

McGuinty grant soothes textbook sting

More than 500,000 full-time students may be entitled to a yearly grant for textbook and computer costs

Nathan Swyers
The Provincial Government has finally released the Textbook and Technology Grant, announced last spring. Students can now apply for the \$150 grant to help offset the cost of textbooks, laptops, and other required learning tools. It is part of the Skills to Job Action Plan: a three-year, \$1.5 billion commitment announced last March.

Since the grant is not yet fully implemented, students only receive \$150 per year. In 2010, when the program is expected to fully roll out, the amount doubles to \$300. Many students say this barely scratches the surface when it comes to the cost of books.

"It seems scrawny compared to what textbooks really cost you," says 1st year health and bio-tech

student Jaimie Lynn Osztermayer. "They're paying for maybe one or two of your books. I wouldn't even go through the trouble of

actually applying for it."

The application process is straightforward, and any student who applied for OSAP is automatically registered for the grant, whether accepted for a loan or not. Cheques will be mailed out once the colleges confirm their enrolment status.

Sophia Aggelonitis, Hamilton Mountain's MPP, says that she hopes students take advantage of the grant.

"When it's fully implemented at \$300 per year, it's a step in the right direction," says Aggelonitis. "An investment in our students is the right investment."

The grant comes from the Skills to Job Action Plan, which focuses on three key strategies: money for skills for new careers, money for existing programs and student aid, and money going to build new places to learn. Aggelonitis

says that the renovations and construction projects happening around Mohawk are all part of this initiative.

Who is eligible?

- You must be attending a Ministry approved program.
- You must be a full-time student: at least 60 per cent of a full course load, or 40 per cent for a student with a permanent disability.
- You must be a Canadian citizen, a permanent resident, or a protected person.

How do I apply?

- 2008-2009 OSAP applicants are automatically considered. You do not need to apply.

- Applications for everyone else are available online on OSAP's website.

When is the deadline?

- One-term programs: within 30 days of your study period.
- Two and three-term programs: within 90 days before the end of your study period.



PHOTO BY NATHAN SWYERS

\$150 may not seem like a lot of money for textbooks, but it's better than nothing.

"The good news is that we have over 100,000 students attending post-secondary right now as compared to five years ago," she says. "What it's saying to me is that the importance of post-secondary education in the province of Ontario is growing."

Aggelonitis says that the plan is geared toward helping post-secondary students acquire the tools and skills they need to succeed.

"Without a doubt, when we look at our college graduates, they play such an essential part in our economy," says

Aggelonitis. "Mohawk graduates play a huge part in the success of the Hamilton community."

"Grants are a good idea. I just think the amount isn't even worth it," said Osztermayer. "Maybe if it was about \$450, it would be a little more logical."

Other programs drawing from the \$1.5 billion include constructing and renewing infrastructure, helping in distance education, and the Second Career Plan.

A diploma for a V-card

Samantha Payne

A 22 year-old San Diego college student has her virginity up for grabs to the highest bidder. She has partnered with a Nevada brothel in order to raise money for graduate school. Famous radio personality Howard Stern had her on his show to talk about her cause, and the offers are flying in.

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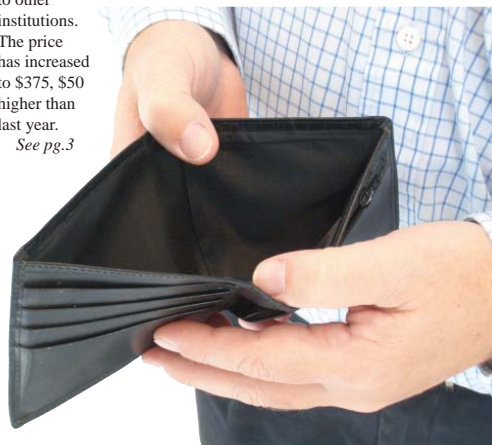
Parking fees higher; wallets lighter

Lee Richardson

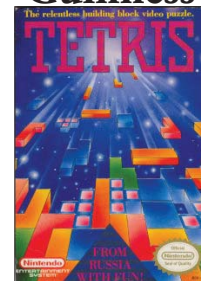
Mohawk College has raised its parking fees yet again, but this time it's part of a three-year plan intended to put the school's costs closer to other institutions.

The price has increased to \$375, \$50 higher than last year.

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Brantford museum scores Tetris with Guinness



Alex Patteson

Over 100 players flocked to the Brantford Personal Computer Museum to take part in an enormous Tetris tournament. The event was held to garner attention to the museum and ultimately break the Guinness World Record for most participants in a Tetris tournament. The first place prize was \$1000 in cash

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COUNTRY PUB

WEDNESDAY, SEPT 17TH - THE ARNIE

SALOON OPENS @ 9PM