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# THE BEHREND BEACON

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CHRIS HVIZDAK/BEHREND BEACON

Robert Speel, Mike Taylor and Scott Soltis moderate the debate between the SGA presidential and vice-presidential candidates Wednesday evening in McGarvey Commons. To see candidates and their platforms, see Page 4.

## Candidates exchange words

By Sarah Weber  
staff writer

SGA presidential and vice-presidential candidates faced off in a debate at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday in McGarvey Commons. Dr. Robert Speel, political science professor, moderated the event. A crowd of about 50 people listened to the candidates answer questions from the audience.

Several topics were touched upon by audience questions, but much discussion was generated from the problems with SAF funds. Presidential candidate Zack Mentz and his running mate, Seth Laird proposed a "follow" committee, which would make sure that SAF money is getting what it paid for. The SGA committee would visit events sponsored by SAF to get student feedback and observe the programs.

Presidential candidate Justin Curry and his running mate Cayla Javor proposed student feedback surveys given

after events to find out if the program had been worth SAF funding.

Presidential candidate Alex Henderson, the lone candidate who has served on the Behrend SAF committee, and running mate Deepti Soni said that students make up the majority of the SAF committee and it didn't make any sense to have students overseeing students.

Mentz has previously served two years on the SAF committee at Penn State Mont Alto.

Another issue the candidates tackled was recruitment.

"The out of class experience should measure up to what we are paying," said Curry. He proposed developing the property across the street from Behrend. "We need to offer more than trees and buildings."

Soni suggested, aside from business development in closer proximity to campus, giving students more leisure time options like canoeing or kayaking. She also noted that Penn State Erie is

allowed by the greater university only to recruit in the Erie, Crawford and Venango areas. If Behrend could recruit in Pittsburgh, where many students come from, Soni thinks the campus could boost its numbers.

Mentz proposed implementing a 'Lion Scout' program, in which "students go back to their high schools and introduce themselves." The program would give high school students the opportunity to ask questions and learn more about Behrend.

After taking a five-minute intermission, the debate became crossfire style with the candidates questioning each other.

Most of the questions, for example, "Why do you want to be SGA president," were cordially answered citing experience and leadership skills. However, tensions rose when Curry asked Soni whether she would be able

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## Campus foliage overlooked

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By Amanda Charney  
contributing writer

Few students realize the amount of land Behrend claims as its own or the number of species of trees on campus or even that Behrend is now a recognized arboretum. Even less is the number of students aware of what an arboretum is exactly.

It was not until recently, April 23, 2003, that the college was recognized for its extensive collection of greenery.

Behrend officially carries the title of an arboretum. An arboretum typically refers to a place where an extensive variety of woody plants are cultivated for scientific, educational and ornamental purposes.

With 725 total acres, Behrend is home to more than 175 different categories of trees. Part of this can be attributed to the significant contribution of land to the college from Mary Behrend.

"I knew there were a lot of trees," said Ruth Hoetzel, BIOL 06. "I just never realized that we had so many different kinds of trees on campus; without them we would die!"

The fact that Behrend is now considered an arboretum can be attributed to one professor emeritus of biology, Dr. Edwin Masteller.

Masteller worked for many years so that Behrend would become a place to admire and learn about different plant life.

After the dedication, faculty of the Biology Department gathered to create a website that would guide students and the public to learning about the trees on campus.

The website, which can be accessed at [http://bio.bd.psu.edu/plant\\_web/](http://bio.bd.psu.edu/plant_web/), includes a Virtual Tree Tour, labeled plants arranged in alphabetical order of common names (also with thumbnail image preview), a list of the trees organized by plant family and a collection of plant photographs from all over campus.

The tour is a replication of a campus map with numbers indicating where certain tree species can be located around the university. The numbers on the map are each linked to their own web page about that particular tree.

Each tree's web page includes photographs of the whole tree, the leaves, flowers (if existing) and the little black identification signs (again, if existing), as well as a description of the tree and links to obtain more information.

This website is far from complete, however, as there are currently 67 trees presented on the virtual tour and over 175 varieties of tree on campus.

Nonetheless, additions to the website will continue as Behrend's Arboretum continues to grow.

Plans for the future include an herbarium or a collection of dried plants mounted, labeled and systematically arranged for use in scientific study that will enhance education, outreach, research and conservation efforts on university property.

## New SEET director found

By Tiffany Mak  
staff writer

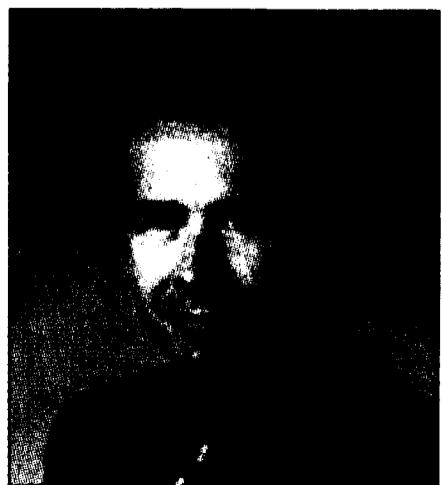
Dr. Ralph Ford was named the new Director of the School of Engineering and Engineering Technology effective on July 1.

Due to the upcoming retirement of the current SEET director, Dr. Robert Simoneau, Behrend's administration team had to name another professor who was eligible for developing personal vision and outlook for the future of SEET. There were four candidates and Ford was chosen by Dr. Jack Burke, CEO and Dean.

To search for an appropriate director, interviews started in January and the selection started in late February. According to Simoneau, apart from candidates recommended by the search committee, the team advertised across the country and conducted a national search.

"Professors in Behrend have a slight advantage because they know the system here," said Simoneau. "We want somebody who can use his leadership to execute his vision."

Being the current associate professor and chair of electrical, computer and software engineering at Behrend, Ford was excited and looking forward to starting the new position this summer.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ralph Ford, the soon to be director of SEET. Ford, a Behrend professor, is currently on international sabbatical teaching in the Czech Republic.

His objective is to continue to increase the quality of the school and the education that they are providing. Especially the updated Strategic Plan and Vision for the school that will be released soon Ford sees himself playing an important role in keeping the whole SEET focused on that vision.

"The vision reflects our focus on continuing to develop quality undergraduate educational programs," said Ford.

Although Behrend and SEET have made strides in external recognition of the engineering programs, Ford believed that there was still room for improvement. The move to the Research and Economic Development Center and the co-location with the School of Business will provide a unique opportunity for the collaboration of students in both fields.

"In anticipation of this, we have started to develop interdisciplinary academic programs between the two schools and that is something that I would like to see flourish," said Ford.

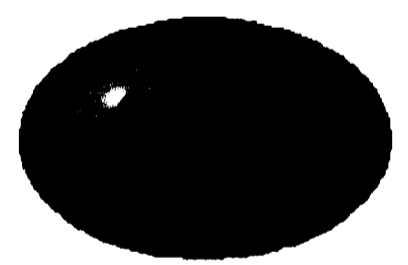
The program "Towards An Integrated Multidisciplinary Engineering and Business Learning Environment with Emphasis on Product Realization Processes" is established to foster the learning environment of integrated multidisciplinary engineering and business undergraduates.

"We want engineering graduates who can understand and articulate the business model and business graduates who understand engineering design parameters," said Ford in another interview.

"Brand new and larger classrooms and labs are closer to each other and we can work better on teaching and research," said Simoneau. "I believe REDC can provide a unique interactive business and engineering environment and culture."

Ford received his bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering at Clarkson University and then worked as a teaching and research assistant at University of Arizona. He then received a master's and doctorate degree at the University of Arizona in 1989 and 1994 respectively. He also served as a research associate from 1991 to 1994 at

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## LRC helps students

### Tutors provide variety of services

By Naomi Herr  
staff writer

Students working on last minute papers and trying to study incomprehensible subject matter can turn to Ruth Pflueger for help. Pflueger is International Programs Advisor and the Director of Behrend's Learning Resource Center.

The LRC is a place where students can go when they are seeking academic support. The LRC can provide tutoring for all levels of education and in any subject area.

"We don't target a certain student population. It's available for everyone," said Pflueger. There are tutors for math, engineering, science, language, English and almost every different school at Behrend.

"If they don't have a tutor then we try to get one," said Pflueger. The LRC not only provides tutoring for any subject area, but also advises students who wish to study abroad and can provide sessions for students planning to take their GRE and GMAT.

The LRC is helpful with graduate school application essays and students applying for major scholarships. According to Pflueger, a lot of students that apply for major scholarships for study abroad programs and grad school use the LRC.

"They are very self motivated and excited about studying overseas," said Pflueger

The LRC is run by a staff of stu-

dents who get paid \$6.50 an hour. These tutors help first-year students make the transition from high school to college easier as they have already had the same type of classes and they have had the same faculty.

For upper classmen, the tutors can dissect their papers and serve as what Pflueger called a "fresh eye," to tell them what needs improving. Tutors often see the same kinds of mistakes and they know what to look for.

Pflueger said that the tutors are meant to provide services no matter what difficulty level, whether it is to help learn how to study or help getting students back into the swing of things. "They are more objective when checking your paper than a friend might be," said Pflueger.

Last academic year there were over 5,000 appointments scheduled to see tutors at the Learning Resource Center. Pflueger said that it all depends on when students have to meet paper deadlines or have tests scheduled as to how many people may show up at the LRC on a daily basis.

"Students sometimes wait until the day before a paper is due or the day of a test to show up. They may come once or twice or they'll come all the time because they see the benefits," said Pflueger.

Tutoring is provided not only by appointment but also during the evening and weekends in Reed 3. A few may even come around to the residence halls so that the students don't have to come to the office.