LTE: Funding for higher education applauded

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By E. Joseph Savoie

On behalf of Louisiana's colleges and universities, and the more than 200,000 students that they serve, I'd like to take advantage of this forum to thank Gov. Kathleen Blanco and our Louisiana legislators for their strong show of support for higher education in the recent legislative session.

The 2006-07 budget passed by the Legislature and championed by Gov. Blanco provides much-needed relief for higher education's storm-induced financial shortfalls and funds a range of important initiatives vital to Louisiana's long-term rebuilding effort.

Because of their efforts, we will be able to rebuild Louisiana's higher education enterprise, strengthen economic and workforce development efforts, increase cooperative initiatives with our elementary and secondary education partners, and of course, provide much-needed quality programs and services to the citizens of our state.

The faculty pay raise in particular sends an important signal across the country that education is a priority for Louisiana. Because of this support
and many other budget initiatives, we will be able to maintain the unprecedented positive momentum in education in our state - momentum that will continue to pay large dividends for our citizens.

Education is the foundation of economic vitality - and, more to the point this year - of our long-term recovery from Katrina and Rita. We look forward to continuing important work to advance our goal of increasing student access and student success. Louisiana's future is truly being determined now, and the support of our elected officials this session will make a positive difference.

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