

• Student Government Elections Results Inside •

The Behrend Beacon

October 10, 2003

Vol. LI

RECEIVED 2 Pages

OCT 15 2003 No. 5

BEHREND COLLEGE LIBRARY

2003 college grads face tough job market

by Rob Wynne
managing editor

For students like Julie Lafferty, graduating from college meant moving on – moving on right back to Behrend.

Lafferty, 22, graduated from Behrend last December with a bachelor's degree in political science. Despite sending out numerous applications and resumes, Lafferty decided to go back to school and pick up another degree, this time in history. Despite the hiring slump in 2003, Lafferty feels that teaching might be a better bet in her career hunt.

"I applied to different firms in the Erie area to be a paralegal. I also tried some federal agencies like the CIA and FBI, but I don't meet the age/height/weight requirements. The CIA didn't hire me because I wasn't bilingual, and you can't get certified to teach with just a political science degree, so I decided to take 30 credits to complete my History major so I can go to Mercyhurst as part of the 4+1 teaching program," said Lafferty.

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, an information source for college career services throughout the country, hiring of new college grads dropped 36.4 percent in 2003 compared to 2002.

"It is a fact of the current job market that new college grads will have a difficult job search, and it's been that way for a few years," said Andrew Watters, associate director of the Career Development Center at Behrend.

Lafferty, currently employed as a server at Cracker Barrel restaurant, explained that many of her friends could not find work, either.

"Pretty much all of my friends are having trouble finding jobs," she said. "Even the ones with bachelor's degrees are still working as servers, cooks, hosts, or working 12 hours a day at a minimum paying job. It's rough."

It's not just political science and other humanities majors that have problems in the current job market. The current slump has affected everyone from English to Engineering.

"Actually, the job market has affected all majors, to some degree," said Watters.

"The thing about job searching is that different majors will want to

use different strategies and techniques to go after jobs."

Companies that typically come to campus to look for on-campus recruiting and career fairs are usually looking for students in the technical field, business, management, accounting, and liberal arts majors who may have an interest in business or marketing. With liberal arts majors, those jobs are often fewer in number with any given employer and so the job search strategy with those majors will be not necessarily be through on-campus recruiting, but working with the Career Development Center, we can help them develop a list of contacts in a particular field."

Behrend does have its advantages when it comes to preparing for the job search. A visit to the CDC, for example, is strongly recommended by Watters, Lafferty, and Dr. Jack Burke, Behrend's CEO and Dean.

"We offer access to all of the University's career services and job fairs. We also offer personal attention in helping with resumes and I always encourage students to seek help with their resumes. There is nothing easier for an employer to do than to reduce the pile of resumes by throwing out the ones with typos or poor organization. Also, one should customize the resume for the particular job sought," said Burke.

"Another service that students are taking advantage of is our mock interview service. It's a full-practice interview we video-tape to provide feedback," said Watters.

There are also a number of unique connections that Behrend has to the business world. Knowledge Park, for example, which houses offices of G.E. and Aalborg Industries, among others, is tied into Behrend campus and utilizes Penn State's research abilities in addition to offering internships and employment to many students from Behrend.

"The long-term goal is to eventually have 3,000 people employed in Knowledge Park. It will be a major source of jobs for graduates. Many of our graduates are employed there now, but the Park is still in its infancy," said Burke.

Students should also consider internships. Watters said that many employers will often fill a job opening with an intern because the



PHOTO BY ROB WYNNE/BEHREND BEACON

2003 graduate Julie Lafferty is one of the students effected by a current hiring slump. Lafferty returned to Behrend to complete another degree to get her certification in teaching.

company has had a chance to get to know an individual. Also, students can make many contacts within their field, which will ultimately help them in the long run.

Students can take advantage of one of the Career Development Center's features, the annual all-majors job fair, on Tuesday from noon until 4 p.m. in the Junker Center. Students in all academic areas and grade levels are encouraged to attend, as companies will be looking for interns and summer positions, as well as part and full-time jobs.

For more information about the Career Development Center, visit www.pserie.psu.edu/student/cdc or call 898-6164.

Students and donors recognized at annual scholarship luncheon

by B.J. Shields
staff writer

On Saturday, nearly 400 bodies packed the gymnasium in Behrend's Erie Hall for the annual Scholarship Luncheon. The event took place during Parents and Families Weekend so that students' achievements could be shared with friends and family.

More than 150 students were recognized for receiving various scholarships that are distributed exclusively through Penn State Erie. Students were honored with a luncheon buffet, followed by an awards ceremony.

Penn State Behrend Campus Executive Officer and Dean Dr. Jack Burke welcomed the attendees in his opening remarks.

Students and their families were then directed to the complimentary buffet featuring stuffed chicken breast and lasagna prepared by Behrend's Housing and Food Services.

After lunch was served, guest speaker Mr. Michael Woods (76 LIB) gave a brief speech in which he expressed his gratitude for the opportunities he had at Behrend due to the support of financial scholarships and the people who made them possible.

"I wouldn't be where I am today if I wouldn't have been blessed with the opportunities made possible through the generosity of these folks," said Woods in reference to some of the scholarship donors who were also in attendance.

It is our hope that we can give people the same opportunities to shape their dreams, he continued, referring to the establishment of the trustee scholarships that have been created by his own family.

Mr. Woods' own generosity in giving to the local Penn State campus has made possible the Michael Jude Woods and Tracy Kimes Woods Family Trustee Scholarship this year. The recipients of these awards were Ryan Beer, Jason Campbell, and Chandra Giger.

Like the recipients of the Woods

Family Trustee Scholarship, all students being honored at the event received scholarships made possible through charitable gifts made directly to Behrend College. These endowments are gifts of cash, which can then be invested.

The return on the principal amount (the cash gift) of the endowments is then invested in the institution, allowing for the creation of different scholarships, said Ed Blaguszewski, Manager of University Relations.

All of the financial awards were made possible through endowments. Each individual scholarship has its own criteria for awarding. Most of the scholarship recipients must first meet certain criteria. The common criteria is that they must be a student at the Behrend campus. From there, however, there are other determining factors leading to the awards, such as potential for leadership, academic merit or financial need.

At the awards ceremony, each student who received one of the Behrend scholarships was called by name, class rank and major to the front of the room to be awarded a certificate of recognition.

The ceremony is funded annually by the Office of Student Affairs, with

additional funding support coming from the Office of Development and University Relations.

Overall reaction to the event was positive.

The scholarship luncheon was great. You can't beat public recognition, free money and free food, said Barton Leonard Towell, fifth semester MIS major. Towell was one of six recipients of the Erie Insurance Group Leadership Scholarships.

Christopher Strayer, third semester English major, said, "It was a nice event; the food lived up to expectations and a lot of certificates were handed out. Strayer was recognized twice during the event for his award of the Ray and Virginia McGarvey Scholarship and the Harriet Behrend Ninow Memorial Scholarship.

In addition to the students and their families, the ceremony was also attended by representatives of the various academic schools of the college, the presenters of the awards, the keynote and guest speakers, and donors who have made the scholarships possible.

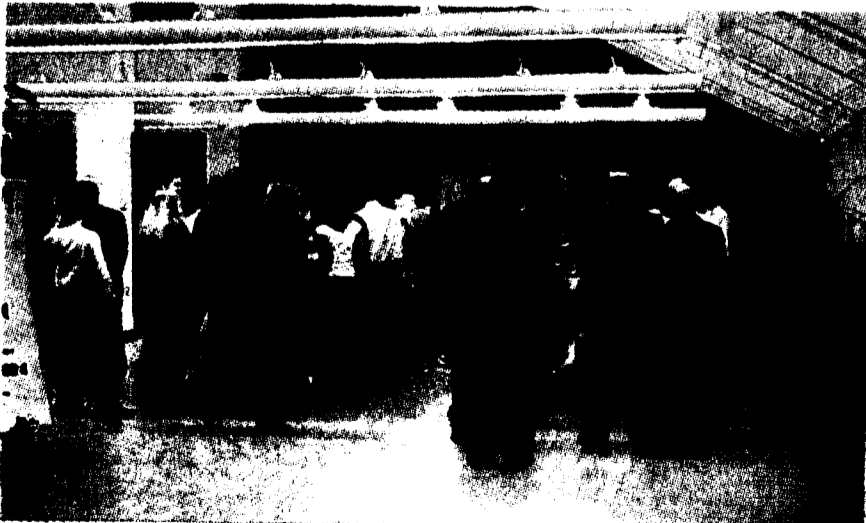


PHOTO BY LAUREN PACKER/BEHREND BEACON

In addition to the scholarship luncheon, the annual Harambee dinner was also held last weekend. These two events coincided with Parents and Families Weekend.

Spanier visits Behrend to announce new Fellow

by Justin Curry
news editor

On Wednesday, University President Graham Spanier made the four-hour trek to Erie to announce the latest appointment to the Council of Fellows.

At 5:15 p.m., President Spanier addressed the crowd of approximately 40 distinguished staff, alumni, and community members and presented John S. Heller, Ph.D., with the Alumni Fellow Award, the most prestigious award given by the Alumni Association.

Heller is the Director of Research and Development for Raegant Development at Abbott Laboratories.

Heller, a graduate of Wesleyville High School, now resides in Kenosha, Wis. He has worked for the past 18 years as a scientist at Abbott Laboratories, which is a global health care company devoted to the discovery, development, manufacture and marketing of pharmaceutical and diagnostic products.

Heller led the team that developed the first widely available test for HIV antibodies in the blood, which enabled mas-

sive screening of blood donors and significantly reduced the risk of acquiring HIV infections from blood transfusions.

The Lion Ambassadors were on hand at the press conference to help welcome and seat the guests, who started arriv-

ing around 3 p.m.

Due to the large amount of people expected at the event, the lot outside of Reed was blocked off for the majority of the day, which resulted in a small parking crunch throughout the busier hours.

When Heller arrived at Penn State Erie, he spoke to students in chemistry and biology classes and presented a general forum on AIDS research. He stated that "the most effective way to stop AIDS is to interrupt transmission of the virus, and it will take a combination of education, science and government policy to accomplish that."

He compelled to students to get actively involved in this global epidemic. "You [the students] are the people who will solve this problem in the coming years," he said.

Dr. Jack Burke was also on hand to present Heller with this award. "We are exceptionally proud of John Heller's scientific accomplishment, he sets a fine example for our students and demonstrates the value that results from a Penn State education," Burke said.

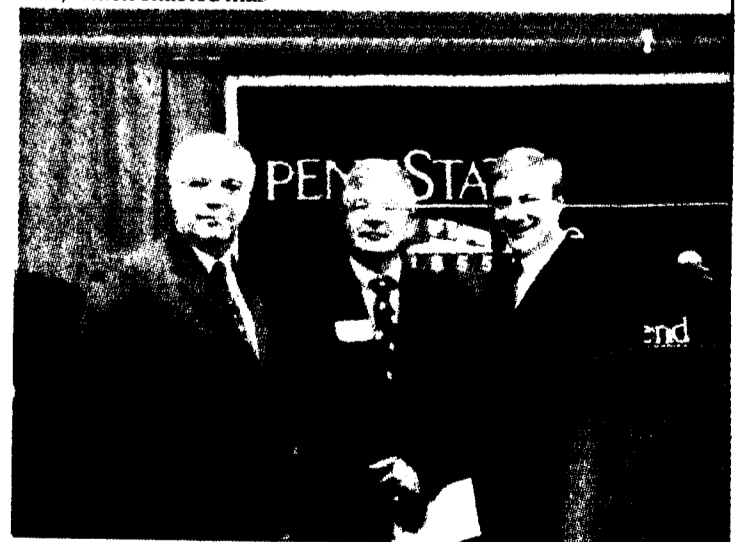


PHOTO BY JUSTIN CURRY/BEHREND BEACON

Dr. Jack Burke (L) and Dr. Graham Spanier (R) present John S. Heller, '67 with the Alumni Fellow award on Wednesday, October 8.

Inside

NEWS 1-4
EDITORIAL 5
NAT'L CAMPUS NEWS 6-7

A & E 8
FEATURES 9

CALENDAR 10
SPORTS 11-12

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