University of Missouri to get $10M for new learning center

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon says the University of Missouri-Columbia will receive $10 million in state funds for a new learning center in its business school.

Nixon on Monday announced the money for the $20 million Applied Learning Center in the Trulaske College of Business. The school is expected to provide another $10 million from private donations for the center.

Plans for the four-story building include a 250-seat auditorium, laboratories and open spaces for studying.

Nixon had previously withheld the money because of lagging revenues but revenue collections have been increasing so far this year.

Nixon last week also released $7.4 million for a new enterprise center at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Governor Nixon releases funds for Trulaske College of Business

Watch story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=56a5302e-d87c-4cf2-bb04-4a80069d6dfb
COLUMBIA -- Governor Jay Nixon announced the release of funds for a new addition to the Trulaske College of Business at the University of Missouri.

The $20 million dollar Applied Learning Center will feature a 250-seat auditorium, class rooms and laboratories.

Half of the funds will be provided by private funding, the other half will be from the state.

The building will be constructed on the corner of Rollins Street and Tiger Avenue.

State budget funds a $20 million learning center

Watch story: http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=28916&zone=2,5&categories=2,5

COLUMBIA - The 2015 state budget for higher education will assist the University of Missouri in constructing a new Applied Learning Center.

Gov. Jay Nixon visited the university Monday morning to announce the availability of state matching funds to help construct a new center.

"A result of continued growth in Missouri’s economy, revenues are available for key priorities like higher education,” Nixon said.

The Trulaske College of Business raised $10 million through local funding and donations, and will receive the second half of the funding from the 2015 state budget for higher education.

Nixon said the construction of such a facility is a good use of state money because of the opportunity it provides for students.
"The Applied Learning Center at the Trulaske College of Business will help students put the skills they learn in the classroom to work in the real world," Nixon said. "It allows them to engage in real-time business practices."

The Applied Learning Center will be a four-story building consisting of active learning class laboratories, executive-style classrooms, open spaces for student study and a 250-seat auditorium.

The center will be built at the corner of Rollins street and Tiger Avenue.

**COLUMBIA DAILY TRIBUNE**

**Nixon releases $10 million to fund MU business school building**

A new $20 million applied learning center for the MU College of Business will provide labs where students can trade securities and develop sales and marketing campaigns, taking education beyond the lecture hall.

The center is designed to meet the demands of companies that want prospective employees with broader knowledge of business practices and techniques, said Sam Hamacher of Harbour Group. Hamacher represented donors who provided $10 million of the overall cost during a Monday news conference when Gov. Jay Nixon released the state’s share of the cost.

“What business leaders have asked of the business school is to give us more practical experience coming out of school,” Hamacher said.

Nixon’s appearance in Columbia is the latest in a series of visits to communities where new construction projects or major repair and renovation projects are being funded with state appropriations. Last year, Nixon approved spending $38.5 million from bond proceeds on Lafferre Hall.

The new applied learning center, attached to the Trulaske College of Business, will be financed with state general revenue and is one of several campus projects across the state where half the cost is coming from private donors.

Lawmakers appropriated about $540 million for repair, maintenance and new construction during the next two years before adjourning Friday. That figure includes $56 million for
University of Missouri needs across the system and $35 million from bonds to build a new museum and research center in Columbia for the State Historical Society of Missouri.

The repair and renovation money meets a long-term need, Nixon said. Lawmakers approved bond funding for a large number of projects last year, but revenue shortfalls kept Nixon from releasing the funds. A rebound in state receipts, up more than 7 percent when predictions put the increase at 4.6 percent, is making the construction possible, Nixon said.

Last fall, he said, his staff surveyed two- and four-year schools to finalize a priority list. “Now the legislature has passed that list,” Nixon said, allowing a further look at the need for new facilities.

Nixon stopped short of saying he would approve the new historical society building. “We’ll look at them carefully, but I certainly feel good about those kinds of investments in our state.”

Several area lawmakers attended the announcement and said they are confident the budget passed this year is balanced and can support the construction spending. Each appropriation to borrow money is accompanied by an appropriation of current revenue to make the first payment, done to reassure investors that the state is backing the bonds.

“While there are certainly no guarantees, everyone felt good about those projects, especially the historical society, and I think it will get done,” said Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia. The strong revenue numbers are encouraging, said Rep. Caleb Rowden, R-Columbia. “It is definitely good for our community.”

The applied learning center, to be built at Rollins Street and Tiger Avenue, will be a four-story structure with a 250-seat auditorium, learning laboratories, classrooms and open spaces for study. Nixon was joined by Hamacher, UM system President Tim Wolfe and MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin for the news conference.

The center was pushed to the top of the university priority list that provided the 50 percent match required under a state law approved three years ago. It is an example of the kind of high-demand projects the law was designed to promote, Nixon said.

Wolfe, a graduate of the business school, said the match program will be important for all four campuses.

“This is just another example of when business and industry come together with the state, magical things will happen,” Wolfe said.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Gov. Jay Nixon confirms funding for new Trulaske Business College building

PHILLIP SITTER, 11 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — The state and private donors have cemented funds for a new $22.3 million building for the MU Trulaske College of Business, Gov. Jay Nixon and university officials announced Monday.

Nixon said $10 million for the new building will come from the state's Higher Education Capital Fund. Private donors will provide the rest.

The four-story building, which will be called the Applied Learning Center, is slated for construction on the southeast corner of Tiger Avenue and Rollins Street. It will house a 250-seat auditorium, a mock stock trading floor, a space to practice sales pitches and classrooms.

Crews will break ground on the site — currently a parking lot across the street from Cornell Hall — within a year, said Sam Hamacher, who earned his accounting degree in 1974 from MU and was on hand Monday to represent the project's private donors.

The building will hopefully be ready for students in two years, he said.

“When the state and higher education come together, magical things can happen,” said University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe, who announced the funding along with Nixon, MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin and Hamacher in the plaza outside Cornell Hall.

Since 1999, Hamacher said, enrollment at the business school has increased from 2,789 students to more than 5,000.

This Is Why Tech Bubbles Actually Happen

We tap our phone, we expect to be able to make a call, send a text or open an app. We key in our PIN at an ATM, we expect to get cash. We punch in a time on the office microwave, we expect our lunch to heat up. In short, when we depend on technology for countless everyday tasks, we take for granted that it’s going to work.

A new study finds that this automatic assumption has a surprising, far-reaching dark side. Much as we expect the technology we interact with every day to be successful, we expect stocks of publicly traded technology companies to be successful — even if there isn’t any evidence that they perform any better than old-economy stalwarts.

We unconsciously confer on technology, especially new technology that we don’t really understand, an almost magical status. “We found that people weren’t particularly excited about the prospects of old technology,” says Christopher Robert, associate professor of management at the University of Missouri — Columbia and one of the paper’s authors. “You’re more likely to have faith that something you don’t really understand will work.

That’s because “technology” gets lumped together as this sort of monolithic entity, Robert explains. “We develop [a mental] shortcut that all of these technologies are successful and they work and then overgeneralize that perception to all technology,” he says. “We often don’t see its failures,” he points out, because those either never make it to market or fail to become a part of our daily lives.

How often do you think about Pets.com or the mini-disk? Probably not much. Now, how often do you think about Google or Apple?

“The success stories are very salient,” Robert says. “When you get an Apple or a Google... being really successful, people pay a lot of attention to that, but they don’t pay as much attention to the failures.”
This mental double standard makes us likely to view tech company stocks through rose-colored glasses. Robert’s experiments found that we’re more likely to invest in (hypothetical) high-tech stocks than stocks of other industries, even when both produce similar financial results. We’re also more likely to ignore the cardinal rule of investing — that past performance is no guarantee of future results — when it comes to tech stocks. In experiments, subjects who saw growth in a tech company’s past were more likely to invest, assuming that the good times would just keep rolling.

Except, of course, the market doesn’t exactly work like that. The dot-com implosion of 2000 should have been a cautionary tale, yet here we are just 15 years later, with economists once again warning that sky-high valuations for today’s tech darlings could indicate a second tech bubble in the making.

“I suspect that the same processes might take place as they did [in 2000],” Robert says. “Of course, technology does keep marching along and is successful as writ large — however, individual companies might not be as successful.”

And when people pile into certain stocks because they just assume they’ll do well without looking at the fundamentals, they drive up valuations even further, and the whole phenomenon snowballs. “When you see a lot of investment going into technology-oriented co’s that don’t have any [profits]... that’s a sign that there might be a little bit of irrational exuberance regarding those companies,” Robert says. “You never see these companies that make asphalt shingles getting these huge, pumped-up PE ratios.”

Among state universities, a fight for rich students

State universities are increasingly becoming bastions of privilege.

In order to boost their revenue by moving up in popular college rankings, public universities are increasingly awarding merit scholarships to affluent students who live within their borders -- and beyond. This often comes at the expense of the institutions' own state residents, according to a new study by the New American Foundation, a centrist think tank that explored the merit aid practices at 424 public colleges and universities.

And the practice is on the rise, reports Stephen Burd, a senior policy analyst and former reporter at "The Chronicle of Higher Education." Some institutions that were initially hesitant to court
well-off students are today feeling compelled to do so as other public universities seek to recruit high-income students in their own backyards.

To protect their territory, schools boost their financial awards to affluent, high-achieving teenagers in their state, and also compete by hunting for prize recruits beyond their state borders.

"The level of competition is creating a prisoner's dilemma," Donald Hossler, a professor and higher-education expert at Indiana University, is cited as saying in the report. "Some schools are doing this not because they want to but because their peers are. They feel they can't afford not to do it."

As an example of this pattern, Burd notes how the University of Missouri at Columbia felt it had to react after admission representatives from the Universities of Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi and Minnesota began aggressively recruiting in the state. After losing out on high-achieving students that normally would have enrolled at the U. of Missouri, the school significantly boosted it merit aid to higher-income Missourians and nonresidents.

The schools upping their merit aid to more affluent students are more likely to be located in the South, West and parts of the Midwest. The practice is less common at state institutions on the West Coast and Northeast, where schools continue to devote most of their aid dollars to those who need help.

The University of Alabama and University of South Carolina have been particularly aggressive in their recruitment across state lines. Thirty-nine percent of freshmen at the U. of South Carolina are receiving merit aid. The U. of Alabama, meanwhile, is offering the largest merit aid packages, an average of nearly $12,000.

Below are the state flagships with the highest percentage of its student bodies receiving merit scholarships:

1. University of North Dakota, 41.3 percent
2. University of South Carolina, 39.1 percent
3. University of Vermont, 33.3 percent
4. West Virginia University, 30.7 percent
5. University of Nevada, 30.4 percent
6. Ohio State University, 29.9 percent
7. University of Montana, 29.3 percent
8. University of Colorado, 26.9 percent
9. University Hawaii, 26.1 percent
10. University of Mississippi, 25.6 percent

Richer students crowding out poorer kids?

The share of aid going to the students at public institutions in the highest income quartile (23 percent) is nearly the same as that going to students in the lowest quartile (25 percent), according
to the report. By contrast, some 20 years ago 34 percent of aid went to the poorest students, with 16 percent going to the wealthiest.

As a result, public universities that award a large number of merit scholarships today serve fewer low-income students, Burd concludes. At schools that offer less merit aid, students with Pell Grants -- federal grants given to low and lower middle-income students -- represent 42 percent of the student body; at high merit-aid schools, Pell Grant students represent 32 percent of students.

"In bringing in more and more wealthy nonresident students, these colleges are increasingly becoming bastions of privilege," the report said.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Dogs and owners walk to help other dogs in need

SARAH BELL, May 17, 2015

COLUMBIA — Under a pavilion at Cosmo-Bethel Park, hints of turquoise-colored T-shirts and balloons popped against the noonday sunlight.

Two Great Danes, Chili and Cupcakes, pulled their owners to the front of the registration table as saliva dripped from their mouths. Colby Jack, an English bulldog rested in the shade next to his owner with his eyes half shut.

More than 50 people attended Armani's Angels' first Wag 'n' Walk on Sunday afternoon. The event raised more than $15,000 in individual donations, registrations and raffle tickets. The money will go to the emergency and critical care fund at MU's College of Veterinary Medicine, according to previous Missourian reporting.

Jessica Robertson started the Armani's Angels nonprofit after her cockapoo, Armani, was nearly killed by a burglar. Her goal for the organization is to help people pay the vet bills for their seriously injured or ill animals. Despite intense medical intervention, Armani died in April from complications from his injuries, according to previous Missourian reporting.
During registration dogs drank water from large bowls and their owners ate hot dogs and chips. The $25 registration fee provided a lunch, a Wag 'n' Walk T-shirt and a doggy swag bag.

Around 1 p.m., owners and dogs began the half-mile walk around Cosmo-Bethel Lake Trail.

The dogs played together as dog-walkers chatted. Some dogs took a dip in the lake, while others pulled away and jumped in without permission from their owners.

“There was a huge turnout,” Mandy Crane said. “It seems like all the dogs got along, which is amazing. There is quite a variety (of dogs) here.”

Crane was in charge of running the raffle-ticket table. Items and services raffled during the walk included a Skin Brite Peel at Pela Cura spa, a $50 gift certificate for Sophia’s restaurant, a free dog bath and three dog-walking or dog-sitting visits from Lizzi and Rocco’s, and a dozen chocolate covered pretzels.

“Thank you everyone,” Robertson said to the group of walkers. “We hope to do this every year and make it better every year.”

Armani’s Angels next fundraiser will be a golf tournament, lunch, happy hour and silent auction on June 29 at the Columbia Country Club.

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

MAY 18, 2015

Donated dogs help farmers with disabilities stay on their land

BY DONALD BRADLEY
As Alda Owen messes with cattle, Sweet Baby Jo plops down right in the middle of things.

On her belly, ears up, wide-eyed and ready to spring.

“She don’t like ‘em getting too close to me,” Owen, 62, says of the border collie as the Angus herd crowds around in a farm lot in DeKalb County in northern Missouri.

It’s almost as if the dog knows what happened before she got there.

One day a big bull head-butted a gate and knocked it into Owen, who is legally blind from a childhood eye infection. That gate cost her 60 stitches and almost her leg.

Then came Sweet Baby Jo, part of a project called PHARM Dog. That’s Pets Helping Agriculture in Rural Missouri, which may be the only program like it in the country.

Plenty of others train service dogs, but this program is specifically for farmers who don’t want to give up farm life because of disability or sickness.

Like Alda Owen. Sweet Baby Jo came to the farm she owns with her husband, Rick, and changed her life.

“I can get out and help Rick now,” she said. “I can get the cows in the lot while he goes gets a bale of hay.

“I feel sufficient, and I had stayed back hiding a lot of my life.”

And there’s Jim Harig down by Eminence, Mo. He could hardly get around his place because of idiopathic neuropathy. Now he holds onto a brace mounted on the back of Dixon, a yellow Labrador, to get out and check his sheep and horses.

Dixon can carry buckets, fetch tools and open gates.

“If I had to sell my animals, I think I’d lose the ambition to live,” Harig said.

The first PHARM dog recipient was Dennis Schmitz of Parnell, Mo. One winter day while grinding cattle feed, Schmitz’s coat got caught in his tractor’s power takeoff. The spinning shaft pulled him into the machinery, breaking his neck, three ribs, collarbone and right arm.

All three are still on their farms, along with nine or so others who have received PHARM dogs since 2012.
PHARM founder Jackie Allenbrand, who lives in Gentry County, hears this often: Why don’t these people just quit such a physically demanding job? Why don’t they sit on the porch, or move to town?

“But here’s the thing about farmers — and I’m married to one — they’re stubborn,” Allenbrand said. “It’s what they do. Most were born into it and they don’t want to give it up.”

Troy Balderston, who got a PHARM dog to help him run cattle from a wheelchair after a car wreck left him paralyzed from the chest down, put it this way: “I don’t know anything else.”

Allenbrand got the idea for the PHARM Dog program while working with Missouri AgrAbility, an initiative to help farmers overcome disabilities and keep working. She and her husband use border collies to help with their cow-calf operation on a farm in Gentry County.

Allenbrand got the small startup grant in 2005 and designed a plan with the help of groups such as the University of Missouri Extension and Midland Empire Resources for Independent Living. At the time, AgrAbility program director Karen Funkenbusch said Missouri was the only state with such a dog program.

Eligible disabilities include amputation, arthritis, vision impairment, cancer, cardiac problems, diabetes, spinal cord injury, deafness, back injury and traumatic brain injury. The plan called for stock dogs and service dogs. Allenbrand registered the organization as an independent nonprofit in 2012. The big challenge was money. She needed dogs to be donated and trainers to work for free.

That’s how she came to meet Bobby Miller, who trains border collies at his place in Plattsburg. He’s 64, a Vietnam War veteran and a heavy equipment operator. A bumper sticker on his pickup says: “My border collie is smarter than your honor student.” Allenbrand must have pitched the idea well.

“That night, I told my wife, ‘This thing might be a good place to put a dog or two and my time,’” Miller said.

So he called Allenbrand to say he’d like to help. She soon showed up with an old wheelchair.

“She told me the dogs needed to get used to it, so I’d sit in that thing and pups would climb on my lap,” he said.

But border collies are easy, he said. They want to work. Herding livestock is in their black and white. It’s farmers who sometimes need a lot of training.
Balderston, who lives in Beaver Falls, Neb., but works cattle in Kansas, had to learn it all from a wheelchair. Duke, his border collie, had turned up on the streets of St. Joseph. So now this paralyzed farmer and stray city dog team up to move cattle between pens.

“They don’t do what I say because I sit too low to the ground,” Balderston said. “They don’t respect me. They’ll listen to him.

“And he goes everywhere with me. He rides up in the cab.”

Not everything has worked out. The first PHARM dog, for Schmitz, got kicked in the head by a cow and died. His second got run over by a school bus.

“I’ve had terrible luck, but I’d sure take another one,” Schmitz said.

Jim Harig, 70, thinks his neuropathy came from exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam. He’s pretty much lost use of his arms below the elbows and his legs below the knees.

“I used to fall down a lot,” he said.

He keeps horses, donkeys, sheep, mules and alpacas on his 200 acres. Every morning, he gets out and checks on them all with Dixon serving as a four-legged cane.

“All he cares about is helping me,” Harig said.

Miller tears up when he hears those stories. Allenbrand once told him she felt bad that for every dog he trained for the program, he was losing his usual fee of $350.

“You know, Jackie,” he told her. “Weeks from now when I lay my head on my pillow, I’ll remember where that dog went. If I’d got $350, I wouldn’t know where the money went. I’m good.”

Can’t get much more country than Alda Owen, and she’s got the middle name to prove it: Rea.

As in REA — Rural Electric Association.

“They sent my parents a refund check and they used it to help pay for me being born,” Owen said.

On a recent clear morning, she jumped into her Kubota utility vehicle and took off up a gravel road a couple of hundred yards to a cattle lot. Sweet Baby Jo rode in the back, face in the wind, excited to be going to work. She eyed Angus cattle gathered under trees.
Alda and Rick Owen live on 260 rolling acres north of Maysville, the Dekalb County seat. They both grew up on nearby farms. At age 10, she lost a lot of her vision from histoplasmosis, an infection she thinks she contacted through chicken droppings.

“Put a bucket on a fence post and to me it looks like a person, but I can drive this thing,” she said loudly over the engine.

A couple of years back, she had a cancer scare and afterward grew depressed. A friend of her daughter had heard about PHARM Dog.

Owen presented a new challenge for Miller as he trained a dog for her.

Most people with a herding dog stand far away and shout commands or blow a whistle. That doesn’t work for Owen because she can’t see what’s going on. She has to get close to the action.

“That’s different, but that’s what works for Alda,” Miller said. “Baby Joe will protect her.”

Every morning in the feed lot, the dog goes to work.

“She’ll hold them while I do what I need to do,” Owen said. “I couldn’t be out here if not for her.”

Allenbrand wants PHARM Dog to grow. She would like to expand with more dogs and into more states. Right now, Cargill Nutrition donates food for the dogs in training. Agribusinesses MFA and Pioneer have contributed.

“If I can do anything to help these farmers stay put, that’s what I want to do,” she said. “

“Same for everybody involved in this — we’re all farmers ourselves.”

Tree Task Force For More Trees in Columbia Spoke at City Council Meeting
May 18, 2015

Campus Child Care, a ‘Critical Student Benefit,’ Is Disappearing
By Scott Carlson
Paterson, N.J.

NO MU MENTION

As a first-generation, low-income college student, Ashley Abregu faces outsize challenges. In this city, a destination for immigrants, where a quarter of the population lives below the poverty line, there are many people like her.

But Ms. Abregu carries another big challenge, one that comes in a tiny package: Her name is Aubrie, and she is 3 years old.

Ms. Abregu, who was born in Peru and raised in the United States, is a single mother — one of about 1,800 parents who attend Passaic County Community College here. But among them, she is lucky: She and about 100 other parents got their children into an all-day child-care program run by the college, in a space adjacent to its main building. And because the program is supported by the local public schools — to give children a jump-start before entering kindergarten — Ms. Abregu pays nearly nothing.

Without it, "I don’t think I would be able to go to college," she says early one Wednesday morning at the child-care center, where the walls are plastered with 3-year-olds’ renderings of shamrocks and the Cat in the Hat. If Aubrie weren’t enrolled here, her mother would have to pay about $200 a week for private day care and spend hours transporting her daughter on buses. Ms. Abregu relies on her own father for
support; while she was pregnant, Aubrie’s father was arrested for drug dealing and deported.

Now majoring in the humanities, with plans to work in political campaigns and health activism, Ms. Abregu hopes her daughter will emulate her. "We come here, and she says, ‘Mommy, your school,’” pointing to the college, Ms. Abregu says. Since coming to the child-care center, Aubrie has been more social, more eager to learn. "Kids are going to follow whatever you do, especially at this age."

Ms. Abregu’s story is one often overlooked in higher education, yet it is more common than people assume. According to the Institute for Women’s Policy Research, nearly five million college students — about a quarter of all undergraduates, and 30 percent of the community-college population — are parents. About 3.4 million of those student-parents are women, and two million of them are single mothers.

For those parents, child care is "the critical student benefit," says Catherine Hill, vice president for research at the American Association of University Women.

"Students say that if they don’t have child care, then the other support services just don’t mean that much," she says. "If you don’t have child care, then you can’t go to tutoring or a mentoring program or any other number of support services that schools offer."

But Ms. Hill and others who study the needs of low-income women in college have noted that many institutions, under financial pressure, are reducing, privatizing, or even eliminating their child-care programs, even as the number of low-income and first-generation students in college rises. According to the AAUW and the National Center for Education Statistics, less than half of the nation's community colleges offer on-campus child care.

"The trend we’re seeing is that it’s declining," says Barbara Gault, executive director and vice president of the Institute for Women’s Policy Research, although she notes that hard numbers are difficult to find, as the issue is generally not studied. Her research and interactions with college administrators, however, have uncovered a pattern: College officials say child-care programs are too difficult and expensive to maintain, and, what’s more, they sometimes have a cynical view of the service and of parents in higher education. One administrator told her that his college "can’t deal with everyone’s personal problems."
Parenthood is "viewed as the irksome baggage that poor people come with," she says. She and Ms. Hill note that colleges spend money on other student services and facilities that benefit small portions of the student population: counseling services, athletics, science labs. Child care should be seen as another such service, they say.

Still, at a time when community colleges in particular are financially stressed, a child-care center can be a burden that some administrators see as expendable.

In 2009, Highline College, just south of Seattle, discontinued its 30-year-old child-care program when it was forced to cut $2 million from its $25-million operating budget. Lisa Skari, its vice president for institutional advancement, says the college had been subsidizing the program at an annual cost of about $300,000 — paying $5,000 of the $8,000 cost of caring for each child there. "It was unfortunate, because in 2004 we had just opened a new child-care facility that was state of the art," she says. Now a local nonprofit group is renting the center to offer child care, and the student government has set aside money to help subsidize the cost for some needy parents.

Brookdale Community College, in an affluent part of New Jersey, near the shore, has had a child-care center since 1974 that can serve up to 100 children. But it has been a financial burden, losing $284,000 on an $800,000 budget last year. Administrators are now discussing how to hand it over to a private operator.

Child-care professionals often criticize privatization, arguing that the profit motive can undermine teacher salaries and services. David Stout, dean of enrollment development and student affairs at Brookdale, says the college may have to continue subsidizing the child-care service to maintain quality and keep it affordable.

At a child-care center at La Guardia Community College, part of the City University of New York, children not only get healthy food, socialization, and comprehensive lessons in literacy, but they also take advantage of some of the college’s facilities — taking swimming lessons in the pool, for example. But maintaining funding for the program is always a battle. Parents in the CUNY system organize bus trips to Albany every winter to lobby state lawmakers, asking them to continue giving CUNY nearly $3 million a year for its 18 child-care centers.

When asked about the value of the child care, the parents often deliver a remarkable message: The community college is not only helping them advance
socioeconomically; it is also setting up their children for opportunities the parents never had.

Lauren Patterson, a La Guardia student, didn’t learn how to read until he was 16 because he spent part of his childhood in the group-home system and bounced among various schools. His son, who is 2, has learned to recognize Spanish and English words through the child-care center. "When we go home, we don’t watch TV," he says. "My son picks up a book." Mr. Patterson, a veteran, wanted to go to New York University, but there were no child-care services for students there, and private child care would cost him several hundred dollars a week. Cheaper day-care services in the neighborhood plop the kids in front of a television all day. "I am not going to forgo my son’s education so that I can get an education," Mr. Patterson says.

Passaic County Community College started its day care in 1999, after the Board of Trustees determined that affordable, high-quality child care was a pressing need among students. The child-care center also has a curricular connection: Students in the early-childhood-education program work there to get experience. The college managed to pay for its services through a combination of state funding and various grants. In the late 1990s, preschool was included under a previous court decision that required the state to distribute school funding more equitably. The college formed a partnership with the Paterson Public Schools to subsidize the child-care program.

Linda Carter, an assistant professor in early-childhood education and a founding manager of the day-care center, got more support from federal agencies, nonprofit foundations, and the state to pay for programs in literacy and nutrition, and for evening child care.

Ms. Carter says that before the day-care center opened, student mothers would leave their kids alone in the library or bring them to class, which was disruptive. Some mothers would trade off babysitting duties in the hallways. When some single mothers turned up at college without their children, Ms. Carter wondered, Were the kids at home alone?

"It was scaring me to think what they were doing just to get to class," she says.

Of course, many parents at Passaic County might still be in that position. The day-care center takes only 3- and 4-year-olds, and only up to about 120 kids. Steven M. Rose,
the college’s president, says he hopes to expand the program in the next couple of years — but how the college would pay for that is unclear.

The hassles of running the child-care center go beyond the expense. Mr. Rose, as the official "owner" of the center, had to get fingerprinted and reviewed by law-enforcement agencies. He is occasionally embroiled in disputes between teachers, touchy parents, and their toddlers. Some years ago, for reasons he still doesn’t understand, he had to replace the flooring in the center’s kitchen because it did not meet strict licensing standards. And closing the college in a snowstorm gets more complicated when kids need to connect with their parents.

Other challenges are more serious: If a child turns up at school with bruises, or if a court bars a relative from seeing a child, the involvement with the police and child-protection services that can result aren’t typically part of a college president’s job.

Given hassles like those, some of Mr. Rose’s peers at other community colleges look askance at his aspirations to expand the child-care center, he says. "They think I am crazy," he says. "But they didn’t have our demographics."

For students who are parents, having a kid is another barrier to graduation.

"It’s all about taking away the obstacles," Mr. Rose says, "and which ones we can mitigate, and which ones we can’t."