

# → **Fast Facts**

## → **Pell Grants**

Due to an update in the way the U.S. Department of Education calculates eligibility for Pell Grants, more than one million low-income students could face reductions in their federal aid. About 1.2 million students would receive reduced Pell Grants and about 90,000 would lose Pell Grant eligibility entirely.

Liane Hansen. "Low-income students facing reductions in federal aid," *Weekend Edition Sunday*, National Public Radio (NPR), December 19, 2004.

## → **New and emerging occupations**

According to the Occupational Employment Statistics division of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2001, most new and emerging occupations were in firms with fewer than 100 employees. No single industry dominated the creation and growth of these occupations. Slightly more than half of all new and emerging occupations were paid in a range of \$8.50 to \$17 per hour. Among the emerging occupations in the field of education are school diagnosticians, distance learning coordinators, and home-school liaisons.

Jerome Pikulinski, "New and emerging occupations," *Monthly Labor Review*, December 2004. [www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2004/12/ressum1.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2004/12/ressum1.pdf). December 28, 2004.

## → **Search for extraterrestrial intelligence**

The SETI Institute predicts that we'll detect an extraterrestrial transmission within twenty years. A new telescope array consisting of 350 6.1-meter radio dishes networked into a large, sensitive radio telescope will speed up the SETI search by a factor of 100. The recent discovery of planets around many nearby stars is a strong argument that our solar system isn't really unique at all, says Jack Welch, UC Berkeley professor of electrical engineering and astronomy.

David Pescovitz, "Listening for ET," *Lab Notes*, Volume 4, Issue 9, December 2004. [www.coe.berkeley.edu/labnotes/1204/welch.html](http://www.coe.berkeley.edu/labnotes/1204/welch.html). January 3, 2005.

## → **Best free reference Web sites of 2004**

The Machine-Assisted Reference Section (MARS) of the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) of ALA has compiled a list of 30 best free reference Web sites. The list includes the American Association of Retired Persons, History Matters, Math Forum, Science Daily Magazine, and the Valley of the Shadow. The URL is below.

"Best Free Reference Web Sites 2004 Sixth Annual List," American Library Association. [www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/rusasections/mars/marspubs/MARSBestRef2004.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/rusasections/mars/marspubs/MARSBestRef2004.htm). January 3, 2005.

## → **Benefits of preschool**

The benefits of preschool, validated by several long-term tracking studies, are higher test scores, increased social skills, better classroom behavior, higher graduation rates, increased productivity, and less criminal behavior, W. Steven Barnett, director of the National Institute of Early Education Research, told attendees of Simba Information's *Ready To Learn: Opportunities in the Early Childhood Education Market Conference* in his keynote address.

"Preschool attendance promotes higher test scores, higher graduation rates and less criminal behavior, according to experts at Simba Information Conference," Simba Information. November 4, 2004. [www.simbanet.com/news/press/2004\\_1104\\_simba.htm](http://www.simbanet.com/news/press/2004_1104_simba.htm). December 19, 2004.

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