

the scoop

Biden’s plans of action for 2021 Changes to education affordability

ALAYNA ROSS
Reporter

The United States has a new president as of Jan. 20. Joseph R. Biden has become the 46th president of the United States alongside Vice President Kamala Harris, who is the first female vice president in the country’s 243-year history.

As of Jan. 29, President Biden has signed 42 executive actions since coming into office. These executive actions cover a multitude of different sectors including, health care, environmental, equity, economy, COVID-19, census, immigration, ethics and regulation.

For healthcare, Biden has resumed enrollment on HealthCare.gov from Feb. 15 through May 15 and has instructed federal agencies to review policies that may decrease the accessibility to the Affordable Care Act. Biden has also made efforts to repeal the ‘Mexico City Policy,’ which bans government funding for foreign nonprofits that conduct or support abortions.

Biden has also made many changes to the United States’ environmental stance by putting the climate crisis at the forefront of national security and U.S. foreign policy. Biden has restored the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.

The United States also officially rejoined the Paris climate and has canceled the Keystone XL pipeline. Moving forward, Biden wishes to reverse over 100 Trump actions on the environment.

Equity has also been a large platform for Biden. He has passed executive actions that prevent workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, actions to prevent and address harassment and discrim-

ination against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, orders to cut federal contracts with private prisons, build relationships with tribal communities and reverse the ban on transgender Americans joining the military.

There are a multitude of executive orders that have been passed since Inauguration Day, including laying the groundwork for a \$15-an-hour minimum wage, COVID-19 precautions and the end of discriminatory bans on entry to the United States.

However, there is a specific plan that has not been enacted yet, but has the potential to have a large impact on the students of Ashland University.

Biden has expressed his intention to address affordable education called “Plan for Education Beyond High School”. According to Joe Biden’s website, “Biden is proposing a bold plan for education and training beyond high school that will give hard-working Americans the chance to join or maintain their place in the middle class, regardless of their parents’ income or the color of their skin.”

In Joe Biden’s plan, he outlines an interest to invest in community colleges and training, encourage college as the solid pathway to the middle class and offer support to colleges and universities such as historically Black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions.

Biden will enact legislation that will allow students attending school part-time and DREAMers to attend a community college for up to two years without having to pay tuition. This legislation will extend to adults who wish to pursue education beyond high school.

According to Joe Biden’s web-



U.S. EMBASSY JERUSALEM

Biden speaking at an event in Israel during his vice presidency.

site, the plan will be a federal-state partnership, with the federal government covering 75% of the cost and states contributing the remaining responsibility, except in cases of Indian Tribes, in which the federal government will cover up to 95% of the cost.

Scout Weber, President of AU’s College Democrats, supports Biden’s stance on affordable education.

“I think his plan is a taking step in the right direction for making education more accessible,” Weber said. “Biden’s plan will not fix all of the problems with this, but it is a great way to open up the conversation for more opportunities in higher education.”

Biden has also offered up a plan to forgive student loans of \$10,000 per student. This program will offer \$10,000 of undergraduate or graduate student debt assistance to public servants for every year of national or community service, up to five years.

In 2009, the Obama administration attempted to alleviate the burden on college students by nation-

alizing all public loans. This meant that students could only borrow guaranteed loans from the federal government.

Joe Beaver, President of College Republicans, explains how Biden’s plan for loan forgiveness will hurt students more than it will help.

“President Biden is doubling-down on this [Obama’s student loan reform] failed policy with forgiveness of \$10,000 per student and nothing prevents each university from raising its costs by \$10,000, voiding all benefit to the student,” Beaver said. “Pressure must be placed on each university for balanced budgets and limited bureaucracies; otherwise, Biden’s bandaid to the wound of student debt will hurt far more students in the coming decades.”

With differing views on Biden’s call to action this far into presidency, only time will tell what changes America will begin to see.

For more information on national, state and local politics, visit AU-Live.com’s ‘politics’ tab.

HAMILTON con’t from front

During his time at AU, Hamilton has inspired those who have entered his classroom.

AU senior and finance major Cameron Deal said Hamilton was an outgoing educator who was dedicated to helping his students succeed.

“Dr. Hamilton’s relationships with his students were like no other,” Deal said. “He cared to hear about every student’s story and offered his insight and help in any way that he could.”

Deal said Hamilton even helped him overcome a very difficult time in his life by offering guidance and advice when it was needed the most.

“That is just one of the many moments that proved Dr. Hamilton was a selfless and compassionate person. He took time out of his day to listen to my personal issues and offer words of encouragement,” Deal said. “I will never forget what he did for me.”

Hamilton dealt with many medical hardships throughout his life, but it never stopped him from doing what he loved. He remained committed to the Ashland Community until the very end.

“The death of Dr. Mark Hamilton has been hard on the AU community, but his legacy will always live on. I certainly aspire to have the outstanding character Dr. Hamilton had as I grow and mature as an adult,” Deal said. “I hope that I do well and make him proud.”

Hamilton is highly regarded by faculty and students as a man of kindness, faith and intellect. For many years, this cherished quote by Hamilton’s favorite author lived on his classroom door, encompassing his optimism even as he endured challenges in life.

“I believe in Christianity as I believe the sun has risen. Not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.” - C.S. Lewis

Coburn Art Gallery kicks off new semester with Faculty Art Exhibition



AVAERIE FITZGERALD

Artwork by faculty lines the walls at the Coburn Art Gallery.

NATE POWALIE
Reporter

The Coburn Art Gallery held a faculty art exhibition to kick off the 2021 spring semester at Ashland University. The event, which features works from the Art and Design Department Faculty on campus, ran from Jan. 21 to Feb. 5.

Some of the faculty involved included professors: Cynthia Petry, Dan McDonald, and Priscilla Roggenkamp.

This exhibition has been an annual event for the last 25 years, as faculty collects pieces that are special to them to show off to the community.

“It’s important for students and

the campus community/Ashland community to really see what we’re doing,” Petry, Director of the Coburn Art Gallery, said.

Her inspiration is based on her pursuit of something unknown and entitled “The Unknown Men.”

“[My] mixed media collage series aligns with loss of knowledge and birding,” she said. “I am a chaser.”

Petry finds interest in collecting old photographs, most of which she attempts to return to rightful owners, but to those she cannot find, she reinvents the photos and gives them a longer life.

In an interview conducted on 88.9 FM WRDL, Petry said, “My work this semester has been based

on these unidentifiable photographs. I collect photographs from the 1800s, early 1900s, and I try to collect ones that I can return to families.”

That research takes her to outlets like Facebook, Ancestry and Find A Grave.

“I have these photos that aren’t lost,” Petry said. “I look at it like birdwatching. We’re after this elusive clue.”

That mystery is one of many elements that can draw an audience to an artwork.

Roggenkamp had many factors behind her “Family Separation Series.”

“What inspired my artwork?” Lots of things,” she said. “The

topic of this body of work is immigration in its broadest sense. Many of our families have come through the immigration system at some time in history.”

Family makes for the ultimate connection to this piece. The temper around society plays an influential role in setting the mood of a work.

“The collagraph prints are part of the ‘Family Separation Series,’” she said. “As a parent of two daughters, there is nothing that is scarier to me than being separated from my children.”

Art can tie into many aspects of life, and Roggenkamp’s idea can influence viewers to connect more with their feelings of family, which

led to her other piece on display.

“The ‘Immigration Quilt’ responds to news of people who were caught up in the immigration system...waiting,” she said. “Seeing images of people sleeping on the ground or waiting endlessly behind chain link fences really struck me. They were the inspiration for this quilt.”

With the new semester now underway, students, faculty, staff and community members can check out art at the Coburn Art Gallery any weekday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on weekends from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m..

If you have a story idea or want event coverage, you can email Avaerie Fitzgerald at afitzge3@ashland.edu