

The Cornell Daily Sun

Vol. 124, No. 42 ■ ITHACA, NEW YORK, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2007 ■ 24 Pages – Free

C.U. to Invest \$20 Million in Ithaca

By WILLIMINA BROMER
Sun Staff Writer

On Oct. 6, President David J. Skorton announced at a meeting with community leaders that Cornell will invest \$20 million in the Ithaca and Tompkins County communities over the next ten years.

The money, which doubles the amount Cornell currently contributes locally, will be used to help create more affordable housing and alternative modes of transportation.

According to Stephen Golding, executive vice president of finance and administration, a study conducted last winter identified a need for more affordable faculty, staff and student housing closer to campus as well as alternative means of transportation to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles coming to and from campus.

“It is a pro-active program, which

demonstrates Cornell’s commitment to work with the community to deal with identified problems with regard to housing and transportation,” Golding said. “Programs that provide housing opportunities would also be beneficial and essential to recruiting faculty, staff and students to Cornell.”

In all, six main areas of investment opportunities were identified by the study: elementary, middle and high school educational services, healthcare, the environment, economic development, housing and basic infrastructure.

“By working with local community leaders over time, we will be able to ensure Tompkins County has a sustainable economy with a strong cultural social life such that it’s a great place for

our faculty staff and students to live and raise families,” Golding said.

The investment is in addition to the \$2 million a year Cornell typically provides to the community. According to Golding, the money comes from operating revenues generated from non-academic sources that do not support teaching and research.

“Cornell has historically provided funds to offset the cost of the K through 12 education, the fire department and other community based activities. The investment is part of a more focused look at those strategic areas where Cornell and the community can work effectively together to ensure the ability of the region and Cornell to recruit the next

Money to help create more affordable housing will double Cornell’s local investment.



generation of students and staff,” Golding said.

The investment specifically targets housing and infrastructure, but according to officials, there may be secondary outcomes as well. By creating job opportunities, for example, officials hope it will positively affect the economy.

Furthermore, in light of recent race-related controversies in the Ithaca community, Town Supervisor Cathy

See INVESTMENT page 6

East Avenue to Close to Vehicle Traffic Next Week

East Avenue will be closed next week from Oct. 22 through Oct. 26. Pedestrian traffic will be allowed on the east and west sidewalks and pedestrians will also be allowed to cross East Avenue. Vehicle and parking access to Day Hall will be maintained, and no utility disruptions are planned during the construction.

The closing will force adjustments to several TCAT routes. The Sage Hall bus stop will be relocated to Uris Hall, the Teagle Hall bus stop will be relocated to Corson Mudd Hall, the Barton Hall bus stop will be relocated to Kennedy Hall and the Statler Hall bus stop will be relocated across the street from Uris Hall. The East Hill Shuttle will offer one central campus stop on the west side of Barton Hall.

— Compiled by Sun Staff

Local Actions Protect Rights

Community aids undocumented workers

By EMILY COHN
Sun Staff Writer

The controversial issue of immigration, currently at the forefront of the national discourse, was also at the center of local Ithaca politics Monday night when the Town Board voted to endorse Gov. Eliot Spitzer’s (D) plan to provide undocumented immigrants with driver’s licenses. This action is one of the many steps Ithaca has taken in recent months regarding immigrant rights.

On Sept. 21, Spitzer announced the policy change would enable undocumented immigrants to apply for state licenses without providing Social Security numbers. The reform would instead permit foreign passports as valid

forms of identification and therefore allow undocumented immigrants to receive licenses. The controversial plan will make New York the eighth state in the nation to have such a policy.

Herb Engman, recently elected Town of Ithaca Supervisor and a senior extension associate in the department of human development, strongly supported Spitzer’s plan. Engman stated that the Board felt that from an ethical point of view, it was their responsibility to speak up on the issue.

“Immigrants are doing a lot of hard work but in return are being blamed for the ills of society. They are simply coming here to work,” Engman said.

See IMMIGRATION page 4

Study Links Alcohol and Absences

By MICHAEL STRATFORD
Sun Junior Staff Writer

For many students at Cornell and other schools across the country, the weekend starts on Thursday nights. This

trend, known to some as “Thirsty Thursday,” has recently come under attack by college and university officials.

Prompted by pressure to reduce underage drinking and the results

of a recent study, some schools are increasing the number of Friday morning classes in order to curb stu-

dents’ Thursday night drinking habits.

At Cornell, 81 percent of Cornell undergraduates report taking Friday classes and about one in four students has missed class at some point because of alcohol or drug use, according to Deborah Lewis, alcohol projects coordinator at Gannett.

In March, the U.S. Surgeon General issued a “Call to Action” about underage drinking, urging colleges and universities to “reinstate Friday classes to shorten the elongated weekend” as a strategy to reduce the risk of adolescent alcohol use.

A University of Missouri-Columbia study, published in July, studied the drinking patterns and academic schedules of 3,341 undergraduate students over the course of

Satanic verses



JENNIFER VARGAS / SUN SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

Salman Rushdie speaks last night. See Monday’s Sun for coverage of the event.



MATT HINTSA / SUN SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

See STUDY page 4