



THE BEHREND BEACON

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Behrend ranks fourth Students take advantage of depression screening

By Crystal Chisholm
staff writer

One of the many offices located in the RUB is the Personal Counseling Center which shares office space with the Career Development Center. The Personal Counseling Center is a support service offered to all students for free and has been an important part of campus life for many. At the completion of this school year, the office will have seen approximately 1200 students.

In addition to coming into the office for an appointment, students can participate in the counseling centers newest service, online mental health screenings. Every year in the month of October, Behrend, along with other colleges, hospitals, community centers and various places of employment around the country participate in National Depression Screening Day.

National Depression Screening Day has been held around the country every year for 14 years and is used to help raise awareness about depression and other mental health illnesses. Penn State Behrend was ranked fourth (with 293 students) in the number of colleges whose students have taken advantage of the online screening.

Sue Daley, director of Personal Counseling, has two psychologists on her team: Allison Parr-Plasha, who is on temporary leave, Nicole Kirkpatrick and a consulting psychiatrist, Dr. Max Gottesman.

The counseling office provides students with many services such as individual counseling, crisis intervention and support groups. Each person who comes to the office to talk with us is different, so we "tailor a plan or strat-

egy that works for you," said Daley.

Not only do students have the option of actually coming into the office for a visit, if they are a little apprehensive about the confidentiality in the office, they have the choice of taking the online survey in the privacy of their own rooms.

"Each student that speaks with a psychologist in the office should not worry about confidentiality," said Daley.

Anyone that comes in for a session is given a counseling contract that clearly explains what you can expect from the counseling service. Most things discussed in your session can only be released with your written permission.

The National Depression Screening can be accessed by visiting the Penn State Erie website. Under the Student Life headline, there is a link for the webpage of Personal Counseling; there one will find the link for the National Depression Screening.

The Personal Counseling Center offers not only face to face consultations, but through The National Institute of Mental Health, is able to provide online screenings for Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. The inventory of questions and answers used in the screenings prepared by the National Institute of Mental Health are very brief. If interested in taking any of the screenings, visit the website <http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org/screening>, keyword: "feelgood."

On Behrend's Personal Counseling website, there are articles about illnesses such as Seasonal Affective Disorder, Depression and Bipolar Disorder. In addition to these articles, there are links to other websites commonly known to affect college aged students. Many of these sites provide students with a "virtual pamphlet" which offer tips to college students on learning how to cope with stress.

Daley realizes that full time students may not always have the time to come into the office and talk to a

COUNSELING, continued on Page 2

African Resurrection entertains, teaches



BRADLEY STEWART/BEHREND BEACON

Two youngsters participate in dancing led by African Resurrection. The five member group, composed of two singer/dancers and two drummers, performed in the McGarvey Commons at noon on Feb. 15 as part of the Rhythms of Life Series. The performers are Baltimore's premier African heritage dance ensemble and seek to raise awareness of traditional West African dance and drumming

Challenge course considered

By Bradley Stewart
news editor

The Office of Student Activities is considering the construction of a challenge course on campus. Such a course, an obstacle run and series of cables suspended from the ground, would provide a setting for campus or community groups to strengthen communication skills, cooperation, trust and conflict resolution.

The consideration of a challenge course being constructed is in its earliest stages. Student Activities, spearheaded by Chris Fox, coordinator of student organizations and program development, are gauging student interest, cost estimates and insurance issues.

Two weeks ago, Student Activities sent out a survey through zoomerang.com, selecting a random sampling of students to answer outdoor and challenge course related questions. Survey results will be collected within the next few days, but according to Fox, so far the responses to a challenge course have been "pretty positive."

"The survey was created to get student feedback," said Fox. Fox wants to ensure that if a course is constructed, that students will take advantage of the opportunities it will create.

In examining information from the survey and in dialogue with other campus units, Fox has found that ROTC, residence life and the athletics department has a direct interest in

the construction of such a course.

"All athletic groups would benefit from the conditioning the course would provide," said Brian Streeter, director of athletics.

Several sports teams train and condition in the campus pool. In Streeter's opinion, the construction of a challenge course would provide another means of strengthening the body as well as teamwork skills.

"We used to have a course with pull-ups and dips and more," said Streeter. "But we lost the course with the building of the road."

Costs for such a course vary greatly depending on the complexity of the course. Possible course constructions include a low ropes course, a high ropes course or both. While a high ropes course is most appealing to the individual, the low ropes would be more valuable in terms of team building and would provide less insurance issues.

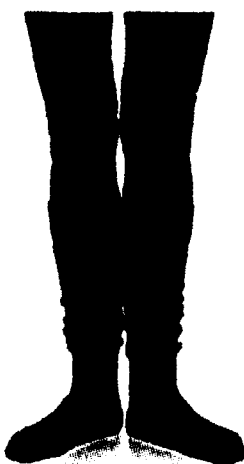
"Penn State's insurance will cover a low ropes course," said Fox. "General liability won't cover a high ropes course."

Though no estimates have been made at this point, according to Fox, costs would be covered by grants, not any raise in tuition or fees.

Possible locations considered for the course include the Behrend Fields and behind the Junker Center.

Fox, who has worked with challenge courses in the past, is optimistic about the addition and success of a course at Behrend.

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Our offices are located downstairs in the Reed Union Building.

Gays face 'uncomfortable' climate

By Daniel J. Stasiewski
editor in chief

A satirical flyer titled "12 Reasons Same-Sex Marriage Will Ruin Society" was found burned on the Women Today office door about two weeks ago. Brittany Hess, president of Women Today, discovered the sign, which she said was put up to show support for fellow Multi-Cultural Council organization and campus GLBT group, Trigon.

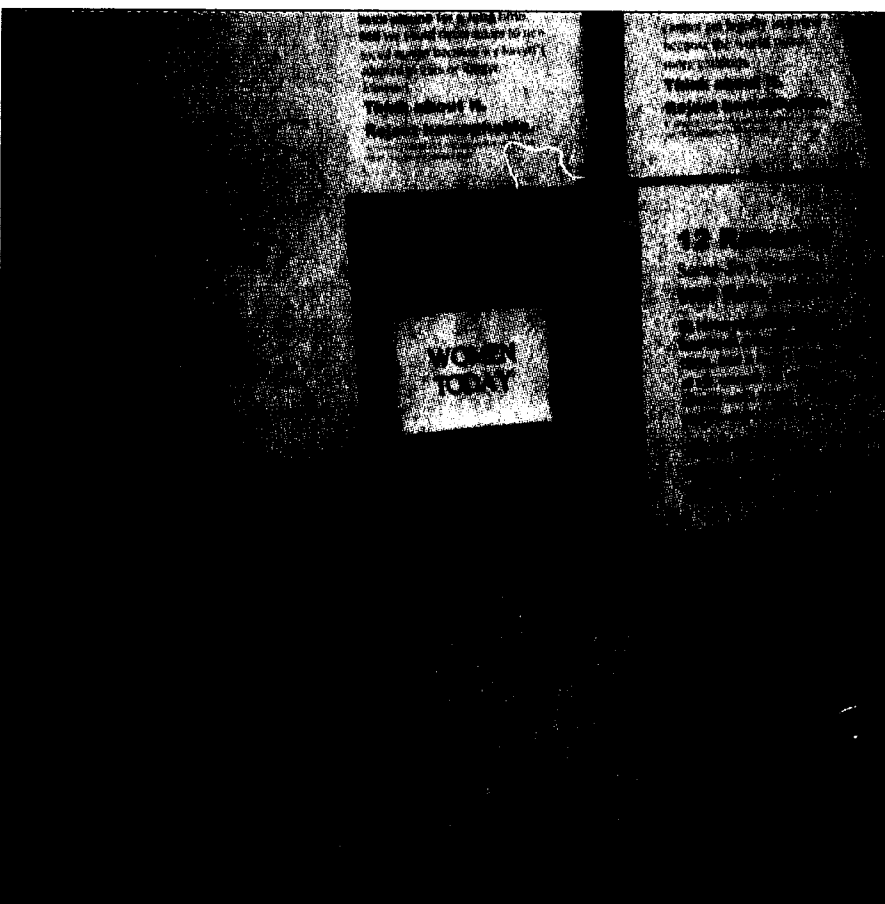
The incident was not reported to college officials, but Chris Strayer, secretary of Trigon, said most vandalism of Trigon signs goes unreported. According to Strayer, the signs get pulled down on a regular basis.

"I was pleasantly surprised to find a sign still hanging in the engineering building," he said.

Bulletin board signs for Trigon were ripped down as recently as Monday. In most cases, it doesn't get much worse than a few missing informational flyers. On occasion, the vandalism gets more vicious.

Trigon has a folder full of signs that have been defaced. Some signs simply have the word "fags" written on them. Others are more elaborate, with a "Being Gay Is Not A Crime" sign receiving the addendum "It should be."

Chris Rizzo, director of student activities, is in charge of the Reed Union Building and occasionally receives reports from Strayer on the



DANIELLE FAULKNER/BEHREND BEACON

The Women's Today door where the burnt sign once hung. In response to the torching, now a 'Please Do Not Burn' sign is posted to plead for tolerance.

vandalism. While he did say that all clubs are victims of missing signs, he saw Trigon's case differently.

"For me it's an act of intolerance," said Rizzo.

According to the student guide to general university policies and rules, intolerance is defined as contempt for a

group based on "race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or political or religious belief."

The guide warns students that a violation of the intolerance policy will be treated more severely than other behavior and may result in "separation from the University."

Personal Counseling's Sue Daley is a member of Penn State University's GLBT Network and was, at one time, adviser of Trigon.

A staff member since 1993, Daley has talked to gay and lesbian students who have found the climate at Penn State Behrend "uncomfortable." Most, she said, transfer to other schools.

"Erie is family oriented and that's not gay family oriented," said Daley. "I think the campus reflects the community."

Parents of gay high school students have called Daley asking for help finding a GLBT youth organization in the Erie area. Her search came up with nothing.

Some groups, not specifically youth oriented, are forming in Erie. In the recent issue of Erie Gay News, one writer was organizing a Gay Bowling League at Greengarden Lanes. A GLBT Business Association is also in the works.

Other groups do exist in Erie, but for Strayer, an organization like Trigon has the role of support and activism.

"Our purpose is to help GLBT people in society," he said, adding gays and lesbians just want to be accepted as people.

Strayer expressed a need to stick together and forming niches like Trigon help students feel less uneasy. The organization, for Strayer, is active only because GLBT students need it to be.

"In a perfect world Trigon wouldn't have to exist."