

FROM FRONT PAGE

COLLEGE TO CAREER

everyone had given their presentations, Mester presented a concise overview of what academia has to offer.

Christa Morris, a 1998 graduate of Behrend currently working in advertising for the Lake Shore Visitor, described the "short path" to her current position. After graduation, she performed shows at Universal Studios for two years. She next moved to Washington, D.C., where she spent a year with the Washington Post. She is happy to be back in Erie, where she does inside sales, which means that she works predominantly on the phone.

She advised students to carefully consider their internship and not to be afraid to take advantage of more than one internship opportunity.

"I learned more in the first five minutes of my internship than I did in four years of college," said WICU news reporter Julie Eisemann. In her internship with the Pittsburgh station WPXI, Eisemann was thrust into first-hand experiences for which she had no preparation. She had to quickly learn the newsroom code and determine what events were newsworthy. After working at the assignment desk, she shadowed reporters and eventually handled her own news stories.

Eisemann continued to work for WPXI until she decided to aggressively pursue a position with a station that would allow her more air time. After receiving many rejection letters, she came to Erie and sought out the manager of WJET. Her determination impressed him, and she secured a job the next week. She has been a news reporter in Erie since, and though she admits the pay is unimpressive, Eisemann finds her work invigorating.

Julie Gardner, a reporter for the Erie Times-News, shared a similar story of "forcing" the newspaper to hire her. She landed a paid internship with the Erie Times-News the summer after her sophomore year at Mercyhurst College, and she continued to work for the paper in the ensuing years. After spending some time working for a newspaper in Dunkirk, she came back to her job in Erie but then moved to New York, where her career changed direction. She took a job with WNYC, New York City's public radio station, which she kept until two months ago.

"The WNYC offices are six blocks away from the World Trade Center," Gardner explained. "I was there when it happened. So I came back."

Brittany Rowe, promotional coordinator for WQLN, stressed the importance of internship experience and a portfolio. She said her portfolio was instrumental in helping her to gain her position at WQLN, and she suggested that students make a point to gather materials which could be used for a portfolio or resumé tape. She also shared a few tips for making the most out of an internship.

"Timing is very important," Rowe said. "I took my internship right before my last semester, and it was a good

panelists agreed, derives from the fact that they are women in a field dominated by men.

"There are lots of women in the communications field, but they're fighting their way up," Eisemann said. Still, they all agreed that extreme sexism in the workplace is not tolerated. In response to the question of whether it would be useful for women in their position to take classes in gender studies, the panelists responded in the affirmative.

"It's important to understand how people think, to help learn personal relationships," Morris said. Rowe agreed, citing the differences in how men and women communicate. Next, the panelists talked about the effect of their job on their lifestyle. Although they all reported having to work long hours, including many weekends and holidays, none have found the toll on their home lives to be excessive. The evening concluded with a discussion of how students can attract employers.

Gardner dispelled the notion that a degree in communications is necessary in order to attract an employer in the field. She graduated with a degree in political science and gained her job with WNYC largely because of her writing skills.

"I was appropriately goofy, and that's what they were looking for," she said. Eisemann credited her persistence with winning her the job at WJET, while Morris cited her experience and Rowe her portfolio. After a nightcap of cookies and punch, the students departed with a much better feel for what options are available.

"Evenings like this are very important because they show the possibilities that are here," said Dr. Rod Troester, advisor of the Society for Women in Communications.

He had attempted before to start up a club like this, but until this year not enough students had expressed interest. "It takes a half a dozen or so students to get started," he said. "The core group has taken the idea and run with it."

"I am very excited about the success of our first event," said publicist Libbie Johnson. "Behrend has a general communications degree program and the guest speakers effectively portrayed the different job positions and careers students can choose from." Anyone wishing more information about the Society for Women in Communications should contact Johnson at emj120@psu.edu



PHOTO BY ROB WYNNNE

Julie Eisenman (left) and Jule Gardner spoke at the "From College to Career" program held Thursday by the Association for Women in Communication organization. Both women have careers in the field of communications.

transition from college to the real world." Size is also important, but bigger is not necessarily better. Working for a small corporation or a non-profit organization can be more rewarding than working for a large company because there are more opportunities for hands-on experience.

All the panelists agreed that working with people is one of the best parts of the job. Gardner and Eisemann, in particular, related the rewards and the responsibilities of meeting so many different people on the job. Rowe expressed a special affection for the WQLN events involving children, while Morris thrives on the constant challenge of her position. Part of that challenge, the

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

~asked by Kelly Walsh



"Watch movies at home with my girlfriend."

Chris Alibarhuo
Marketing, 07



"If I had a fireplace, I'd curl up next to it with a good book."

Melanie Serensca, Julie Heiser
Comba, 05; General Arts
and Sciences, 05



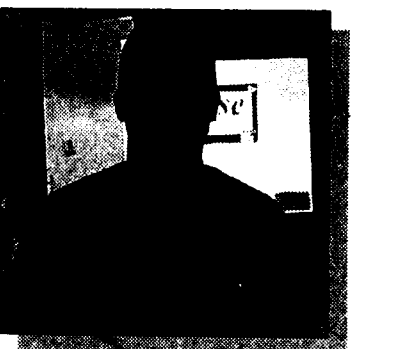
"Read."

Jim Lucas
Psych, 07



"Eat chips and dip."

Kate Costanzo, Erin Phillips
Math, 07; BLASC, 07



"Go sled riding."

Matt Kaufman
Biology, 03

What is



Find out December 5

REED WINTERGARDEN

OPHELIA PROJECT

ment in which girls can develop into healthy, happy, well-balanced, confident women.

The movement later spread throughout the region. The Behrend chapter of the OAC was formed when a guidance counselor at Roosevelt Middle School phoned Dr. Charisse Nixon, instructor in psychology and a member of the Ophelia Project. Together they saw a need for positive young role models for both boys and girls in local schools.

Last October the OAC received approval from the Student Government Association and is now an official campus organization. "A big challenge we have faced is that of membership," said Kerr. "Since Behrend has such a large number of commuters it's very hard to find people come to meetings when classes are over and get students involved."

The OAC is trying to get a large group of students together from which to establish mentoring programs at elementary, middle, and high schools near Behrend, such as Harbor Creek and Iroquois. It also wants to work with teenagers and help them develop their own service programs at their high schools.

Another OAC goal is to educate others on what types of problems teens are facing and how to help them through the difficulty of adolescence.

One program the OAC presents is called Straight Talk: Sex, Drugs, and Lies. Members go into schools and talk about sexuality, drugs, self-esteem, and relationships. They hope that this program will show teenagers the power of choice by telling their own personal stories.

The OAC urges anyone interested to get involved. "Come check us out," said Kerr. "It's a great organization for someone who is looking for a service organization or for someone who wants opportunities to help others. Also this is not an organization partial to girls. Our mentoring programs already established at Roosevelt and McDowell consists of both boys and girls. We are looking for anyone who wants to take time out of their lives because they care and want to be there to help and talk with another."

The next OAC meeting is Monday at 7p.m. in Reed 114.