

# NEWS

## 2006 SGA Elections

### Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates

**Deepti Soni President,  
Ross Zambinini Vice President**



Mike Sharkey/THE BEHREND BEACON



**Meredith Straub President,  
Ken Middlemiss Vice President**



Mike Sharkey/THE BEHREND BEACON

Giving Behrend Back  
The Soni/Zambanini 2006-2007 Platform

Penn State Behrend has long been recognized as the small college with the big degree. With valuable experience both academically and socially, we hope to create a synergy between events inside and outside of the classroom in order to make Behrend the small college with the big experience.

With the opening of the REDC, parking, a problem often complained about but rarely addressed, is bound to become more hectic than ever. After discussions with Jim Amann, it was determined that Behrend classes will be split between the current engineering complexes and the REDC. Our proposal is to make it mandatory for incoming freshmen who live in Niagara, Lawrence, Perry and Senat to park in the Wilson Picnic Grove parking lot in order to alleviate already pressed parking spaces. We will urge administration to consider using the Junker Center lot as a new commuter lot between certain hours to alleviate commuter concerns with the opening of the REDC. Also, the adoption of Blue & White lots, which determine commuter passes and resident passes, should alleviate parking confusion.

From previous services with SGA, Soni and Zambanini generated the idea for digitally posting ISBN numbers and book information online. Now, those ISBN numbers are being collected and recorded so that they may be posted online forcing the bookstore to adapt more competitive prices. Soni and Zambanini will continue to promote this program, supplementing students with even more information such as: acceptable older editions, supplement materials, etc. Soni and Zambanini will also work to convince professors that newer edition books aren't necessarily better. As long as material covered is not sacrificed, faculty will be encouraged to change books less frequently.

Also to be continued through Soni and Zambanini is the adaptation of local vendors to Lion Cash. Through their previous service, Soni and Zambanini are responsible for the implementation of Lion Cash now available through a list of vendors. Continuing this program, Soni and Zambanini would like to see the idea taken the next step where the same local vendors offer discounts to Penn State ID holders.

Soni and Zambanini have rose up on behalf of Behrend to fight against higher-tuition rises by organizing the Rally at the Rotunda, and will continue to do so by continuing their meetings with legislators and lobbying in Harrisburg. We would like to examine how much state subsidy allotment Behrend receives.

Recognizing students demand transition between the classroom and the real-world, Soni and Zambanini will work with a number of organizations to promote such events on campus. They will continually request SAF funds in order to sponsor campus-wide events.

Finally, Soni and Zambanini are open to compromise, criticism and concessions. We want to create open lines of communication between SGA and the student body. We want to hear from you, and have created a website for students to access to post their comments, concerns, and ideas. This website can be accessed by joining the Facebook Group "Giving Back Behrend."

Students! This one's for you.  
The Straub/Middlemiss 2006-2007 Platform

For the past two years, we have worked together to accomplish what some said was impossible. Since the Fall of 2004, Meredith and Ken have worked together to bring students' needs to the forefront of their committee's activities. We have been, and will continue to, work for YOU!

Our first step will be to improve SGA's communication both internally and externally. We will improve communication from the student body to SGA. Students are uninformed of the issues that senate handles on a daily basis. We will not only encourage the student body to attend weekly SGA meetings but we will also make information covered at SGA meetings more easily accessible. In the bottom of the Reed Building, there is a message board assigned to SGA. It is our plan to post important legislation, reallocations and upcoming programs on that board in the upcoming year. Furthermore, we will see the SGA "buzz" really reach the student body. Word of mouth advertising is a powerful tool, and we intend on utilizing its power to the fullest.

We will improve communication within SGA. We will ensure that every senator and council representative is informed of SGA policies, and understands the powers that Senate possesses. Furthermore, it is our plan to facilitate meetings for all committee directors and assistant directors. Through these meetings, we will see a dramatic increase in more creative programs and more obstacles within committees overcome.

We will strengthen SGA programming. The Rally at the Rotunda, Culture Week, Mini-THON, the Housing Fair and the Spring Elections are just a few examples of programs that can be improved in many ways. We will attend meetings of all the committees to provide our own expertise. We have proven that we can not only work together, but handle any problem that may arise.

We will invite faculty and staff to speak at our meetings. Sometimes concerns need to be voiced to faculty and staff for the problem to get solved. We will strongly promote our guests to the student body, so students can be provided a forum for their concerns to be heard by the right people.

No one can promise that they will fix the parking conditions on campus or anything of the sort. We have an amazing record of working things out together. We will work actively to help the students with any needs that may arise, whether it is parking or the food in Bruno's. We are not afraid to ask people for help, yet we are also not afraid to stand up for ourselves or more importantly, YOU.

## Senatorial and secretarial candidates

Allison Palermo  
senatorial candidate



First and foremost SGA is an altruistic association which is the voice of the students at Penn State Behrend. This being said, I would like to have another opportunity to share my views on ways the school could be improved to help the students. I realize this position takes work and dedication but I'm willing to put forth the effort. My previous experiences with SGA as well as other student governing bodies have trained me to work for and with people. So, vote for me and I'll prove my presence on the Senate to be a positive one.

Anita Srivastava  
senatorial candidate



When the Behrend Beacon asked me the question of the day on March 16, 2006, "What does SGA do for you?" I answered, "They make it possible for organizations to get allocated money for events on campus, and that basically promotes participation on campus." I left out a lot more that is included within the role of SGA. SGA represents the voice of the student body and it makes changes in the Behrend community possible. As Senator, I hope to contribute to the change, strengthening the voice of the student body and providing more opportunities for student organizations and clubs.

Jennifer Behn  
secretarial candidate



If elected to the Student Government Association, I will do my best to fulfill my duties as Secretary. I feel it is important to be involved on campus as much as possible. As a member of the student government, I will do my best to represent the student body by listening to their suggestions or concerns and bringing them to the attention of SGA. I understand the responsibilities of the position of secretary, and I am willing to work hard to complete them to the best of my ability.

Julie Elkins  
secretarial candidate



Last fall, I ran for and won the position of Freshman Senator. Since then, I've been very active and involved in the Senate and in both the Governmental Affairs and Student Affairs committees. When I received the Outstanding Freshman Senator award, I was both elated and honored. It's great to see how much of a difference I can make for the school through my dedication to SGA. As secretary, I would strive to make SGA as an organization run more smoothly and efficiently. That way we can focus on what is most important: making Behrend a great experience for students!

Erin Kennedy  
senatorial candidate



It is no secret that questions and concerns are constantly raising throughout the student body. My search to help find answers eventually led me to SGA. Throughout my term as a freshman senator, I have been doing my personal best to listen and to help pass legislation that will serve in the students' best interest. If reelected, I will continue to serve my fellow students in this manner. In addition, I will help to raise awareness of the functions of SGA so that students who are looking for a place to bring their concerns can find that place more easily.

Laura Plocido  
senatorial candidate



As a Senator on SGA this past year, I have seen many things changed on Behrend's campus and I find that to be very rewarding. I would like to continue my role as a Senator next year so that I may continue to help to improve Behrend. If elected, I will try my best to be a liaison to the Students, making sure to bring concerns that they may have to the attention of the rest of Senate. I will also work hard to talk to students about SGA and let them know how they can get involved.

Erin Seigrist  
senatorial candidate



I am running for a Senator position of the Student Government because I want to make a difference here at Penn State Behrend. I am currently a Senator and love having a voice for the student body. I am also an active member of the THON committee. I am a sister of Alpha Sigma Alpha in which I have held 4 positions, including fundraising chairman and 3 executive board positions that include President, Vice President of Programming and Ritual, and Vice President of Alumnae and Heritage. I have the leadership qualities that are needed to be a good senator.

Benjamin Gilson  
senatorial candidate



The most prominent duty a senator in the SGA must fulfill is to represent the interests and opinions of the students. Through voting and through actions, I plan to make good decisions for the students. The best way to help the students is to put pressure on the government regarding school funding. I feel that Rally at the Rotunda is an event all members of the student body should attend to fight for lower tuition. I will also help the campus is by joining the THON committee. Penn State has an extremely positive image, which I will work to uphold. It has been a pleasure working as the SGA as the Student Life representative. I have learned a great deal this last year and hope to serve Behrend again.

Mike Bergstrom  
senatorial candidate



Over the past two semesters I have served as a freshman senator in SGA. As senator, I will strive for more involvement from not only current members, but also students who are not in the organization. Another goal is to improve communication between students and the SGA by gathering more student input on issues. Lastly, I will work to spread the name and purpose of the SGA so more students know what we are doing to improve campus life. If re-elected, I will do my best to continue to represent the wants and needs of the students here at Behrend.

Lauren Wagner  
senatorial candidate

Photo not available

I feel that clubs and organizations are extremely important to the college experience. Student involvement enhances student experience and helps students to meet others and feel as though they are part of a campus. I support all clubs and organizations at Behrend, especially those that promote diversity and awareness. If elected to SGA I will be a strong supporter of the extracurriculars here at Behrend and do what I can to get student involvement up.

Brett Watson  
senatorial candidate



This past semester I have had the tremendous honor of serving on the Student Government Association as an upperclassman senator and sitting on both the Student Affairs and Academic Affairs Committees. If re-elected, I would continue to be an active, dedicated member of the Senate and my committees, and I'd also strive to ensure that the interests of all Behrend students are represented and protected. I would also like to see the SGA become more approachable to the student body and play a more active role in first hearing and then solving their problems. Any and all support is appreciated!

Amanda Tyler  
senatorial candidate



For the past two semesters I have had the privilege and honor of serving as a freshman senator in SGA. I have been involved in the budget and governmental affairs committees, and have participated in many other activities. If re-elected, I will strive to bring the concerns of my fellow peers to the SGA, so change can happen. I'd like to see more outside involvement from students in the decision making of SGA, and will work to make this happen through telling others about SGA. I would appreciate your support during elections, in helping to reelect me as senator.

Samantha Yong  
senatorial candidate



The Student Government Association of Penn State Behrend undertakes the enormous responsibility of leading, as well as guiding and advancing, the student body and its variety of organizations. Having been a part of student governments in my original country, Singapore, and in the United States for a fair number of years, I have great interest and the experience for the position of Senator. I would also be able to give a different perspective, in addition to new ideas and suggestions, to the Association, and can therefore assist not only the Association, but the college and its students on the whole.