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Behrend student arrested on multiple child pornography charges



Behrend senior Jonathan Demerecz on his way to a Matchbox Players event.

By Chris LaFuria
news editor

A Penn State Behrend student is in prison tonight after being arrested and charged with possession of child pornography. Jonathan Demerecz, 23, of 2713 Shannon Road was arraigned in North East and sent to jail after authorities discovered 80 movies and over 600 images of children as young as five years old involved in sexual activity on his personal computer. After an investigation by Wesleyville Police and the Erie County District Attorney's Office, Demerecz was charged with 22 counts of child pornography.

According to his housemates, Demerecz's computer was seized three weeks ago by authorities. A warrant was left in place of the computer, saying that Demerecz was under investigation of child pornography. "It was about three weeks ago when they took his computer and told him they were looking for child pornography," said Show Zhu, one of Demerecz's housemates.

Other housemates of Demerecz said that they were not surprised with the arrest. "He always acted strange about kids," said Chris Neville, another housemate of Demerecz. "It was kind of weird how he always dressed up like Santa every year.

This year, he said he stood outside for two hours to hand out candy to kids on Halloween." Neville adds, "I wasn't surprised he got arrested after they took his computer."

Demerecz's housemates noted that at the time of the seizure of his computer, Demerecz acted erratically. "He was taken to the [Emergency Room around the time] his computer was taken," Neville said. "When he came back it seemed like he had a mental breakdown. He couldn't speak and was shaking. We didn't know what was going on."

As a student, Demerecz, a physics major, was highly active in extra-curricular activities. He was on schedule to graduate in the spring of 2007. He was active in Matchbox Players, the theater and improv club. Also, he was the vice-president of the Gamers Club. Demerecz, who is from Butler, PA, surprised many close friends with his recent arrest. Journalism major Jerry Pohl was

one of his friends that first heard about the arrest. "I found out through phone calls from several friends about [Demerecz's] arrest," Pohl said. "I was shocked and dismayed by what happened."

Demerecz has been charged with the crimes but has not yet stood trial. Authorities are still investigating while Demerecz is being held on \$50,000 cash bond.

"It was about three weeks ago when they took his computer and told him they were looking for child pornography."

-Show Zhu, Demerecz's housemate

Midterm election drives younger voters to polls

By Adell Coleman
contributing writer

A record number of young voters cast their ballots in the recent midterm election. According to the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), an estimated 10 million young Americans ages 29 and younger voted, which is an increase of two million since the midterm election in 2002. Researchers found that the main issues driving young voters to the polls included the rising costs of tuition and loans for school, and the war in Iraq. According to CIRCLE, 68 percent of young people polled disapproved of the war and the President's handling of it.

Penn State Behrend sophomore Communication major Miranda Krause was among those who voted in this election. Krause said she voted because she cares about the country as well as the war in Iraq. "I just want the war to stop," she said. For Krause, the war is personal. Her boyfriend will be deployed after he graduates from college. "I am worried about him going," she said. "He told me I am not allowed to watch CNN because his officer told him that they are only showing the worst part about it. He told me that when he's there he's not going to be in any kind of danger, but I will still worry."

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Casey defeats Santorum for Senate

By Scott Muska
staff writer

After a midterm election that was dominated by the Democratic Party, Pennsylvania will be seeing many changes, but one of the most important is in the United States Senate seat that was up for grabs in 2006. Democrat Bob Casey took the seat from Rick Santorum, resulting in Santorum's first political defeat.

Despite Santorum raising \$10 million more than Casey for his campaign in the most expensive Pennsylvania Senate race in history, he was ousted by a considerable margin. Casey acquired 59 percent while Santorum captured 41 percent of Pennsylvanians' votes.

Many voters admitted that they didn't vote for Casey because they appreciated him and his ideals, but because they wanted to vote against Santorum. Known by some as one of President Bush's right-hand-men, Santorum immediately had the odds stacked against him. He agreed with President Bush on many topics such as the denunciation of gay marriage and abortion. Penn State Behrend freshman Raymond Scalise is ecstatic with the change that he is seeing as the Democrats take a higher level of power in the government. He disagrees with Santorum, saying that, "his views are just too conservative for today's political world. I don't like the fact that his views are too parallel to [President] Bush."

Casey was able to secure a vast majority of the Independent Party votes (72 percent to Santorum's 28 percent) because of the popular opinion that he was not overly liberal and that his opinions were not so close-minded that he would not consider anything coming from a conservative viewpoint. "I'm glad that Casey was elected because he is a moderate Democrat that is willing to listen to both sides. He's not what you would call an extreme liberal," said Scalise.

Another leading reason that many Independents sided with the Democrats this midterm is because of their protest of the war in Iraq which the Democrats seem to be more in favor of ending than the Republicans.

Some other calling cards for Casey are the promises he makes to the working class in Pennsylvania, namely that he will work to abolish unaffordable health care and work to create the jobs for the future. He also claims, in his online blog, that he is an "independent voice for Pennsylvania," whereas Santorum is a "rubber stamp for President Bush."

After a long stint in the United States Senate dating back to 1994 when he became the youngest Senator in American history, Santorum accepted his first defeat just before 10 o'clock on Tuesday evening when he called Casey and then gave his farewell speech to some of his supporters in Pittsburgh. He evoked no hostility towards Casey in the speech, saying that he would "do a fine job for Pennsylvania."

Casey steps into office at a time when his country is much divided on many different topics and the split between Republicans and Democrats may be at an



SEN. BOB CASEY, JR

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

all-time high as far as the hostility level is concerned. Casey, however, remains determined and optimistic. In his blog he states that "the only way we're going to work through the tough problems we face is for Democrats and Republicans to start working together again. We need to start focusing on the values that unite us instead of the politics that divide us."

Pelosi to lead Congress, Democrats sweep election

By Chris LaFuria
news editor

With a projected Democratic gain of 28 seats in the House of Representatives and six in the Senate, Congress anticipates many changes in high-profile positions in the Cabinet and the House. With the opposition in many Americans to the war in Iraq, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has resigned from his position. In the House of Representatives, Democratic Rep. Nancy Pelosi becomes the first woman to lead Congress, taking over the Speaker of the House from Republican speaker Dennis Hastert of Illinois.

According to many political analysts, a main issue that separated the bipartisanship was the lack of improvement in Iraq. President Bush addressed the issue that "many Americans voted to register their displeasure with the lack of progress." This may have had an affect on the departure of Rumsfeld, who was a key player in the beginning of the war in Iraq.

Many people and officials agree with the decision of Rumsfeld's resignation. Security and Defense committee member Hassan al-Sunnaid said, "Changing Rumsfeld should have happened a year ago because their work in Iraq did not achieve any results."

Pelosi, who has become the highest ranked woman in the history of the

United States, views her promotion not as a major step for women, but for the Democratic Party. "My first excitement is that there will be a Democratic speaker," 66-year-old Pelosi said.

Among some of the plans of the Democratic Party to change policy are a raise in minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25, lower prices of prescription drugs for those on Medicare, cutting interest rates on student loans to reduce college tuition costs, and breaking ties with lobbyists and lawmakers. Pelosi says that the Democratic Party will work to embark in a new direction, which does not include getting even.

With the selection of Pelosi as the Speaker, many political analysts are reluctant to support her. According to USA Today, Political analyst Stephen Hess does not know what to expect from Pelosi. He said that Pelosi "is no Newt Gingrich. She really isn't intellectually interesting. Gingrich came up with ideas. With her, I don't know whether this is true or not."

Regardless of the criticism, the Democratic Party has taken the majority of Congress. Some students at Penn State Behrend foresee a struggle with the shift in the majority. "Nothing is going to get done," says Political Science major Nadine Granjean. "People are going to go back and forth."

Within the next few months, Pelosi, as the leader of the Democrats, looks to make many changes to policy and create new ideas for America's future.

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