

"With the donations from Saddle Up, our goal is to begin wrap-around programs that afford a 'one-stop' buffet of therapies and techniques to families who have children with an ASD diagnosis."

Founded in 1983, the nonprofit Project Help provides early-intervention and family-support services to children with disabilities and developmental delays up to age 3.

Project Help, which just began its 13th year in its North Baird Lane facility and its second in the Fairview Center's Yellow Room, currently serves 48 children with special needs. It also is a stimulating, progressive preschool for 17 toddlers who are developing typically in a program that promotes diversity, creativity and cultural experiences. Practical outcomes are developed for all children in a play-oriented natural environment.

The center's staff, which includes more than 150 student volunteers each semester, works with parents through family-support programs that include workshops, one-to-one interactions and informal training seminars focusing on specific instructional techniques.

Grants from the Tennessee Department of Education through Early Intervention Services and the United Way of Rutherford and Cannon Counties partially fund Project Help's work. The Murfreesboro Charity Circle, Middle Tennessee Electric Customers Care, St. Rose Knights of Columbus, Gwenn Walker Memorial Fund, Bands for Babies, the MTSU Martial Arts Club and Wild About Smiles Pediatric Dentistry also have made major contributions to Project Help, providing the center with much-needed equipment, toys and consumable items.

Although the center's staff members are grateful for the ongoing support, they admit they need additional money to help meet Project Help's child-centered mission. Fundraisers like the July 30 "Saddle Up!" event target those goals. In addition to expanding the program with services for children with ASD, Waldrop said the funds raised by the event also supplement daily operations.

Items up for bid at the live auction include a Cape Cod playhouse, tickets on Southwest Airlines and a Nashville Night-Out with a room at the Opryland Hotel.

Individual tickets, which include a meal and two drinks, are \$50 each. They're available by calling the center at 615-898-2458. The evening's dress code is casual.

For more information about Project Help, visit its new Web site at www.mtsu.edu/projecthelp.

Grad student gets up close to space shuttles

An MTSU graduate student attended workshops and toured Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Fla. on June 12, a day before the space shuttle Endeavor was scheduled to launch.

Jeff Brummitt, a research assistant for MTSU aerospace professor Paul Craig, stood under the Discovery space shuttle as NASA employees were repairing tiles and got a close-up view of Endeavor while it was on the launch pad during his tour of Kennedy Space Center. Craig and Brummitt are conducting research to determine the best methods to train air traffic controllers and pilots on using the next generation of technology through funding secured by U.S. Rep. Bart Gordon.

"I was surprised and very pleased at the access the group was given to the operations at the space center. The orbital processing center and the close-up view of the active launch pad were truly amazing," Brummitt said. "I truly stood in awe at the size of the Vehicle Assembly Building. I know the walls there have seen many historic moon rockets and spacecraft pass through over the years."

The shuttle launch was canceled early the next morning because of a hydrogen leak, according to Gordon, who coordinated the workshops and tour for the student and a group of eight middle Tennessee teachers. The launch has been rescheduled to July 11.

"Despite the disappointment of missing the launch, the teachers reported they would be able to use the things they learned in the workshops in their classrooms back home and were thrilled at the access they had to the shuttles Discovery and Endeavor," said Gordon, who chairs the House Science and Technology Committee. Its Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics governs NASA.

Before touring the Kennedy Space Center, Brummitt spent the morning in workshops. "One of the most beneficial things I brought back was how vital it is to use the resources and tools available to us. We must always be looking for new tools to aid us in our research and improve the ones we already have," he said. "The exercise on the lunar landing was very interesting and convinced me that we must gather all the facts that we can in order to make intelligent decisions."

Brummitt said the safety of the shuttle crew was more important than the scheduled launch.

"I was prepared ahead of time for this possibility. The tour alone was well worth my travel down," he said. "The safety of the crew far outweighs the glamour of the launch coming together for the viewing public. Just knowing that the launch will eventually still take place is enough to keep me more than interested."



CLOSE TO HISTORY— MTSU aerospace research assistant Jeff Brummitt stands less than 1,500 feet away from the space shuttle Endeavor on June 12, a day before the launch was canceled.

photo submitted

Change in tobacco surcharge delays implementation until January 2011

The Tennessee State Legislature finalized its efforts to delay the implementation of the Tobacco Use Surcharge for state employees, including MTSU workers, until 2011 and sent the legislation to Gov. Phil Bredesen June 17 for his signature. The governor's office has indicated that he will sign the legislation and will not veto the postponement.

This means the Tobacco Use Surcharge for state employees will not be implemented Jan. 1, 2010, as planned. It is now set to begin on Jan. 1, 2011.

The State Insurance Committee voted to continue funding support of the Tobacco Quit Products being offered at \$5 co-pays until Dec. 31, 2009. Employees who are currently using any of the quit support products (gum, etc.) will be able to continue at the reduced co-payment until that date. On Jan. 1, 2010, the co-pays will return to normal and over-the-counter products will not be covered.

For additional information and updates, visit www.state.tn.us/finance/ins/tobacco.html.

fee method and had again raised tuition across the board, officials said students at state universities would have faced an increase of about 6 percent. Those at UM would have paid a flat 7 percent and community college students another 5.5 percent.

Under the old system, part-time students paid about \$6,000, or 30 percent more, for a university degree than full-time students. At community colleges, part-time students paid about 27 percent more.

The chart at right, provided by the TBR, shows in-state tuition increases for 2009-10 and compares them to costs in 2008-09. The new tuition chart does not include Memphis.

"The Tennessee Board of Regents believes that in order to fill Tennessee's need for a better educated population, it is important to encourage people who cannot go full-time to pursue higher education nevertheless," the board said in a release. "The inequity in the cost of a degree for part-time students has been a disincentive for their attendance."

Tennessee Board of Regents' In-State University Tuition Per Semester (www.tbr.state.tn.us)				
Hours	Cost 2008-09 (tuition capped @ 12 hours)	Cost 2009-10 (more than 12 hours cost \$10/hour)	Percentage Change	Dollar Change
1	\$189	\$191	1.06%	\$2
2	\$378	\$382	1.06%	\$4
3	\$567	\$573	1.06%	\$6
4	\$756	\$764	1.06%	\$8
5	\$945	\$955	1.06%	\$10
6	\$1,134	\$1,146	1.06%	\$12
7	\$1,323	\$1,337	1.06%	\$14
8	\$1,512	\$1,528	1.06%	\$16
9	\$1,701	\$1,719	1.06%	\$18
10	\$1,890	\$1,910	1.06%	\$20
11	\$2,079	\$2,101	1.06%	\$22
12	\$2,151	\$2,292	6.56%	\$141
13	\$2,151	\$2,302	7.02%	\$151
14	\$2,151	\$2,312	7.48%	\$161
15	\$2,151	\$2,322	7.95%	\$171
16	\$2,151	\$2,332	8.41%	\$181
17	\$2,151	\$2,342	8.88%	\$191
18	\$2,151	\$2,352	9.34%	\$201