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HONORING VETERANS



President Barack Obama greets Richard Overton, with Earlene Love-Karo, in the Blue Room of the White House, Nov. 11. Overton, 107 years old and the oldest living World War II veteran, attended the Veteran's Day Breakfast at the White House.

Schools Improve Slowly

Melinda Gates gives U.S. education a C-plus grade

By Donna Gordon Blankinship
The Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Melinda Gates, one of the most influential women in American education, said this week she gives the U.S. public school system a C-plus, but adds there are spots of improvement that give her optimism for the future.

Gates said she bases her assessment on international comparisons of student achievement and on the fact that only a fraction of American high school students are ready for college when they complete their studies.

"I see pockets of improvements. The neat thing about the pockets of improvements is they're getting larger all the time and they're across the nation," she told The Associated Press during an interview this week in her Seattle office overlooking the Space Needle at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Those pockets are growing in places like New Orleans and in Florida, New York, New Orleans and Colorado, Gates added, because districts are talking to each other and sharing their best practices.

For the past decade, the Gates Foundation has studied education, influenced public policy and spent billions of dollars toward improving student outcomes by supporting education reform and demanding better results. Since 2000, the foundation has spent about \$5 billion on education grants and scholarships.

Their focus has influenced the national agenda, as the U.S. Department of Education has pushed for similar reforms such as adoption of the national academic standards known as the common core, as well as insisting on improvement in state teacher-evaluation systems.

The foundation has given some states money and assistance to prepare their applications for federal grant programs and some top officials in Washington, D.C., are for-

State Moves to Extend Boeing Tax Breaks

Washington lawmakers woo aerospace giant with financial incentives

By Mike Baker
Associated Press

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) — Washington lawmakers moved swiftly Saturday to extend aerospace tax breaks in a bid to satisfy Boeing Co. and win the manufacturing work that will come with the company's new 777X production.

The Legislature gave final approval to extend the tax incentives — worth a total projected value of \$9 billion — all the way to 2040. Lawmakers

then adjourned their three-day session without taking up a transportation package that Gov. Jay Inslee had sought.

Legislators from both parties touted the importance of the Boeing jobs, especially for the long-term. Senate Majority Leader Rodney Tom, a Democrat who leads a largely Republican caucus, said the company has had an enormous impact on the state over the years and said the bill was a way to make sure it continues.

"It's an incredible opportuni-

ty that we can keep this going for the next generation," Tom said.

Even though the tax breaks weren't set to expire for several more years, Inslee called the Legislature back to Olympia this week for a special session dedicated to the Boeing bills. Along with the tax package, lawmakers voted to spend millions of dollars on worker-training programs and an effort to aid permitting for large aerospace manufacturing sites.

Inslee said the bills were nec-

essary in order to win the manufacturing work that will come with Boeing's new 777X production. He praised the bipartisan work that went into the package and said the deal will reverse the outflow of aerospace jobs from the state.

"This is an unprecedented guarantee that multiple generations of aircraft will be built here right here in the state of Washington," Inslee said.

Democratic Sen. Bob Hasegawa was one of the two

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Gonzaga Gives Students Probation for Guns

The pair say they used a handgun to scare off a transient intruder

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — Gonzaga University has agreed to review its weapons policy as two students who used a pistol to drive an intruder from their apartment appeal their probation for having guns in their university-owned accommodation.

"As a Jesuit institution dedicated to thoughtful evaluation of complex social issues," Gonzaga will use the incident to re-examine its policy, President Thayne

McCulloh said in a weekend statement.

The university informed the students, Erik Fagan, 21, and Daniel McIntosh, 23, over the weekend they were on probation and could be suspended or expelled for any more violations of the Spokane university's code of conduct, The Spokesman-Review reported.

Gonzaga should consider student safety above all else, said their lawyer, Dean

Chuang.

"We're glad that it didn't have to end in tragedy for them to consider changing the policy there," Chuang said. "Our boys were armed and stopped a home invasion here."

A homeless man came to their door Oct. 24 demanding money and trying to force his way inside.

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