

There are many fears international students run into, such

as being sent back to their home country and not being able to continue studying in the United States as well as being left out by American society.

One of Clackamas' international students, who wishes to remain anonymous, came here about seven years ago along with

her mother and her brother after a civil war had broken out in her home country of Somalia.

"When I first watched the whole thing on TV, it scared me to death. It reminded me of what happened in my own country," she said. "I'm a Moslem also but I have nothing to do with what

has happened. Now I'm scared that they will send me back to Somalia. For me, this is my home now, the place where I belong and I don't know where I would go if they send me back."

According to Ellen

See *Fears*, page 3

Clackamas instructors are concerned about students

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Faculty members at Clackamas meet every Thursday at noon to talk about strategies and ways to address the issue of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and to report how students respond to it.

"It's basically like sharing the wisdom," explained Bill Zuelke, counseling department chair. "It's an open discussion among faculty, and we try to encourage staff members to talk to their students about what has happened on Sept. 11."

Since the beginning of the school year, three meetings have been held, each

time hosted by faculty members including Social Science Instructors Trish McFarland, Loren Ford, Bob Kieler and Counselor David Blessman. Reactions to whether it is a good idea to address the attacks in the classroom differ among faculty.

"Some instructors are amending their curriculum to include the tragedy as discussion, some are just giving time at the beginning of class to talk

about today's news and some spend not any time on it at all," said Blessman.

According to McFarland, a topic such as the attacks would arise naturally.

"The way I deal with it is that I can't stop teaching history to talk about now because history deals with the past, but on discussion day,

it might come up as part of discussion," informed McFarland.

Not only students and

faculty are impacted by the tragedy, but the college itself is affected in terms of student enrollment, less resources available for students and declining employment opportunities.

"We cannot ignore something as big as the terrorist attacks and it has to be brought up and discussed," said Joe Johnson, college president. "We have to give students the chance to express their feelings."

Staff members agree that all of us, students as well as instructors, are impacted by the tragedy in one way or another and understand the importance of sharing our inner fears and concerns. When bringing up the issue of the attack in classrooms, instructors are trying to

put it in context with their curriculum. In classes such as psychology, the topic is more likely to arise than in drafting or computer classes, although the issue can be put in context with the curriculum in any class.

"Even if you look at the issue of computers, perhaps it would have never occurred without them," explained Johnson. "There are major questions about the whole computer structure."

Besides looking at how to discuss the tragedy in context of subject matter, it was also brought up at the meetings to provide counseling services for students who want to talk about their concerns and express their feelings.

"We cannot ignore something as big as the terrorist attacks."

Joe Johnson
College President