Oberlin Gets in on the Ground Floor to Help Establish Prepaid-Tuition Plan

Oberlin is one of 52 private colleges and universities that have joined to create Tuition Plan Inc., a program that would allow parents to prepay tuition and receive a discount on expenses if their child is admitted to a member school.

The College has signed on to Tuition Plan during its formative stages. “If only to be able to shape the program,” says Andy Evans, vice president for finance and Oberlin’s representative to the corporation.

The plan is “very interesting to me,” says Robert Knight, financial planning and budget director, “because it brings a lot of issues into play that have to do with higher education management: development, admissions, investment, and more.” Knight, who has also attended some of the organizational meetings, says he has been “bird-dogging” Tuition Plan since its early stages.

How the Plan Will Work

The program will operate a little differently from existing prepaid-tuition plans for state colleges and universities. Tuition Plan will offer certificates in fixed denominations that will be redeemable at a future date for tuition, fees, room, and board at any of the member institutions nationwide, not just in one state.

Each participating institution will guarantee how much a certificate will buy at its institution at given future dates. This will allow families to know at the time of purchase what portion of the college cost the certificate will cover at many institutions, yet not commit the family’s investment to any single school until the student is ready to enroll. (In most state plans families pay 100 percent of today’s tuition to attend the institution any time in the future.)

To cover the difference between the prepayment and future tuition, Tuition Plan will invest the funds generated by certificate sales in broadly diversified portfolios. The group plans to choose portfolios with the potential for greater returns than those generated in fixed-income-oriented state plans.

Each institution will bear the investment risk of the funds derived from purchased certificates. Colleges are betting that their expertise in investing endowment income will mean that the return on their investment of certificate revenue will be greater than the value of tuition, fees, room, and board when the certificates are cashed in.

Public Good

According to its planners, Tuition Plan “should stimulate and encourage more saving for college and university expenses. Ultimately, this might help to relieve some of the pressures for greater and greater outlays for student aid from institutional, state and federal sources.” A prepaid plan would also stimulate inter-institutional competition among private institutions, they say, and help maintain the vitality of the independent sector of higher education.

Plan participants haven’t yet decided whether to form another organization—probably a nonprofit—or to contract with existing investment organizations such as TIAA-CREF to market the plan and to oversee the investments, help institutions plan their guarantees, and pay out funds to their institutions when the students enroll.

As reported in the April 24 Chronicle of Higher Education, among the institutions that have joined Tuition Plan besides Oberlin are Princeton, Rice, Southern Methodist, and Vanderbilt universities, and Carleton and Kenyon colleges. To be viable, planners say, a critical mass of 100 institutions must be involved, 800 have been invited.

So far Oberlin and the other institutions have invested $30,000 each for start-up costs that include expenses of incorporating and legal and management consultant fees.

The program could begin accepting applications May 1.

Johnnetta Cole to Deliver Baccalaureate Address

Johnnetta Cole ’57, former president of Spelman College and nationally acclaimed author, will deliver the 1998 baccalaureate address May 24 at 2:30 p.m. in Finney Chapel. The title of her talk is “...The Greatest of These Is Love.”

During Cole’s more than 30 years as an anthropologist, professor, administrator, author, researcher, and lecturer, she has been an advocate for women and people of color. When she became the seventh president of Spelman in 1987, she not only became the first African-American woman to head the historically black college for women, but she also helped to lead Spelman into the ranks of America’s outstanding colleges.

Cole, who retired from the Spelman presidency in June 1997, will join Emory University’s anthropology department and its programs in women’s studies and black studies this fall, following a year’s sabatical leave.

Cole majored in sociology at Oberlin and earned M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in anthropology at Northwestern University. She subsequently taught at Washington State University, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and Hunter College.

Her most recent book, Dreambol’s Darkest Dreams, captures in aphorisms her thoughts on life, women, education, and work, among other topics. Other books she has written or edited include Conversations Straight Talk With America’s Sister President; Anthro-

pology for the Nineties: Intro-

ductory Readings; and All American Women: Lines That Divide, Ties That Bind.

Last year Cole was appointed to oversee an aggressive diversity program at Smith Barney, the stockbrokerage and investment firm.

Seniors Opuruiché Miller and Claudia von Vacano Win Watson Fellowships

Opuruiché Miller and Claudia von Vacano have won Oberlin’s 61st and 62nd Watson Fellowships. At least one Oberlin student has won a Watson Fellowship every year since 1969, when the first ones were awarded.

This year’s nominate pool—133—was the largest in six years, according to the Thomas J. Watson Foundation, which grants the awards.

Miller, an Oberlin resident and assistant professor of religion, and Brenda Geier-Miller, special advisor, academic services, will explore the influence of hip-hop culture through radio in South Africa, in part by serving a nonpaid internship at a South African radio station. Von Vacano, a native of Bolivia whose family now lives in Alexandria, Virginia, will study mural art in Mexico, Nicaragua, and South Africa, creating a multimedia record of her observations.

The Watson Foundation looks for “seriously creative people,” says the foundation’s director, Noreen Tunis. This year 60 graduating seniors from 51 colleges met that criterion. The grant awards $35,000 to each fellow to travel outside the United States on what the foundation calls a wanderauf, to explore a topic of his or her own choosing.

A double major in African-American studies and religion, Miller has been exploring hip-hop culture in the United States for several years and considers himself part of it. He co-chaired last month’s conference Sacred Mics and Sacred Words: Hip Hop in the United States for several years and considers himself part of it. He co-chaired last month’s conference Sacred Mics and Sacred Values: Hip Hop in the United States.

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Paul Cohen, saxophone instructor, recently presented a composition for him by Samuel Pautz with the Plainfield (N.J.) festival. Also recently, he performed in a New York City concert commemorating survivors of the Holocaust. Cohen is an active performer for the American Music retrospective series at the Tillis Center on Long Island. In March he performed an original work of the Composer for Alto Saxophone by Ingolf Dahl in Binghamton, New York, and gave a lecture on the history of the saxophone to the Band College Board Directors National Association convention at Pennsylvania State University. Also in March he was an invited guest at the North American Saxophone Alliance, held in Evanston, where he presented a lecture on lost music for saxophone and gave a recital that included a work by the late Calvin Hampton '90. Paul gave a March master class at New York University. In January he appeared with Orchestra New England, Paul's saxophone quartet, the New Hudson Quartet, performed recently in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where they played a selection of music of Aaron Copland that Paul has prepared at the request of Bossey and Hawkins, Copland. The quartet also performed in Long Beach, California, Press Telegraph covered a talk Roger Copeland, professor of theater, gave on the California State University at Long Beach Friday, April 23. Roger is a panelist and site visitor for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), spoke about federal support for the arts. In "Ex-NEA (sic) Consultant Calls for More Eyebrow-Raising Arts," reported the paper, "reminding the audience that the NEA mandate is to support the arts that might not have mass commercial appeal. "I told the NEA you should be funding stuff that raises eyebrows; that's your function." Last July Roger was one of five international keynote speakers invited to the University of Cape Town to address that country's first international dance and music conference, Confluences. The event itself was sponsored by the South African postapartheid, post-cultural-blot party to reach out to the international academic dance and music community. He is also on the national tour of Merce Cunningham and one about dance criticism—and moderated a panel discussion with the other keynotes on the current state of dance scholarship. After the conference, by arrangement with the U.S. State Department, he lectured in Fre- toria and Jhangwure, where his topics were nonliterary theater in America and the 40-year collaboration between Merce Cunningham and John Cage. In January he gave the keynote address at a conference on cross-cultural approaches to arts fund- ing held at Trinity College in Hartford. The address was titled "Who Lost the Arts?: Why America Has No National Policy as an Approach the 21st Century." Panelists responding to his talk were Wang Meng, former minis- ter of culture in China, Martha Cooney, director of the U.S. branch of the International Theatre Institute, and Tony Hall, Trinidadian play- wright. • Kathleen Chastain, teacher of flute and chamber music with winds, and Michel Debost, pro- fessor of flute and Wheeler Professor in Performance, traveled recently to Yugoslavia and France to play at the Brussels World Music Festival and to teach masterclasses in Paris-Bastille. The French city of Le Havre will name its next in- ternational chamber music competition "Michel Debost." One of Michel's former students, Heidt Pinter '94, has writ- ten about her doctoral thesis at Florida State University in Tallahassee. "The Life and Teachings of Flutist Michel Debost." Michel has been nominated as a 1998 EdSpex Distinguished Achievement Award Finalist for his columns "Debost's Comments" in the March, May, July, September, and November, 1997 issues of "Flute Talk." • President Nancy Dye will give brief remarks at the 10th anniversary of Women's Link, a women's center at Lorain County Com- munity College, May 9. Women's Link, a women's advocacy and education pro- gramation will be the performance of an original composition by dow- degree sophomore Katherine Miller. • William Taylor, professor of psychol- ogy, has been invited to present a seminar, "Memory and Processes Underly
Many Educational-Technology Projects Get Under Way

Eight members of the Oberlin faculty have received Summer Educational Technology (SET) grants; a member of the biology department has been named octet (Oberlin Center for Technologically Enhanced Teaching) faculty associate. 35 faculty members have signed up for the OCTET Summer Workshop, using Educational Technology to Teach Literature. All are fully aware of the statement that the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded the College last year to establish OCTET—see the Observer of May 9, 1997.

The recipients of the SET grants and their projects are:

David Clayton, professor of economics: Internet and Social Studies for a Course on Global Economy.
Paul Davidson, professor of political technology: Improvements to Politics 105.
Patrick Helmsdale, associate professor of psychology: Cognition in the Real World.
Lynn Fisher, visiting instructor in a teacher in the Department of Lab Exercises for Series for Expanded Labs.
Heather Hogan, professor of history: Development of Online Resources for a Course.
Daniel Styer, associate professor of physics: Introduction to Two Courses.
Robin Treichel, associate professor of biology: Development of Web-Based Materials for Cell and Molecular Biology, and
James A. Walsh, associate professor of mathematics: Chaos and Fractals: An Introduction.

Treichel will also be the first OCTET faculty associate. She will receive a reduced salary for the course during the fall semester to work with the OCTET staff to help colleagues in biology, neu- rosciences, and related disciplines "move ahead with educational technology to achieve pedagogical objectives," says Gary Kornblith, director of OCTET.

The summer workshop on using educational technology to teach literature takes place the week of June 18. Fifteen Oberlin faculty members who teach literature—English or other languages—are enrolled. Each workshop participant will receive a stipend of $600 for their work. The main workshop topics are likely to cover the questions: What is literature? What constitutes a text? What constitutes reading and interpretation of a text? What contributes to teaching a text? What tools are suitable for teaching a text? What are the advantages and disadvantages of extending class discussion beyond the classroom using electronic technologies? What are the pedagogical principles of such interaction? And, are some questions and courses better suited to such a strategy than others?

Workshop participants will study examples of literary hypertext and create web pages and other forms of hypertext. A highlight of the workshop is expected to be the colloquium led by the faculty members and their associated students in the divisions, departments, and programs.

As of January Logan had worked for the College—"in the same area of the conservatory—for 33 years. The first five years were five-hour days, and the College doesn’t count them in her longevity,” says Logan, adding, “I count them.”

“I started with 13 people,” Logan says. The mailboxes in her office are now numbered 25, and one of the people she works for don’t have mailboxes. She also started with a non-correcting typewriter. She remembers her first office being furnished with—besides the typewriter—a desk, a chair, a filing cabinet, and a turntable. Today—besides a computer, printer, dumbing machine, DAT machine, microwave, video player, refrigerator, a filing cabinet, a desk, an extension, two chairs, shelves, and a table bearing a supply of coffee and sweet rolls to share.

Logan’s involvement with the College has taken her beyond her office. She and her husband, Matt, have been host parents to foreign students at the College since 1973, and have been the chair for the Department of English, and has played in the gamelan.

“I’ll miss the people,” Logan says, but she has made quite a few plans for her retirement years. She’s already signed up for the College’s secretarial pool. And she has begun training as a volunteer chaplain at Allen Memorial Hospital. Besides also volunteering at the Oberlin Historical and Improvement Organization, she will travel with Matt. The couple plans to go rock hunting in Missouri and Florida.

Committee on Partnerships for Child- ren’s Health—funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—which she chairs.

Johnnetta Cole . . .

At the last College Faculty meeting of the school year, May 5, the faculty dis- cussed—somewhat simultaneously—the substance of a motion to award research portfolios instead of summer stipends to newly appointed faculty members. (See the Observers of March 13 and April 10.)

Discussion resulted in several friendly addenda. The proposal, as described in a motion to award research portfolios in- cluding the establishment of a concentration in the faculty members and their associated students in the divisions, departments, and programs.

Prepaid Tuition . . .

Investments as this fall fall if by the Internal Revenue Service ex- cept for the 100 percent prepaid tuition Plan investors as it now affords state- plan investors. But before Oberlin goes ahead with the plan, says Knight, “much more discussion will be necessary with admissions staff and trustees.”

One More Issue . . .

Your last chance to be featured in Faculty and Staff Notes this year is coming up. Send your submission to the Observer edi- tor (Observer@oberlin.edu) by Wednesday, May 13, to secure your place in the May 28 issue.
Joseph Schwartz Will Play after Leaving Oberlin

"I enjoy teaching very much, and that's the way I want to go out," says Joseph Schwartz. Schwartz, who has taught at Oberlin since 1960, is leaving his last Oberlin students this semester. "It's been a long run," he says, "but in some ways it feels like we came to Oberlin yesterday."

Looking forward to new activities—like playing the stock market—Schwartz, with his wife, Florence, will move to Florida in November. The couple is building a house in Tarpon Springs. Outfitting his new home with a new Steinway, it didn't take long to realize that his plans to continue teaching privately, in his new location would work out. The Steinway dealer has already asked about taking lessons himself and about Schwartz's offering master classes to area teachers.

Schwartz will continue to perform with the Oberlin Trio, a group that was formed in 1984 with Andor Toth, professor of violoncello and chamber music, and Stephen Clapp, former Oberlin professor of violin who is now dean of the Juilliard School of Music. The trio will give concerts in Armenia this fall, the second time in two years the Oberlin musicians have continued to give in solo performances. He played Beethoven's Fourth Concerto with the Galveston Symphony Orchestra last year and will play the First, Third, and Fifth concertos with the orchestra next year.

But the future has other kinds of playing in store as well. Schwartz says he looks forward to "palm trees, sunshine, and swimming in the gulf." "Travel in Europe is also in his plans. Still, he admits, "I'll miss our friends and colleagues and students—also the ambiance of a small college town." Looking back he recalls outstanding students, many of whom teach in colleges and conduct orchestras and opera. "It's amazing the number who are professional musicians," he says. For him it has been a "tremendous source of satisfaction to work with the talented students we have at Oberlin."

Not only has he enjoyed watching his students grow and develop, but he finds them "such fine people, too."

As a teacher, Schwartz says, "You're part psychologist and part coach and part disciplinarian." "You teach through demonstration, osmosis, and talking about music, explaining certain concepts. Sometimes you try to rid the right elements that interfere in expressing the character of the music. Often you have to tread carefully. There's a fine line between giving constructive criticism and crushing a student. You have to keep the balance, the benefit of the student, and you gear efforts toward finding a solution."

Correcting and helping students has carried the burden of his days, he says. Schwartz has given many recitals in Oberlin. He says the experiences of playing at Oberlin and playing anywhere else are "essentially the same. :You are trying to communicate a subtle musical experience to people, although sometimes it is necessary to go further in the program to the sophistication of the audience. At Oberlin one can program any kind of music and find audiences who, while they are small in town, may not have the experience to appreciate more exotic offerings."

In 1983 Schwartz founded Oberlin's Summer Piano Institute, which he directed through 1993. His College committee service includes membership on the Conservatory Faculty Council, Educational Policies Committee, and the General Faculty's Research and Development Committee and Admissions Committee.

Schwartz was named Oberlin's Wheeler Professor of Performance in 1987. The Wheeler Professorship, a five-year appointment, recognizes excellence at the height of a performer's career. With the stipend Schwartz did some traveling and studied fortepiano with Malcolm Bilson. Schwartz remembers being fascinated with the sound of the piano when he was four or five years old, and says he still is "fascinated with the sound of the instrument."

"You learn from listening to other musicians," says Joseph Schwartz, professor of piano forte. "Musicians need not play the same instrument to be benefit from each other. We learn as much from a great singer or violinist as from another pianist."

He gave his first solo piano recital—"Grandmother's Minuet" by Grieg—at age 14. He won his first competition at sixteen at Julliard, where he studied with Rosina Lhevine and Irwin Freundlich. Schwartz earned a Bachelor of Science degree at Julliard in 1954, stayed on for a Master of Science degree, which he earned in 1957, then taught at Julliard's Preparatory Division until coming to Oberlin. One of his students studied further with Eric Harrison in London, Guido Agosti in Rome, and Wilhelm Kempff in Poland, Italy.

While he was teaching at Julliard, Schwartz won first prize in the Naumburg Competition, and gave his New York debut recital in Town Hall. That recital was the first of a dozen solo recitals in important New York venues, which include—besides Town Hall—Carnegie Recital Hall and Merkin Hall. He has also given recitals in London, Brussels, Hamburg, Vienna, Rio de Janeiro, Caracas, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Los Angeles, Boston, Boulder, and Austin; and has been soloist with orchestras in New York, Los Angeles, Boulder, and Philadelphia. Schwartz has also given recitals in Europe, Canada, and South America. He has also accompanied instrumentals and singers in concerts throughout the United States. The same year in which he won the Naumburg Competition—1958—Schwartz won the National Music League Competition and was awarded a management contract. Before that he appeared in Town Hall with the Little Symphony Orchestra as the winner of another competition. He was a gold medal winner in the Artists Division of the American Guild of Piano Teachers in 1952.

On the other end of competitions, Schwartz is popular as a judge, most recently judging the Corpus Cristi International Young Artists Competition. "I enjoy listening to the wonderful young talents play," he says, "but to tell the truth I really hate to decide on a winner since there is usually more than one who attracts my interest. Competitions are all somewhat arbitrary."

His recording with the Oberlin Trio of French trios is on Amplitude Records. Schwartz says that "to work with the music itself" is a "never-ending source of pleasure. The challenge is to find the right sound, or the right gesture which illuminates the inner meaning of the work."

"As I play the piano these days, I feel an even closer kinship with the color and sound, with the character of the music itself, with its emotional content and its structure." And he is "constantly making new discoveries."

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Watson Winners...

Continued from page 2

Raw Noodles: Persimmon

African-American-hip hop in 1998. The gathering of scholars, poets, artists, and others enjoyed regional attendance and publicity. During his junior-year Winter Term Miller traveled to South Africa, where he observed a J ohannesburg radio station that programs "black music." Hip hop is "part of a continuum of cultural expressions that have their origins in the African-American community and have filtered through centuries of African-American cultural expressions such as the spirituals, blues, gospel, jazz, string rhythms, musical and children's games," wrote Miller in his fellowship proposal. Hip hop began as expressions—positive and negative—of poor and underrepresented black American-city youths living in a society that did not value their worth, says Miller. It is now "the cultural currency of a much greater cross-section of black and other American youth and has penetrated cultural all over the world."

Regarding hip hop as a tool for social change, Miller will observe what types of African American music, artists, messages, and images the South African radio station operates on and the role that the station plays in expressing the character of the music. Often you have to tread carefully. There's a fine line between giving constructive criticism and crushing a student. You have to keep the balance, the benefit of the student, and you gear efforts toward finding a solution."

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