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## Washington Insider

### Higher Education Act Reauthorization Enacted

After five years of discussions and extensions, Congress has passed and the president has signed the first reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) since 1998. Although most of the HEA deals with federal student aid, the legislation also includes many federal programs affecting colleges and universities, including support for international education and foreign language studies and graduate education. The new law also has a number of provisions reflecting some of the policy controversies affecting higher education.

### NARA to Open Personnel Files of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS)

The National Archives and Records Administration opened more than 35,000 official personnel files of men and women who served in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), which was the U.S. wartime intelligence agency during World War II. The files cover civilian and military personnel who served and were later transferred, discharged, reassigned, or died while in service prior to 1947. These records are available for research in the textual research room at the National Archives II facility in College Park, Maryland.

### Smithsonian's American History Museum to Reopen Nov. 21

The Smithsonian's National Museum of American History will reopen its doors to the public on November 21, 2008. The reopening will mark the completion of a two-year, \$85 million renovation of the building's center core and internal infrastructure. The centerpiece of the renovation is a specially designed viewing gallery for the 200-year-old Star-Spangled Banner. The renovation was funded through a public-private partnership with \$46 million in federal funds and the remaining \$39 million from individuals, foundations and corporations.

Sources for the column include the Consortium of Social Science Associations' Washington Update and the National Coalition for History's Washington Update