

# Continuing Education

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## Higher Education Quote of the Week:

"For this session, the priority of health care and hospitals takes precedence over TOPS. We're going to fund TOPS - maybe not at the level that some people want - but it's not going away. The hospitals, on the other hand, might." - State Representative Rob Shadoin, R-Ruston.



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## Greetings!

Back in 2014, with much fanfare, Governor Bobby Jindal pushed through legislation to establish the WISE Fund, which was created to provide more money for colleges to invest in training students for careers in high demand fields. Forty million dollars was dedicated to that fund - at least that's what we were told.

Two year later, many of our schools, which have already spent their allocation of WISE dollars, are still waiting for the money to materialize from the state. Both LCTCS President Monty Sullivan and LSUS President King Alexander told legislators this week they have institutions that have not been paid.

According to the Board of Regents only \$11.7 million of the \$40 million promised in 2014 has been received and spent. As for the \$24.5 million Jindal claimed to have allocated in 2015? None of it materialized, according to Deputy Commission of Higher Education Terrence Ginn. "Bottom line is we never had more," he said. ***[For more on the WISE Fund click here.](#)***

## Shreveport-Bossier Higher Education News

- LSUHSC-Shreveport Interim Chancellor Dr. G.E. Ghali told the Senate Finance Committee on Sunday that the Shreveport-based medical school and school of allied health need an additional \$35 million next fiscal year over what has been allocated by the legislature thus far. "Since July 2015, we have made a total of \$20 million in operating budget reductions," he told the committee. "We are as lean as we are going to get." ***[Shreveport Times, 05.16.16](#)***

## Louisiana Higher Education News

- After 14 hours of debate last week, the Louisiana House of Representatives cut \$72 million from the TOPS program, which was fully funded by the House Appropriations Committee earlier in the week, and transferred the money back to the portion of the budget that funds the safety net hospitals. This move leaves TOPS underfunded by 24 percent. ***[The Advocate, 05.16.16](#)***
- Governor John Bel Edwards and members of the Senate are already talking about changes they want to make to the

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budget sent over the by the House last week.  
Commissioner of Administration Jay Dardenne said on  
Sunday, "The budget is still really problematic from our  
standpoint." ***The Advocate, 05.16.16***

- The Legislative Auditor issued a report last week stating the  
LSU System has improved its oversight of scholarships  
awarded by members of the LSU Board of Supervisors, but  
there is still work to be done. Each member of the Board of  
Supervisors can award up to 15 tuition exemption  
scholarships for each academic year. ***The Advocate,  
05.11.16***

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## National Higher Education News

- The private college discount rate for first-time, full-time  
freshmen, which is the total amount off of the published  
tuition price that is given back to the student in the form of  
a grant or scholarship, has now hit an all-time high. Today  
the average institutional discount rate is 48.6 percent.  
***Inside Higher Ed, 05.16.16***
- Finding a job with a college degree can be tough, but  
finding a job without one today is even more difficult.  
According to a report from the Economic Policy Institute,  
the unemployment rate for young high schools graduates  
is 17.8 percent. ***The New York Times, 05.10.16***

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For more information on higher education in Northwest Louisiana,  
please visit our website at [www.sbba4he.org](http://www.sbba4he.org)

Sincerely,

***Johnette Wagner, Ph.D., Executive Director  
Shreveport-Bossier Business Alliance for Higher Education***

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*You are welcome to forward this newsletter to others  
in your network who are interested in higher education.*

*For more information on becoming a member of the SBBA, or  
providing direct support for our work, please contact  
Dr. Johnette Wagner at [jmagner@sbba4he.org](mailto:jmagner@sbba4he.org)*