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Benacci named Alumni Fellow

by Jen Henderson and Erin McCarty
associate editor and news editor



PHOTO BY BECKY WEINDORF / BEHREND BEACON

Presenting the prestigious Alumni Fellow Award to Joseph Benacci (second from right) are (L to R) Larry Mroz, president of the Penn State Alumni Association, Dr. Jack Burke, Interim Provost and Dean of Behrend College, and Graham Spanier, President of Penn State University.

Joseph A. Benacci was given the 2002 Alumni Fellow Award at a reception in the Reed Wintergarden Thursday night. Benacci is the CEO of TWL Corporation, a family-owned company in Erie. He attended Penn State Behrend in 1953-55, then continued on to University Park.

Since that time, he has given excellent service to the Behrend community. He was part of the organizing committee for the Behrend Alumni Association in the mid-1980s and then served as a member of its board of directors.

Benacci accepted his prestigious award from Penn State President Dr. Graham Spanier, who also visited Behrend recently for the renaming of the Lilley Library and Kochel Academic Center.

Interim Provost and Dean Dr. Jack Burke introduced the recipient, praising him as "one of our most loyal alumni."

"His hard work and determination set a high standard," said Burke.

"We're here to honor an outstanding Penn Stater," said Spanier. "Joseph Benacci is a rich source of information and inspiration for the Penn State community."

The Alumni Fellow Award is the most prominent award that can be given by the Alumni Association. The title is respected in the Penn State community. It entails asking the recipient to continue on with his or her community service to the campus and sharing knowledge and ideas with students here.

"The award is also an invitation for them to return to Penn State... sharing well-informed and sometimes hard-learned perspectives," said Spanier.

Benacci accepted the award with humility and gratitude. While breaking the ice, Benacci said, "My wife cautioned me - don't clear your throat when you get up there." He went on to thank everyone in attendance, especially his family: his wife Berit; and his children Joseph, Christina, Ray, Jennifer, and Karl, a current Behrend student described by Burke as "a very tall guy."

Benacci spent Thursday and today at Behrend

BENACCI

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Virtual Career Fair viable option for students

by Lori DeFabio
staff writer

Two Penn State Behrend students this year had the opportunity to intern for a Virtual Job Fair through StayInventPA.com.

The Stay Invent the Future website shows people the many reasons that Pennsylvania is a great place to live and work. This virtual job fair allows people to post their resumes and allows companies to find prospective employees. The website is updated every day so students can search for companies that are looking for employees and don't have to worry about whether all the positions are filled yet.

The website also allows people to search places to work and lists the costs of living in different cities in Pennsylvania. If you find a company you are interested in, you can submit your resume directly. Otherwise, just post your information and wait for a company to contact you.

Behrend students Valerie Hammond and Kelly Walsh, both Communication and Media Studies majors, have received internships through the Stay Invent the Future program. Hammond believes that it's a great way to find employment without all the pressure of making a good first impression.

"I think this is an incredible opportunity for students to research and contact companies without the pressure of standing before a representative," said Hammond. "This way they can get a feel for exactly what the company is looking for before even having a first interview."

The Virtual Job Fair is important (and free) to all students, but especially to those who are graduating soon and need to find a job.

"I graduate in December so I am looking for a job, too... and very soon," said Hammond. "I think this program is an easy way for students to get connected with Pennsylvania companies that are looking for qualified candidates."

CAREER FAIR

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College students join in local rally for peace

by Kevin Fallon
assistant managing editor

Calls for peace were heard in downtown Erie on Monday. About 400 people gathered in Perry Square to protest the possible United States invasion of Iraq. The rally was organized by local college students and religious groups.

The rally included hymns, prayers, and appeals to the Senate and Congress to say no to war. The rally ended in a march across South Park Row to the Federal Building where protesters voiced their opinion on a possible war.

Behrend student Jon Edwards said he went to show his support against the war.

"Rallies like this are important to show our leaders who represent us what the citizens they represent think about certain issues, so that they can make their decisions based on what the people think," said Edwards.

Edwards also said that the student involvement in the rally was an important aspect.

"Students should definitely get involved, there are a lot of us and we can definitely make a difference," said Edwards. "Looking back at the history of our country, movements such as the anti-Vietnam war efforts and the civil rights movement, student participation has always been a huge part and has always helped to get people heard."

Jen Kons, a student at Mercyhurst who helped organize the rally, said that events like this are a good way to be heard.

"Our goal of the rally was to show Congress there is a substantial contingent in Erie that is opposed to military intervention in Iraq and that when the time comes for Congress to vote... we want them to vote 'no,'" said Kons.

Kons also stressed the importance of student involvement in issues they believe are important.

"As students we've never had the opportunity to do anything like this. I think we did an excellent job of rising to the occasion and doing something we never thought we could do."

The rally was one among several nationwide that took place on the first anniversary of the United States' bombing of Afghanistan. The rally also took place hours before President Bush spoke to Congress, the United Nations, and the American people urging U.S. military action in Iraq. Bush said that Hussein is a threat due to his biological, nuclear, and chemical weapons and is linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

According to a recent USA TODAY/CNN/Gallup Poll, support for such a war has been falling, although the majority of Americans still favor it. Support for the use of ground troops in Iraq declined from 74% in November to 53% before Bush's speech Monday. Also a narrow majority of likely voters polled said the United States had not done all it can to solve the crisis diplomatically.

The Rev. Charles Mock, of Shiloh Baptist

PEACE RALLY

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PHOTO BY KEVIN FALLON / BEHREND BEACON

Many local college students were among the 400 people who gathered in Perry Square on Monday to protest war with Iraq.

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