

“Building a bridge among faculty, staff, and students”

Dr. John Beaumont kicks off 2000-2001 Provost's Speaker Series with outreach lecture

by Liz Hayes
news editor

On Monday, November 13, Dr. John Beaumont presented the first of the three lectures in this year's 2000-2001 Provost's Lecture Series. The recipient of the newly created Council of Fellows Outreach Award, Beaumont spoke on the topic of "Building a Bridge Among Faculty, Students, and Industry" to the crowd gathered in the Reed Lecture Hall.

After Provost and Dean Dr. John Lilley introduced Beaumont, he began his Power-Point enhanced lecture. Beaumont, associate professor of engineering at Behrend, began by defining outreach as the reaching beyond the boundaries of the university to regional industry for educational support. He also cited outreach as the key reason for the success of Behrend's Plastics Engineering Technology Program.

Beaumont went on to describe how several hundred area companies were very interested and involved in the development of this program, which began with four students in 1989. He indicated that several local companies actually approached area colleges with the idea for such a program, and it was Penn State Behrend, with the firm backing of Dr. Lilley, who latched onto the idea. In the end, it was decided that Behrend would provide the facilities and faculty for the program, while regional industry would secure the funds and much of the equipment.

The goal of the PLET program is to provide a "world class education" for plastics engineering students,

according to Beaumont. He described how the curriculum of the program forces students to go "above and beyond," by being involved in projects directly with local industry. This gives students the opportunity to "interact and act as real engineers."

Students also get extensive training in research, including the communication and presentation aspects of it. Every year, Beaumont and the PLET department take students to the annual ANTEC conference. At this conference, students get the opportunity to present their research findings to a large audience. Beaumont said that Behrend's students usually come away from ANTEC with 70% of the best paper awards that are presented there. This year, approximately 60 PLET students will be making the trip to Dallas, Texas, for the ANTEC conference, which occurs in May.

Another project that Beaumont has helped to initiate is the Plastics CAE Center. It came to the attention of the program that many local companies were having difficulties adjusting to CAE (computer aided engineering). Therefore, the PLET program implemented this center to help train businesses in the operation and benefits of this technology. Again, students get a great opportunity to participate.

One other area that Beaumont has helped to develop is in the area of international study. Every year the PLET program tries to take a group of students to an engineering fair in foreign countries. Some of the recent countries the program has visited include China, Germany, England,

France, and Australia. Beaumont remarked that this is a great experience for students, especially since many have never been on an airplane before, let alone in a foreign country. It helps prepare students for what may lie ahead in the real world of employment.

"In ten short years, we are one of the most recognized plastics programs in the nation," Beaumont stated. And he attributes this largely to the great outreach efforts the school has made to involve regional industry in the program.

Beaumont has been with the PLET program since its creation. He is an active member in the Society of Plastics Engineers and has received numerous national SPE awards. In 1999, he received the Division Chair Award for the Injection Molding Division of SPE. He also will soon be marketing his newly patented Melt Flipper Technology through his own company, Beaumont Runner Technologies.

The Faculty Outreach Award, which Beaumont is the recipient of this year,

was established by the Council of Fellows to honor the accomplishments of a faculty member in the area of service to the community or his or her profession. The two other awards the Council presents each year are the

Faculty Research Award and the Excellence in Teaching Award. The three recipients of these awards are then invited to address the college as part of the Provost's Speaker Series. The other awardees this year are Dr.

John Champagne, associate professor of English and recipient of the Teaching Award, and Dr. Syed Saad Andaleeb, associate professor of marketing and recipient of the Research Award.

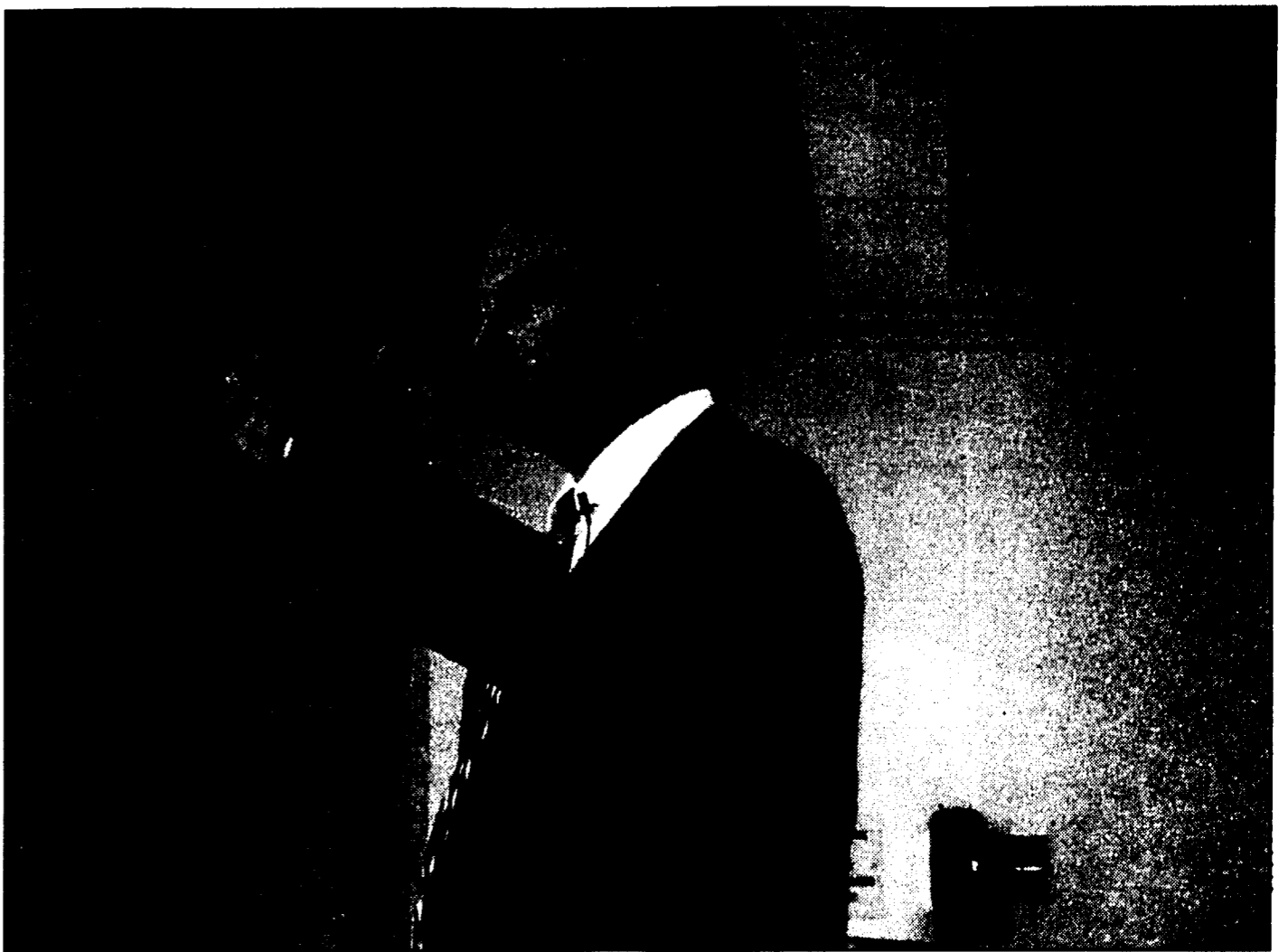
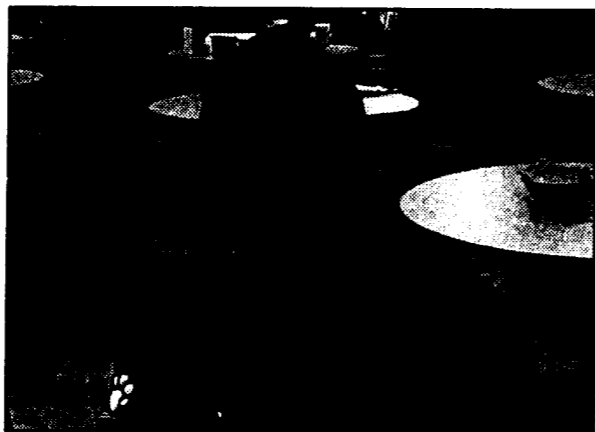


PHOTO BY NEIL MAKADIA

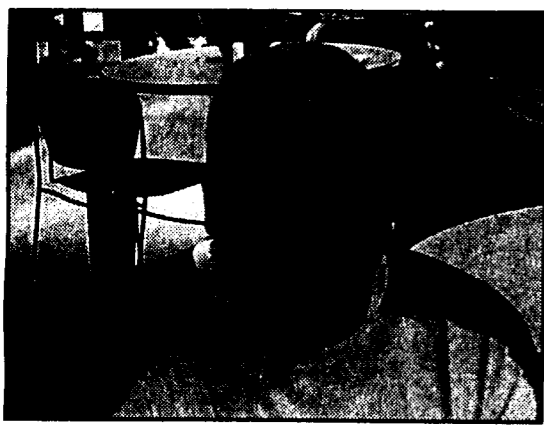
Dr. Beaumont kicked off the 2000-2001 Provost's Speaker Series with his presentation on outreach and the Behrend Plastics Engineering Technology Program. He spoke at noon on Monday, November 13.

Why do we celebrate Thanksgiving?

"For the good food."
Ben Yunion,
Engineering, 01



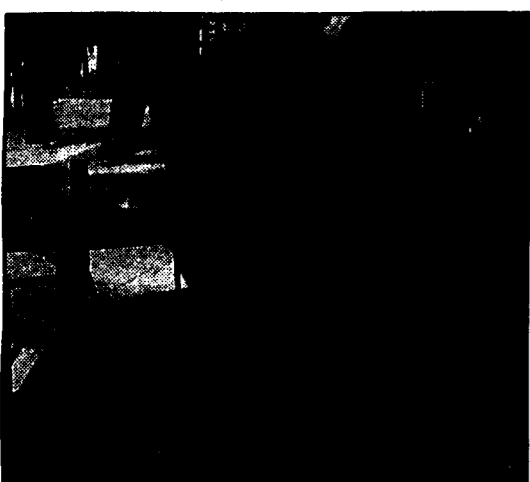
"To remember our past, and to give thanks and to reflect on all of the good things that we have."
Ryan Sullivan,
Engineering, 01



"It's a time to get together with family and friends."
Jodie Payne,
Psychology, 03



"It's a time to get together with my family, eat good food, and watch football."
Sherry Stevenson,
Business, 03



"It's time with my family."
Andrew Snyder,
Mechanical Engineering, 01



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