

FROM FRONT PAGE

DINNER FOR SIX STRANGERS

Harvest's service area, have benefited from the bank's services.

To alleviate hunger in the area, Second Harvest assists food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and other non-profits that typically help lower income people.

Second Harvest also helps to prevent food waste by collecting foodstuffs that would otherwise be thrown away. Seggi said the bank takes in food from all levels of food service; manufacturers, retailers, wholesalers, and farmers all give food to the bank.

"People often ask me 'What's wrong with the food?' They assume something is wrong with it because we are giving it away," Seggi said. She explained the excess food is usually the result of over-production, packaging mistakes, or excess seasonal production (when a product is made with seasonal ingredients or packaged in an obviously seasonal or holiday-related manner).

"It's still good product and there's nothing wrong with it — the producer just can't sell it," Seggi said.

She added that many local producers donate to the bank, including Van de Kampe, Welch's, Wegmans, Tops, Quality Markets, and Troyer Farms.

Seggi then went on to provide some data on the people who generally

benefit from the food bank. In a hunger survey released this week, many surprising statistics were found. For instance, despite the stereotype, many people who benefit from the food bank are not homeless or jobless. It was found that only 10 percent of those serviced were homeless, and that 39 percent had one or more jobs.

Also, many of these people or members of their families were affected by serious illnesses. Nearly 50 percent had serious illnesses, and about 30 percent had to forego medical care because they couldn't afford both food and medicine.

Other statistics Seggi provided were related to socio-economic status. She said more than 80 percent of beneficiaries were white, and more than 20 percent had had some post-secondary education. Also, only six percent were also benefiting from government assistance.

The most startling statistic Seggi provided was the number of children being served by Second Harvest. She said 31,000 children were served every year, which totaled nearly 40 percent of the total served. She said if these children were to occupy every seat in Jerry Uht Park, the Civic Center, and the Warner Theatre, they still wouldn't all fit in the stands — another 5,000 seats would be necessary.

REDC progression on schedule

by Kristen Schrum
staff writer

What could the governor of Pennsylvania do with \$30 million? Donate it to Penn State Behrend for the construction of the Research Economic Development Center, and that's exactly what former Governor Tom Ridge did last December in the largest grant in county history.

For 13 years, Penn State Behrend has been planning to add a new building to the school. The money allocated by Ridge will pay for the construction of the 150,000 square-foot building.

In an October Faculty Council meeting, Dr. Jack Burke, interim provost and dean, put the REDC as one of the top capital projects requiring attention right now. At an October Provost's Advisory Council meeting, Burke said initial meetings to plan the design of the building would be held at the end of October. The REDC is being designed by the partnership of Weber Murphy Fox, Inc. of Erie and NBBJ of Columbus, Ohio.

This center will be the new home of Behrend's School of Business and the School of Engineering and Engineering Technology. The vacated classrooms in current buildings will be utilized by other academic disciplines.

The new building will be located south of the chapel, between the Junker Center and Knowledge Park. It will house classrooms, computer labs, and offices, greatly increasing the academic space on campus. It will also increase space for many of Behrend's professors who have been working out of temporary trailers.

The REDC building will be available for researchers and students from the other colleges in the region to utilize the equipment and resources as well. The main goal of the building is to increase the space available for learning and training to attract more young, skilled workers to this area, who will in turn help fuel new businesses in the region.

According to the John Ream, director of operations at Behrend, the design of the building should take about 12 months to formulate, and the construction should take up to 18 months, putting project completion somewhere in January 2004.

Ream said the building is projected to be about 50 percent larger than the Academic/Library building and will include many different types of rooms such as lecture halls, computer labs, seminar rooms, conference and study rooms, and a plastics lab. And for those who get hungry while they are learning, the building will also include a food area, much like the coffee window at Bruno's.

"All of the programs we do here are based on what businesses tell us they want. I just think this is going to push us to the next step," former Provost and Dean Dr. John Lilley, who first proposed the idea in 1987, once said. Lilley also said the facility fits well with the college's goal to work with Erie-based businesses to fill their training needs while offering Behrend students business experience while still in college.

"If we're serious about continuing to grow as a state, we need to attract and retain young people," Ridge said during the grant presentation. "The foundation is in place. Now we just have to keep our young people here." The new center is projected to help with the larger picture of growth in Erie. Ridge said the new center is a key piece for developing young talent that will add brainpower to the existing companies in the area, and hopefully these talented individuals will decide to start their own businesses here in Erie.

This new REDC building will bring many new opportunities for both Behrend and the city of Erie. Behrend has undergone some major changes in the last few years, and it seems there are other major changes to come in the years to follow. The growth and development of this school is valuable to the students who attend here and the students to come.



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