

# Oakland Tribune Sunday

Tony Hicks: I double-dog dare you to eat one of these IN A&E

**\$114** IN MONEY-  
SAVING  
COUPONS  
INSIDE

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## EROSION OF THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

California, once a champion of low-cost, world-class higher education for all, sees the dream slipping away 50 years later

# BROKEN PROMISE

## Nursing homes got cash, cut care

Law that provided additional money had few safeguards to ensure it was spent as intended

By Christina Jewett and Agustin Armendariz  
*California Watch*

California's nursing homes have received \$880 million in additional funding from a 2004 state law designed to help hire more caregivers and boost wages.

But 232 homes did just the opposite. They either cut staff, paid lower wages or let caregiver levels slip below a state-mandated minimum, a California Watch investigation has found. Included among these homes were 24 facilities in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

The homes that made these cuts collected about \$236 million through 2008, the last year of available data. That's more than a quarter of the total Medi-Cal funding increase shared by the state's nursing homes. But the law that made the extra money possible included few safeguards to ensure that patient care improved.

Many nursing homes appeared to have used the cash infusion to help bolster their bottom lines, according to a California Watch analysis of state nursing home data. Among the 131 homes that cut staff by 2008, the median profit was 35 percent more than other homes in the analysis.

At the same time, the analysis shows, about two dozen homes that made the deepest caregiver cuts had about one-third more deficiencies than other state facilities. State inspectors noted a litany of violations that included neglecting bedsores and giving patients the wrong drugs.

"There was an implicit good-faith agreement that things would get better ... and that was broken," said state Sen. Elaine Alquist, D-Santa Clara, chairwoman of the Senate Health Committee. "It was broken for the people of California and for a very vulnerable population — those that need the greatest care and those that can't advocate for themselves."

James Gomez, chief executive of the state's nursing homes, said the state's nursing homes are "not doing well."

See **NURSING**, Page 5

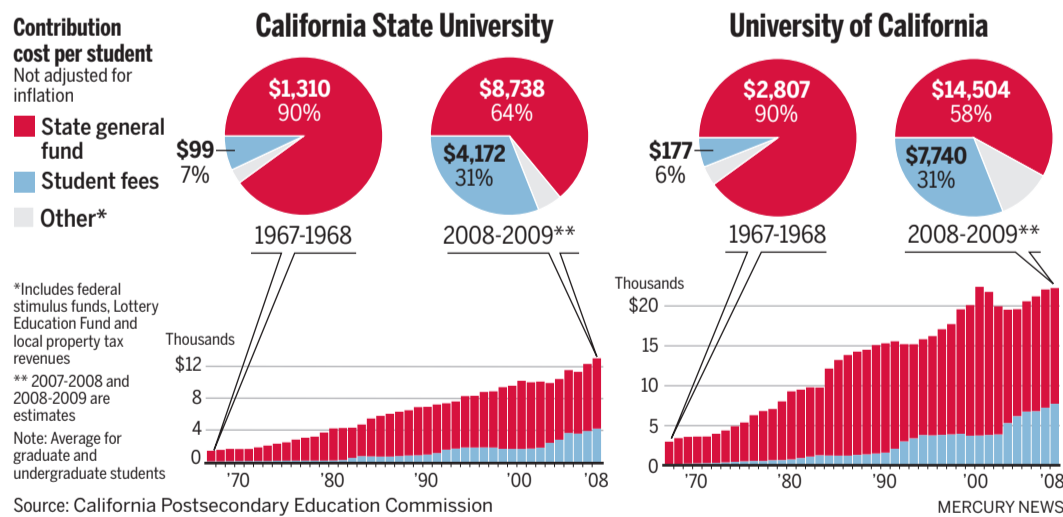


PAULINE LUBENS/BAY AREA NEWS GROUP PHOTOS

UC Berkeley is borrowing more than \$300 million to build a new Student Athlete High Performance Center, above, and pay for a Memorial Stadium retrofit.

### Shifting the cost of education to students

California has been decreasing its contribution since 1967 despite its early pledge to provide low-cost college education.



**Money:** Caught in a budget meltdown, state has steadily reduced its share of costs

**Growth:** Population surge puts pressure on schools to keep up with demand

**Oversight:** Lack of coordination means money is not spent efficiently



Students attend a lecture at San Jose State. All Cal State schools have cut costs and raised fees.

By Lisa M. Krieger  
*lkrieger@mercurynews.com*

Fifty years ago this month, California promised a low-cost, high-quality university education for every qualified high school graduate in the state. But that promise — inflated by growing populations and academic aspirations — expanded beyond the state's willingness to pay for it.

What went wrong? How did the university system that was long the envy of the world suddenly become the focus of angry street protests, overcrowded classrooms, soaring tuition and a monumental debate over whether the state can ever make good again on its groundbreaking mission?

While the recession turned a slow-brewing problem into an instant crisis, a Bay Area News Group analysis of California's higher-education mess reveals that many factors drove the inevitable and ugly collision between the university system's ambitious and uncoordinated growth and the state's declining ability and desire to pay for it. Among the most critical:

■ **Plummeting state support:** Since 1990, state spending per student has dropped by half in inflation-adjusted dollars. While the state paid about 90 percent of a student's education 40 years ago, it now pays 69 percent for Cal State students and 62 percent for those in the University of California system.

■ **No guaranteed funding:** Unlike K-12 education, universities are

See **EDUCATION**, Page 9

### INSIDE



**STATING HIS CASE:** While speaking at the California Democratic Convention, Jerry Brown challenges GOP gubernatorial candidates to a series of debates. **Page A6**

## INSIDE TODAY'S TRIBUNE

■ **ON LIFE SUPPORT:** A 59-year-old San Francisco man is clinging to life after being attacked Friday in Oakland. **Page A3**

■ **THEY WANT THEIR WEB TV:** Silicon Valley explores the next frontier in technology, TVs with Internet capabilities. **Page C1**

■ **NEW ADDRESS:** The California Independent Film Festival takes a big step forward with a move into its new home. **Page D1**

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### MORNING REPORT

**Not done yet: Iceland's volcano keeps spewing ash, grounding flights**



ContraCostaTimes.com  
InsideBayArea.com

**VIDEO:** Local conservative rapper takes aim at President Barack Obama and health care reform at InsideBayArea.com.

**INDEX**  
Crossword.....D6  
Scores.....B8  
Classified.....I5-16  
Opinion.....A7-8  
Obituaries.....C3-4  
Amy Alkon.....D2

**WEATHER B10**  
Sunny  
H: 70s L: 50s

**DON'T MISS OUR SPECIAL OFFERS ON THE BACK OF THIS SECTION**

