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Long Beach Press Telegram—October 15, 2008—Article on students picking less-prestigious schools due to economy.

Los Angeles Times—October 16, 2008—Article on UC educators upset over labor research program not being funded.

Long Beach Press Telegram—October 16, 2008—Article on Pulitzer Prize winner Hersh speaking at CSULB.
College Housing As An Investment

Many parents are finding that buying real estate in a college town can be an investment with a sizable return.

When it comes to getting a better grade in real estate return, many investors are putting their money in higher education. They are investing in real estate in college towns.

College towns that are not close to large cities are a smart and sensible investment choice for several reasons. First, the prices of housing are lower since the towns are not close enough for commuters.

Because college students often want to live off campus and parents have to pay rent for that child, they may find it more profitable to invest in real estate that their child can live in for the duration of his or her college career.

Housing costs for a college student can average between $20,000 and $40,000 through four years of college. If parents have to spend this much money, a growing number find they could better use the money as a down payment on a property that will offer them a return on their investment.

If parents buy property with multiple rental units or a property that can be shared, it may ultimately cost less than paying rent for a single apartment for their college student.

“Real estate continues to be an outstanding long-term wealth generator and now is an outstanding time to buy,” said Tom Kunz, president and chief executive officer, Century 21 Real Estate LLC.

Investing in college housing is a low-risk venture since the first and last months’ rent is normally requested before anyone moves in. And a security deposit can be as high as one and a half months’ rent. The home can be sold once the child graduates college or kept as an investment.

For many parents, this investment compares favorably with CDs, which pay out 3 percent, and the increasingly intimidating and volatile stock market.

Financial analysis reveals that at many colleges it’s possible to make a down payment of $40,000 and receive a return of up to $20,000 per year, after paying off the mortgage expenses, and secure a capitalization rate of over 10 percent. For more information on college-town real estate investment, visit www.Century21.com.
More find college costs out of reach

From Bloomberg News

More than one-third of U.S. parents have decreased or stopped saving for their children’s college education because of the economic decline, according to a survey by Fidelity Investments.

Rising daily household expenses and a decline in home equity mean that parents can afford to pay only 21% of future college expenses, compared with 24% a year earlier, based on the survey of about 3,000 adults released Wednesday.

Total estimated college expenses for current high school seniors at a four-year public or private school will be $120,000 on average beginning in 2009, Fidelity said, using data from the College Board.

Almost 60% of parents have started saving for future expenses, and 30% said they were investing in a dedicated account such as a so-called 529 plan, which allows tax-deferred savings for qualified education expenses and are sponsored by states or educational institutions. Fidelity, based in Boston, manages more than 980,000 accounts in seven state-sponsored 529 plans.
Schools scramble as investment fund curbs withdrawals

Limits on redemptions force about 1,000 institutions to find other short-term cash.

From the Associated Press

NEW HAVEN, Conn. — An investment fund that serves about 1,000 colleges and private schools partially froze withdrawals this week amid the credit crunch, forcing colleges to develop new plans to pay bills.

Wachovia Bank, trustee for the $3.3-billion Short Term Fund offered by Commonfund, said Monday that it was terminating the fund and establishing a process to ensure the orderly liquidation and distribution of the fund's assets. Wachovia initially told investors Monday that they could withdraw only 10% of their money, but that figure was increased to 34% by Wednesday and 57% by Thursday.

Commonfund, a Wilton, Conn.-based nonprofit that advises colleges and schools on money management, also said Thursday that it put a 30% limit on withdrawals from its Intermediate Term Fund after investors in the Short Term Fund tried to withdraw money from that fund, said Keith Luke, managing director of Commonfund.

About 200 colleges and universities have about $1 billion in the Intermediate fund, which is used for long-term needs, such as equipment and plant purchases, he said.

"We just didn't have the liquidity in the fund to do that," Luke said. "We will relax that as soon as market conditions permit."
Term Fund as officials prepare for liquidation prevents a run on money and protects investors, said Laura Fay, a Wachovia spokeswoman.

"It was not something we took lightly," Fay said. "In this environment, we felt this was the best way to proceed."

Some colleges are securing lines of credit because of the restriction on accessing money from the short-term account, said Matthew Hamill, senior vice president of the National Assn. of College and University Business Officers. That means taking on borrowing costs that effectively reduce their rate of return in the original investment, he said.

Hamill said he did not expect the issue to affect students and their families and noted that the crisis had eased somewhat with a greater percentage of cash allowed to be withdrawn.

Assumption College in Worcester, Mass., had about $20 million in the fund but was able to get back nearly a third of that, said Christian McCarthy, the school's executive vice president and treasurer. The redemption and other funds enabled the college to pay all its bills, he said.

"It's been a tremendous inconvenience," McCarthy said. "It really did come as quite a shock. It is disconcerting."

Bethany College — a Lutheran school in Lindsborg, Kan., with 600 students and a $12-million budget — has $700,000 invested in the fund.

"Obviously we weren't planning on withdrawing all at once," said spokeswoman Aubrey Streit. "We're just reevaluating our plan for how we will work with the cash flow over the course of the next academic year."
College outlines cat pact

CSULB: Limits will be placed on when and where the feral animals will be fed.

By Kevin Butler
Staff Writer

LONG BEACH — Cal State Long Beach has finalized a new program to deal with the campus’s feral cat population, but some animal welfare activists fear that the plan goes too far.

CSULB officials began developing a new feral cat management program this summer after stating that coyotes were being attracted to the campus by the presence of cats and cat food.

Volunteers have long operated numerous feeding stations on campus to care for the cats, while also making an effort to spay and neuter the felines.

The university consulted the caretakers while developing the program, which calls for making food available to the cats only during daytime hours.

The new program “is very close to what the volunteers were hoping to achieve with the care of the feral cat population on campus,” said CSULB spokeswoman Toni Beron. “It’s not everything they wanted, but they were not necessarily taking into consideration the needs and concerns that were being expressed by others who were also watching the situa-

feeding stations and register volunteers. Unauthorized feeding stations, any after-dark food or any cat shelter will be removed.

Volunteers will be responsible for ensuring the cats are spayed and neutered and for removing socialized cats for adoption or return to owner, if possible, the program states.

But Leslie Abrahams, a cat caretaker, said that the program goes too far by reducing and moving the feeding stations, arguing that it will disrupt the cats’ lives. Because cats are territorial, many will continue to return to the location of their original feeding stations, she said.

Beron said that the stations will be moved gradually and that cats will follow the food source. Some of the feeding stations had been placed in “totally inappropriate locations,” including near classroom buildings, she said.

Abrahams also opposes the dismantling of cat shelters on campus, a policy she calls inhumane.

Beron said that the shelters had never been approved by the campus and were “quite unsightly.” Research that CSULB consulted stated that such shelters are not used by many cats, she added.

Nancy Peterson, feral cat program manager at the Humane Society of the United States, said that the number and size of the feeding stations may be too small to feed the current cat population, which the university estimates to be about 150.

Beron said the locations of the seven feeding stations have not been settled yet.

kevin.butler@press telegram.com, 562-498-1398
Loans for college still available

By Ann Work
Scripps Howard News Service

Uncle Sam might have a rescue package for you, too, if you're a parent with a student who needs to pay for college.

Despite rumors that college loans will be hard to find from now on, federal money is still out there for students. According to college loan specialists, students who want federal loans can get them, even though sources for private loans may be getting more difficult to find.

The basics of college lending amount to this: Anyone wanting to go to college can borrow from the feds or from a private lender, in their own name or their parents'. Federal government loans for students and for their parents are still available — and these loans, while more tedious to apply for, usually come with lower interest rates, fixed rates, and better terms than private loans.

Private loans are the ones that are now more difficult to get, since private lenders began backing out of the student loan business about a year ago, according to Sue Nelson, associate director of financial aid at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas.

The government-based school loans system has had its own recent bailout.

"We had our own bailout, if you will, before this (current credit crisis) happened," said Melissa Elliott, director of financial aid at Vernon College in Vernon, Texas. "The (U.S.) Department of Education said they would buy student loans from lenders versus them getting out of the program. There were some lenders that went with that program for this school year, and they would be selling their loans to the Department of Education. It's all very complicated. We stay out of that fray. That is negotiated from the lender with the Department of Ed. Bottom line: I feel like they are making student borrowing a priority."

A student should always be able to get a loan because the government requires its state guaranty agency to serve as a lender of last resort. "Our students will still be able to get loans through that agency," Elliott said.

After hearing about some students and parents panicking about student loans drying up, Elliott took the issue up with a representative from the Department of Education, reminding him that even if a student were turned down by all banks, he could still turn to the state guaranty agency for loans. "So why is everybody panicking?" she asked.

"His words to me: 'I don't know. Funds will be available to students.'"

Both Nelson and Elliott agreed it could actually be a positive thing that private loans are more difficult for students to get now. Both said they see a trend among today's students to borrow the maximum amount of money that they're allowed instead of the minimum they need to get by. Students increasingly prefer not to work while they're going to school.

"We counsel them about over-borrowing," Nelson said. Some students apply for and receive all the federal loans they can get and then get private loans, too, racking up debts that can reach $70,000 and higher.

The exception to avoiding private loans are international students, who are ineligible for federal government loans and may need to rely on private loans.

"All of our programs are based on being a U.S. citizen," Nelson said.
Four LBCC alumni enter Hall of Fame

By Kevin Butler
Staff Writer

LONG BEACH — A businessman, former Long Beach City Councilman, television writer and education administrator were inducted into the Long Beach City College Hall of Fame for distinguished alumni on Friday.

The annual Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony Luncheon was held at The Centre at Sycamore Plaza in Lakewood on Friday. The Hall of Fame inductees were:

■ Jeffrey Napper, who serves as the president and CEO of Long Beach Schools Financial Credit Union. As an LBCC student, Napper worked as a part-time teller at the credit union before rising to the head of the organization.

■ Teresa O’Neill, a television writer who has worked on such shows as “Coach,” “Home Improvement” and “Night Court.” O’Neill, who teaches at USC, joins both of her parents in the Hall of Fame: William O’Neill and former Long Beach mayor and LBCC President Beverly O’Neill.

■ Les Robbins, who served on the Long Beach City Council from 1988 to 1998. For 27 years, Robbins worked as a deputy sheriff and sergeant for the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department.

■ Judy Seal, who serves as the executive director of the Long Beach Education Foundation, the nonprofit organization that assists the Long Beach Unified School District. Seal coordinates “Seamless: Education,” a collaborative initiative of the LBUSD, LBCC and Cal State Long Beach. Her mother, Betty Houston Seal, also is in the Hall of Fame.

kevin.butter@press telegram.com, 562-499-1308
College funds still have appeal

SAVINGS: 529 plans still make sense for those with long-term goals, experts say.

By Andrea Coombes
MarketWatch

SAN FRANCISCO — With the credit crunch crimping the student loan market and financial market upheaval crunching investments in college-savings plans, what's a parent to do? That depends somewhat on when your child will need those college funds.

If you've got a long-term horizon, some say investing in the tax-advantaged college-savings tools known as 529 plans still makes sense. Investors contribute after-tax dollars; investment gains are tax-free if the money is used for qualified education expenses.

"The long-term appeal of 529 plans, despite all the painful losses in recent months, is still very much intact," said Marta Norton, senior mutual fund analyst with investment research firm Morningstar Inc., in Chicago.

"If you saw higher expenses or a management team that had changed, those would be reasons to consider switching funds, but solely because of painful performance over a year's span isn't reason to jump ship," she said.

Overall, the investment portfolios offered through all 529 plans tracked by Morningstar were down 6.09 percent on average for the year ending Aug. 31, while they were up 6.06 percent over five years, annualized. An individual investor's return will depend on specific investment choices.

Some argue that even those with kids closer to college age might consider 529 plans' conservative, principal-protection choices. Even with a child in high school, "it's never too late to save money," said Ray Loewe, president of College Money, a Marlton, N.J., financial-planning firm that counsels parents on college funding.

"You're going to be very conservative. But you still have the opportunity to enjoy the tax-free earnings if the money is used to pay for college.

Still, the recent stock market volatility might make investing for college a tough route for some. If you're in panic mode and want to pull your money out of a 529 plan, ask the college about prepaying so you still get the tax benefits, Loewe said.

No matter how you do it, saving something is getting more important as the credit crunch limits loan availability. Fewer lenders are participating in the federal student-loan program, and about 33 lenders have stopped offering new private loans, said Mark Kantrowitz, publisher of FinAid.org, a financial aid information site.

Still, Congress heeded the federal program by increasing the maximum annual unsubsidized loan amount for some students by $2,000, among other measures, in a law enacted in May.

To improve your chances of being able to fund college, consider the following strategies:

1. Apply to many schools to increase the number of financial aid offers you receive.
2. Don't rule out private colleges. Their tuition costs are steep, but these schools often have more ability than state schools to offer scholarships or tap endowment funds to help students, said Dave Kerney, chief executive officer of CollegeZapps, a Littleton, Colo.-based provider of college application tools.
3. Talk to family members. Get up a savings plan and ask for matching contributions, Loewe said.
4. Talk to the financial aid office. School financial aid officers have a good handle on available grants, scholarships and loans. Ask your student's high school about local scholarships and, if they are interested, your employer, too.
5. Seek federal loans first. They're more available and generally cheaper. Meanwhile, improve credit scores by paying down debt to ensure you're eligible for the lowest rates if you need a private loan with a co-signer.
ENTERTAINMENT

40 years later, let your ‘Hair’ down at CSULB musical

By A.J. Whitney

In 1968, a sure way to signal one’s rebellion against authority was to grow one’s hair out as long and wild as possible, rejecting any sprays or products in favor of the natural look.

This look usually went along with anti-Vietnam War sentiment, anti-capitalism, and drug and sex experimentation, and those who lived by these philosophies were branded hippies by disapproving parents, politicians and police.

So when James Rado, Jerome Bock and Galt MacDermot’s musical about the hippie movement premiered on Broadway that year, it makes perfect sense that they would call it “Hair,” and dedicate an entire song to the subject of letting one’s treasures do as they liked.

The free-flowing musical, moreover, rebels against authority by having very little plot.

Cover Stories

HAIR

FROM PAGE 1

and more songs than most shows. Many of these have gone on to become stand-alone hits, including “Ain’t No Woman Like the One I Love.”

Cal State Long Beach’s University Players is celebrating “Hair’s” 40th anniversary — which happens to coincide with the theater department’s 40th anniversary — with an energetic production that opened last weekend in the Studio Theater.

Director Joanne Gordon gets great performances out of her student cast, even though, for the most part, they do not seem to be trained singers. Moreover, many of the songs are deceptively hard to sing, so there were quite a few wobbly notes on opening night.

Hopefully that will not ruin the audience’s appreciation of the otherwise entertaining production, especially since, as a group, the cast sounds great. From the title song, “Hair,” to “Good Morning Starshine” to the poignant ending, “Let the Sun Shine In,” energy and enthusiasm made up for a few voices being off-key. (The four-piece band sounds great throughout.)

As mentioned, “Hair” is not thick on plot. But it is set in New York and there is a story about a young man from Queens named Claude (David Wisner), who has been drafted. He is considering whether to go to Vietnam. Wisner, who seems to be one of the untrained singers, nonetheless perfectly conveys Claude’s indecision and agony.

His friends, of course, don’t want him to go. There’s Jeanie (a charmingly ditzy Jillian Taylor), who is pregnant with another man’s child but in love with Claude. And there’s Berger (a powerful but sometimes off-key Zach Sanders), a high school dropout and the group's leader. Berger has a girlfriend, Sheila (Jessica Hayes, who does a nice job), whom he treats badly, leading her to lament her situation in “Easy to Be Hard.”

Woof (a campy Jonathon Kolbush) is in love with Mick Jagger and quite possibly his male friends. And there are at least 30 others, mostly unnamed, collectively known as The Tribe. They all try to persuade Claude to dodge the draft, and sing to the audience about the hippie philosophy along the way.

With so many actors on stage, the show often feels chaotic, but then, it was a chaotic time, a time when, as journalist Joan Didion put it, “the center was not holding.”

Nor, Gordon and her cast point out, is it holding now. The show begins with a list of Vietnam War casualties and ends with a list of those from the Iraq war.

One big difference is, 40 years later, no one cares whether you have long hair.

A.J. Whitney is a Los Angeles freelance writer.
Peers push young college students left

STUDY: Liberal teachers don’t exert influence expected.

By Justin Pope
The Associated Press

On issues such as abortion, gay marriage and religion, college students shift noticeably to the left from the time they arrive on campus through their junior year, new research shows.

The reason, according to UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute, isn’t indoctrination by left-leaning faculty members, but rather the more powerful influence of fellow students. And at most colleges, left-leaning peer groups are more common than conservative ones.

After college, students — particularly women — move somewhat back to the right politically.

The research is the latest of several efforts by academics to lend analytical rigor to an emotional debate. Overall, college faculty members lean left politically, but there’s sharp disagreement on whether they impose their views on students. The UCLA researchers are among several social scientists who have tried to undermine the argument that students respond strongly to their teachers’ opinions.

Overall, students were nearly as likely after three years of college to call themselves “conservative” or “far-right,” according to findings, and only somewhat more likely to call themselves “liberal” or “far-left.”

On specific policy questions, they moved to more liberal positions.

Sixty percent of the college juniors said they support legalized abortion, up from 52 percent who said so as freshmen. The percentage supporting “legal marital status” for gay couples rose from 54 to 66. The percentage supporting increased defense spending fell from 34 to 25.

“People are moving out of the center to the left during college,” said one of the researchers, Alexander Astin.

Studies dating back decades have noted the trend of college students moving to the left during their college careers. But finding a representative snapshot of overall college opinion is difficult, because colleges have such varying student bodies.

The new figures from UCLA — which has been tracking attitudes of freshmen for more than 40 years — give a fresher and, the authors contend, more valid portrait. Based on a sample of nearly 15,000 students who entered 136 colleges in 2004, the results are carefully weighted to represent the full college population. Unlike in other such surveys, UCLA was able to pose its questions to the same students when they started college and after junior year.

The responses came over a time of deepening unpopularity for the Bush administration and Republicans generally. But Astin said the data show a clear effect from being in college, not just a national trend. In particular, in a separate, not-yet published paper using similar data, he and colleague Nida Denson claim to isolate the changes to students’ exposure to left-leaning peer groups. Right-leaning students tend to concentrate at a smaller number of colleges. So at most colleges, there are more left-leaning peer groups, and students on balance move leftward.
College hopefuls scaling back

TUITION: Bad economy has hit education savings plans.

By Justin Pope
The Associated Press

ELON, N.C. — Erin O’Connell took the tour this week at Elon University, a hand-
some, up-and-coming college with a
$31,000-a-year price tag. That’s hefty —
but $20,000 less than some “apply-
thing” schools she had to cross off her list.
“I’m going to be pulling out my hair to
make ends meet,” said the high school
senior from suburban Boston. “I’ll apply
for anything and everything I possibly
can.” As for more expensive schools, she
said: “While the title would be nice, I
might not get out with both arms and
both legs.”

It’s prime college-visiting season for
the high school Class of 2009, which next
fall will send the greatest number of
graduates on to college in American his-
tory.

But the souring economy and the cri-
sis on Wall Street are shrinking families’
college savings, and some parents won-
der whether they will be able to afford
tuition at the schools their youngsters
are looking at.

Around the country, students deciding
where to apply may have to scale back
their dreams. Some private schools
worry they could lose business to public
universities. Already, federal loan appli-
cations are up, and some schools are
seeing more aid inquiries.

Most students won’t decide on their
college plans for six months.

But a recent survey of 2,500 users of
the Web site meritaid.com found that
57 percent of students were considering
a less prestigious school for money rea-
sons.

In a similar study by Applywise.com
and Next Step Magazine, 50 percent of
families reported limiting their chil-
dren’s college choices to less expensive
options.

Because of plummeting housing
prices, many families can no longer
count on the equity in their homes to
help them pay for tuition.

Meanwhile, 529 college savings plans
have been hit hard in the stock market. A
year ago, they held a combined $110 bil-
on. Preliminary figures from Financial
Research Corp. show the value of 529s
declined 9 percent last quarter even with
new money coming in — and that was
before last week’s selloff on Wall Street.

“We’re revisiting their overall finan-
cial plans,” said Ivan Mallibetsky of Cap-
tal Solutions Group, a college financial
planning service in Bethesda, Md.

“In many cases folks are going to have
to be dipping into some of their own
personal resources, and reevaluating
their personal retirement goals in order
to get the kids the four or five years of
education they planned.”

One of his clients now plans to start at
a community college and transfer to the
University of Maryland rather than
going straight to a four-year private col-
lege.

Some parents are hoping to secure
financial aid, something they previously
assumed they didn’t need or couldn’t get.

“We haven’t qualified before. We
might now,” said Betty Morris of West
Chester, Pa., who was touring Elon this
week with her son Jack.

The good news for such families is that
the college financial aid system is in
many ways tilted toward higher-income
families, thanks to tuition tax breaks and
financial aid that is based on merit, not
need. At Elon, for instance, about 40 per-
cent of the 5,000 students get merit aid.

MONEY FOR COLLEGE

Some financial-aid tips for relatively
well-off families that hadn’t been con-
sidering applying for aid but may now
need it:

Don’t necessarily assume you’re “too
rich” for aid. Colleges award hundreds
of millions in merit scholarships and at
some schools, families earning well into
six figures can get need-based scholarships,
particularly if they have multiple children
in college.

Don’t ignore federal options. Unless
your family earns under $50,000, you are
unlikely to get any federal Pell Grant
funding. But filling out the federal financial
aid application (FAFSA) may still be
worthwhile. Anyone can get federal
Stafford loans.

Continue to save in 529 plans. About
two-thirds of 529 plan assets tracked by
the College Savings Foundation are in
portfolios that become more conservative
as college age approaches. If you’re in
one, your investments were conservative,
or you have time to recover.

If your circumstances change, ask for
more. Most need-based financial-aid
awards are based primarily on prior-year
family income. If a family breadwinner
loses a job, many colleges will try to
adjust their aid awards.

— The Associated Press

Erin O’Connell listens during a group tour
at Elon University on Monday. It’s
college-visiting season for the high school
Class of 2009, which will send the most
graduates ever on to college next fall.

BY THE NUMBERS

Percentage of students
considering a less prestigious
school for money reasons. 57%

9%

How much 529 college savings plans lost
last quarter. A year ago, 529s held a
combined $110 billion.
Educators protest over veto

More than 400 college professors and staffers want $5.4 million restored for UC labor research proposals.

By Patrick McGreevy
and Larry Gordon
Times Staff Writers

More than 400 university professors and academic staff have sent a letter of protest to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, objecting to his veto last month of $5.4 million for a University of California labor research program and asking that the money be restored.

At a time when unemployment in California is reaching a level not seen in decades, the letter said, the governor’s action appears to be politically motivated and an excuse to ax a program his fellow Republicans have sought to kill. Its critics have said it is too close to unions.

“It violates the basic principle of the freedom to speak out and conduct research even on controversial topics,” said the letter signed by the professors and staffers from UC and other California colleges and universities.

Schwarzenegger has said

Schwarzenegger has said his veto of money for the Miguel Contreras Labor Program, named after the late Los Angeles labor leader, was “difficult but necessary” because the Legislature chose not to make other cuts to balance the budget.

The Contreras program has major centers at UCLA and UC Berkeley and also does research at some other UC campuses, serving as an umbrella organization for a number of research initiatives.

Schwarzenegger also vetoed funding for the program two years ago, causing UCLA’s Institute for Research on Labor and Employment and the Berkeley center to step up private fundraising and tap other UC funds. On Wednesday, UC system spokesman Ricardo Vazquez said UC president Mark Yudof has promised to find money to keep the program open at least for the rest of the 2008-09 school year, although the exact amount of the funds and its source have yet to be determined.

Professor Chris Tilly, director of the UCLA Institute, said the veto was an attack on academic freedom that could set a bad precedent for other areas of research. “I think it is a slippery slope,” he said.

patrick.mcgreevy@latimes.com
larry.gordon@latimes.com
‘We’ve done a lot of wrong’

SPEECH: Pulitzer Prize winner Seymour Hersh criticizes Bush, Iraq war during talk at CSULB.

By Brenda Duran
Staff Writer

LONG BEACH — Combining decades of reporting experience and research, Pulitzer Prize winner Seymour Hersh offered a critical analysis of President Bush, the war in Iraq and the press on Wednesday at Cal State Long Beach.

“We’ve done a lot of wrong, we’ve been led down the wrong path by our leaders,” said Hersh, the author of eight books, including “Chain of Command: The Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib,” and winner of four George Polk Awards for magazine reporting, at the second annual Cal State Long Beach Distinguished Speakers Series.

In his one-hour speech, Hersh addressed more than 100 people at the Carpenter Performing Arts Center with a number of personal stories about war atrocities he uncovered while reporting the My Lai massacre in Vietnam, as well as the recent Abu Ghraib prison abuse scandal.

In between tales of his journalistic endeavors, Hersh also inserted a series of knacks.

Hersh called President Bush the “most radical president we’ve ever had” and said after two terms, he could not understand Bush’s decision to go to war in Iraq.

“The good news is we have 90 days left of George W. Bush,” said Hersh. “The good news is tomorrow will be one less day of this man.”

Yet Hersh said the presidential candidates have not provided specific answers on how the United States will get out of Iraq.

“It’s so much more complicated,” said Hersh. “What about our moral obligation? How will we get out in a way that’s honorable?”

Hersh said he hopes the next president considers uniting Iraq’s neighboring countries to find a solution.

When Hersh went on to discuss the press, he expressed disappointment in his colleagues, and himself, for not aggressively searching for answers about the war and not holding the current administration accountable.

“Where are my colleagues in the press?” Hersh asked.

“Where are my colleagues in the press?” Hersh asked.

“My colleagues in the press have failed you,” Hersh said. “We didn’t do the job.”

CSULB student Arif Ali said he agreed with Hersh and appreciated his honest opinions and bluntness.

“The man knows what he is talking about,” said Ali, who is from Baghdad.

Long Beach resident Penelope Doherty said hearing Hersh’s criticisms were eye-opening.

“I’m very moved. I find the state of affairs of our country is tragic,” said Doherty. “I agree that people in our government have lost their moral compass.”

In his conclusion, Hersh said he sees a bleak future due to challenges such as the war and the economy.

“The worst is yet to come,” said Hersh.

branda.duran@presstelegram.com
866-488-1597