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WEATHER

Friday's forecast:



Rain Likely
High: 69°
Low: 45°

Check page 2 for the weekend weather outlook.

INSIDE

NEWS

Behrend students will unite on Wednesday to protest rape and violence. Read about the event and about opinions concerning this problem from various people in the Erie community. See page 2 for more details.

Every year, the English department holds a banquet to honor graduating Literature and Creative Writing majors. This year's dinner will be held at the Marketplace Grill on Monday. Read more about it on page 3.

The Returning Adult Student Organization (RASO) will raise money for the Butterflies for Kids Children's Garden on April 22. Students will also have the opportunity to win prizes from local retailers. See page 3.

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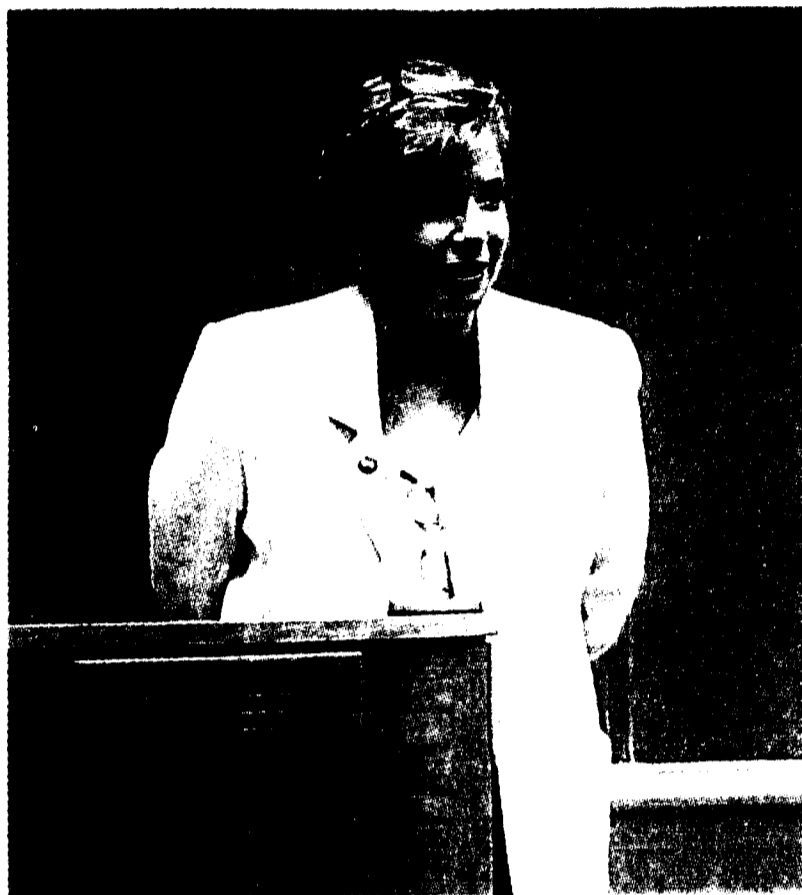
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Communications Convocation features Erie mayor, local professionals



PHOTOS BY ERIN MCCARTY / BEHREND BEACON

Behrend professor Tina Mengine (left), communication director for Mayor Rick Filippi (right), speaks during Saturday's Communications Convocation about her unlikely path to her current position. Filippi discusses his plans for the city of Erie and the importance of communicating with the public.

by Erin McCarty
news editor

"We need to make a commitment to have brain gain rather than brain drain," said Erie Mayor Rick Filippi during his address to students attending the Communications Convocation on Saturday.

The remark was in response to a question regarding the difficulty of keeping college graduates in Erie. This objective was a major reason for holding this four-hour event, which was coordinated by Behrend professors John Kerwin and Dr. Clare Porac and Mercyhurst professor Richard Welch. Representatives from Behrend, Mercyhurst, and Gannon discussed the benefits students can derive from the communications departments at each of the colleges, while local business people in communications shared their expertise on how to break into the field and what opportunities are available in Erie.

The convocation began in Roche Hall, where attendees were greeted by

a table stacked with juice and doughnuts. After ample time to mingle and munch, Welch introduced the program. Kerwin took the microphone to describe an journalistic experience demonstrating the "fine edge of competition" inherent in the business. After giving each college's representatives a chance to speak, Kerwin rose once more to introduce Tina Mengine, the communications director for Filippi.

"My mother told me last weekend, 'If you had told me when you were 10 that you would be the communications director for the mayor of Erie, I never would have believed you,'" Mengine confided, describing her shyness as a child that extended into her college years. She graduated with a degree in business and took her first job as a salesperson for a radio station. Although it was very difficult for her initially, she warmed to her work and spent the next 12 years working in radio. From there, she spent six years at an ad agency.

"The key is to have a message and

to stay on it," Mengine said. She preferred creating ads for political candidates to ads for products, and last year she ran successful ad campaigns for three candidates, one of whom was Filippi. He offered her the newly created position of communications director, and she accepted, not realizing fully what the job entailed but catching on quickly.

"The most frustrating part of the job was dealing with the media," she said. Although she had anticipated media relations comprising 20 to 30 percent of her job, it actually takes up about 90 percent. Although the media extensively covers affairs of the city, it tends to focus more on the negative occurrences. "Nobody cares that we fixed the problem," she said. "Everybody cares that we didn't do it right the first time."

After Mengine's speech, the group moved to Bruno's for a free lunch buffet, where everyone was encouraged to meet people who had come from other institutions. After lunch, the convocation continued in Nick

with two panel discussions featuring local professionals with careers in communications.

Behrend student Megan McNamara conducted the discussion on Advertising, Public Relations, and Marketing. The featured panelists were Dave Waples, National Fuel; Shari Robinon, Bensur Advertising; Michelle McKean and Jeff DeMarrais, General Electric; and John Oliver, Erie Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Mercyhurst student Shivani Suri led the discussion on Media: Radio, Television and Print. These panelists included Shari McBride, Star 104; Stan Zlotkowski, Z3 Concepts; Mark Soliday and Raychel Vendetti, WICU-TV; Bill Welch, former city editor of the Erie Times; and Bob Williams, Corry Journal.

Each panelist discussed his or her occupation and accepted questions

CONVOCATION

continued on page 3

Yeung concludes speaker series

by Erin McCarty
news editor

On Tuesday, Dr. Chuck Yeung, Associate Professor of Physics at Behrend, presented "Balls, Springs, and Tubes: Computer Simulations in Polymer Physics" the final lecture in the Provost Speaker Series.

Yeung was the recipient of the 2001 Council of Fellows Faculty Research Award, which is given to the faculty member who best exemplifies the role of inspired, dedicated researcher. After an introduction by Interim Provost and Dean Dr. Jack Burke, Yeung proceeded with a power point demonstration of how computer simulations can be useful in trying to predict how polymers behave.

He began by defining polymers as large-chain molecules with many repeating constituent parts, and mentioned familiar examples including naturally occurring polymers such as cellulose, starch, and DNA and synthetic polymers such as polyethylene, and polystyrene (styrofoam). The properties of a particular polymer are greatly influenced by its constituent parts. Homopolymers, which consist of many identical repeating blocks, vary significantly from copolymers, which contain blocks of different types.

Yeung introduced the concept of simulation, with the following joke: A farmer's cows were not giving any milk, so he enlisted the aid of some local experts. An agricultural expert and an engineer both came but were unable to solve the problem. Then a theoretical physicist arrived and announced that he knew how to fix the situation. "First," he instructed, "let's assume spherical cows."

Yeung explained that simulations require a certain number of assumptions; this can prove to be a disadvantage because one can never be certain that what is happening in the simulation is what would actually happen in reality. Another major drawback to computer simulations is that the simulations only last a very short time (for example, a simulation that runs for several months on a cluster of a dozen computers might only represent a couple billionths of a second of real time). However, there are advantages which outweigh the disadvantages. Simulations are relatively inexpensive, can be set up to measure any quantity desired, and provide a clean test of theories. Additionally, the researcher knows all of the elements going into the simulation, whereas an experiment using real materials will usually yield a mixture of many compounds, in addition to the one being studied and this can confound the results.

Yeung went on to explain that his simulations involve modeling polymers as strings of beads, and then using the basic principles of classical Newtonian physics ("freshman physics") to calculate the force acting on each bead. With tens of beads in each simulated polymer string, and hundreds of

YEUNG continued on page 3

Robert Kennedy Jr. denounces local polluters, eco-terrorists

by Kevin Fallon
assistant news editor

Robert F. Kennedy Jr. spoke to a full house at Behrend's McGarvey Commons on Wednesday and talked about environmental issues, many of which involve Erie. Kennedy's speech titled "Our Environmental Destiny" hit Erie close to home.

Kennedy condemned eco-terrorism at a Wintergreen Gorge construction site located near the Behrend campus. Kennedy said although civil disobedience is a legitimate tool in democracy, this case was terrorism because the vandals did not stay to accept the consequences.

"(This was) an attack on democracy and will not protect our environment," Kennedy said.

Kennedy also commented on General Electric, which is a major supporter of Behrend and part of Knowledge Park. Kennedy claimed that GE is a corporate polluter that dumped PCBs into the Hudson River and left behind a \$2 billion clean-up



PHOTO BY ERIN MCCARTY / BEHREND BEACON

Robert Kennedy Jr. speaks Wednesday in the McGarvey Commons on the subject "Our Environmental Destiny."

bill after it abandoned factories.

He said corporations have polluted Lake Erie, a lake that should belong to the people, not big business. Kennedy said the people of Erie have a right to the lake and "that right has been stolen from Erie."

Kennedy was the final speaker in Behrend's 2001-02 Speaker Series, "Creating the Global Future." Kennedy reputation as a defender of the environment comes from his fight to protect New York City's water supply and the Hudson River. Kennedy acts as senior attorney for the Natural Resources Defense Council and a clinical professor and supervising attorney at the Environmental Litigation Clinic at Pace University's law school. Kennedy has also won settlements for the Riverkeepers organization which fights against corporate polluters.

The speech focused on protecting nature not for nature's sake but because it enriches humanity. He said economic prosperity equals economic prosperity and polluters abuse