

"My brain just does not shut down. I usually only sleep four hours a night just because my brain refuses to quit."

- Ross Zambanini,  
International Business and Marketing major,  
page 8

"Students have their own money problems with tuition, books and everything else. So when they help more by donating money and books, I am very impressed."

- Quing Liang,  
ESL Coordinator for the International Institute of Erie,  
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# The Behrend Beacon



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## Behrend staff attempts to improve diversity among faculty members

By Sheri Kroskie  
staff writer

For college students, Penn State Behrend offers a wide range of opportunities. Students are able to choose from 31 different bachelor degrees along with numerous clubs and sports. However, according to some students and professors, Behrend is lacking in an essential aspect that every liberal arts school should be offering: diversity.

According to a survey done for the college in 2004, out of the 221 full-time faculty members, only 27 were minorities. Sixteen of the 27 were only considered assistant professors, while a total of seven were either associate professors or professors (associate professor and professor are ranked as higher positions compared to that of assistant professor). Behrend's faculty consists of less than 2 percent of African Americans, 10 percent of Asians, and less than 1.5 percent of Hispanics.

Behrend's Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Academic Administration, Dr. David Christiansen, realizes that our campus has a problem. "Our numbers are low and we want to improve. We absolutely have steps we are taking to make the changes necessary," said Christiansen. "We can be doing better, and we should be doing better."

The Behrend definition of Diversity states, "The College affirms its belief that diversity has a critical role in a liberal education. A college campus provides a unique intellectual environment for individuals with different experiences, backgrounds, and values to interact with one another. Only through the open exchange of different beliefs, experiences, and values can individuals develop the important critical thinking skills that will serve them throughout their life."

Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering Oladipo Onipede feels that the students here are not receiving the type of education that is stated in Behrend's definition of Diversity. "Here at Behrend, there is not much diversity of the faculty, especially cultural and ethnic diversity," Onipede said. "I think that our students need both a diverse student body and faculty for their intellectual development and to help prepare them for their careers. At some point in their careers they are going to be exposed to co-workers, bosses and other people who will not be white American males."

Onipede, who likes to be called Dipo, was born and raised in Nigeria. Onipede is one of the only African American professors here at Behrend. Onipede, who went to college in New York City, and received his Ph.D. in Engineering from UCLA, thinks that Erie is the least diverse city he has ever lived in, saying, "I think that the lack of diversity here at Behrend is partly reflected by the region. Some of the best features of the region, its coziness, friendliness of the people and family closeness can sometimes be a hindrance to fostering diversity." In addition, Onipede said, "Diversity may require opening up and changing some of the attitudes and stereotypes of others. It may require us to put ourselves in other people's shoes and try not to automatically value the people and cultures we are comfortable with"

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## Fines and fees find their way back to students

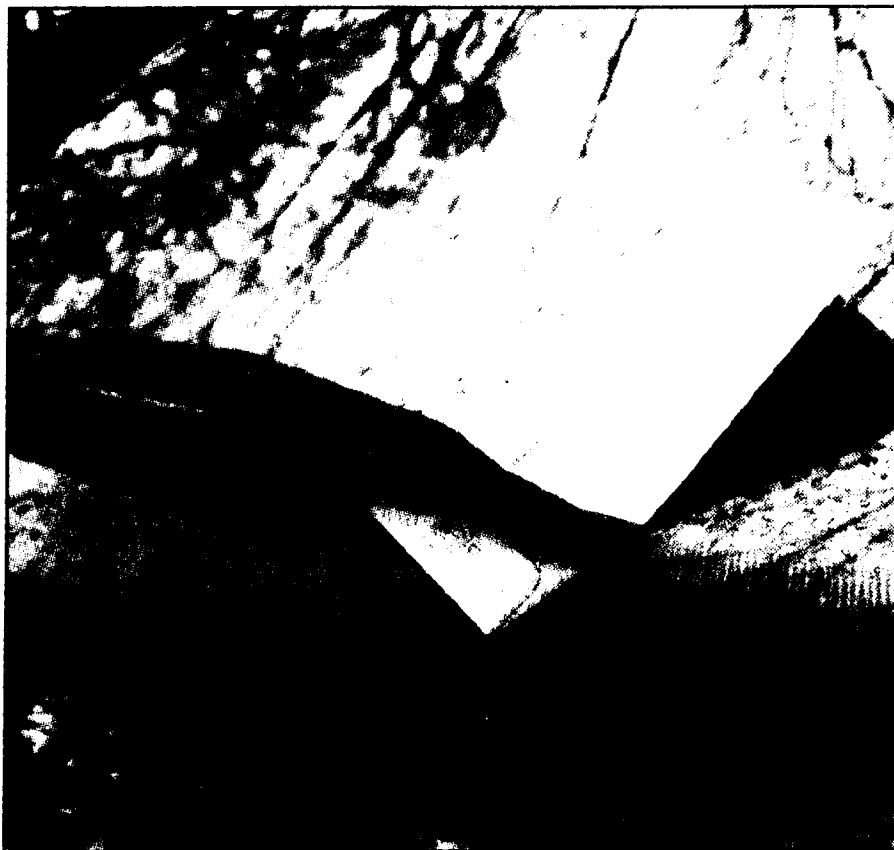
By Jessica Hancock  
contributing writer

Tuition, room and board, books, activity fees, technology fees – and don't forget parking fees. Every year, Penn State Behrend students are required to pay \$140, or \$250 or more if they want to park on campus. If they choose to park without paying, there could be hefty fines awaiting them. Parking fines range from an affordable \$7 for having your permit improperly displayed, to a pricier \$50 for not having your vehicle registered. These fines are not just affecting students; they are also affecting staff and faculty members, as well as visitors to Behrend's campus.

One of the biggest questions regarding parking that Behrend students have is, "Where does all the money brought in from parking tickets go?" With 3,508 parking tickets handed out during the 2005-06 school year, and 3,771 handed out during the 2006-07 school year so far, thousands of dollars are being generated. One common misconception is that all this money goes to support University Park. The real answer, though, is one that should make Penn State students very happy. The money goes right back to them. All money collected from parking fines goes into scholarships and student activity fees which are distributed by the Student Government Association (SGA). The same goes for the parking permits; the money goes back to students through maintenance of the parking lots, and the construction of new parking areas.

When asked about how she feels about money from permits going back into the parking lots, former Behrend student Brittany Nguyen replied, "Wow, I didn't know that. I only used a few of the parking lots, but they were in pretty good condition. It's good to know that money I paid just went back into taking care of the parking lots."

Nguyen continued to say that she occasionally joins Behrend student Jen Smith, 08, to do homework at the Research and Economic Development Center. (REDC), where parking is currently limited. "Sometimes it's frus-



Ashley Bressler/THE BEHREND BEACON

When Penn State Behrend's Police and Safety distribute these blaze orange tickets, many students become angry, but they may not know the money from the fees directly benefit all students.

trating because there isn't anywhere to park, so we have to park somewhere else and walk up. The only parking there is for teachers." Continued on page 2.

## Senior gift to spruce up Junker to REDC walk

By Ben Raymond  
humor editor

A group of Master Gardeners from the Erie area, including one of Behrend's own, are making plans to construct a new garden and seating area outside of the Smith Chapel using funds from this year's graduating class.

The walk from the Junker Center to the REDC will never be the same. The plans for the garden are to piece together an all-season perennial garden. Perennial plants, which once planted, will come back every year during their peak growing season.

Students, faculty and guests of the campus will have the opportunity to enjoy a constantly changing living canvas. The plans for the garden are being carefully designed so that every few weeks

during the year the scenery will change colors, and out like a living screensaver.

Taking on this task is a group of community volunteers, but they are not your garden variety green thumbs. They are certified gardeners who have had hours of training, classes and tests. So far there are 15 Master Gardeners from the Erie area signed up for the project. One of them can be found in the first floor of the Reed Union Building.

When the Senior Class gift committee tallied the votes from a survey of the Senior Class, it was brought to the attention of Mary Beth McCarthy, the CDC's Director of Academic Advising. She is on the committee for the project and has high expectations for the garden. When she brought it up to some of her fellow Master Gardeners she said,

"Wouldn't it be nice if we could use this as a master project," and, "keep it in house."

The Master Gardeners have worked on a number of projects around the city, including a community vegetable garden for those who could not do their own gardening, as well as a test garden at the Erie Zoo. With all of these projects sprouting up around Erie, what can the campus expect? The target budget of the project is \$5,000, but what exactly will that be used for? A good portion will be used for a number of benches for people to rest and relax on. The rest will be used for the bulbs that will bloom in to a wide variety of flowers including but not limited to, tulips, iris' and other fragrant plants.

The garden will provide a number of benefits to the campus. From Spring to Fall Continued on page 2.

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## International Institute Project raises money and supplies for immigrants



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Behrend students helped raise the \$400 and boxes of books and suppli. Shown above are Kelly Walczak and Danielle Wilson, who presented the donations to Barbara Webber, and the ESL department of the International Institute of Erie.

By Ashley Bressler  
news editor

Despite many struggles the International Institute of Erie has experienced, Behrend students came together in a fundraising effort to help ease their financial troubles. In the past weeks, the International Institute of Erie has been in the process of merging

as a way to recover from lack of funds. Through this process, they feared the worst; closing their doors to hundreds of immigrants and refugees whose livelihood in Erie, solely depends on the services they provide for them. Fortunately, there was a sign of hope for the International Institute of Erie as Penn State Behrend students supported the International Institute Project fundraiser providing books, school supplies and the means for them to remain open a little longer.

In recent weeks, the International Institute Project fundraiser, headed by freshman psychology major Danielle Wilson and associate professor of psychology Dr. Dawn Blasko, set up various locations through out the campus where students could bring their donations of children's books, school supplies and cash. The International Institute Project committee hoped the donations would help the International Institute of Erie stay open and continue to provide financial, educational and emotional support for the 350 refugees who are expected to be placed in Erie this year. In the two weeks the fundraiser was held, Wilson said Behrend students were able to help raise over \$400 and numerous boxes of books and school supplies that will benefit the ESL (English as a Second Language) department at the International Institute of Erie. Wilson volunteers as an ESL tutor at the International Institute of Erie, and said she noticed their financial strain. "I didn't know they were having trouble, so that wasn't our initial intent for the fundraiser, but it was nice to be able to help them when they were actually in need," said Wilson.

On Tuesday, April 10, Wilson said she delivered the donations to the International Institute of Erie, where the staff and ESL students were more than gracious to receive them. "It was a surprise to the students.

When we showed up, they were so excited and grateful to get to look through all the boxes of books. That's what made the fundraiser a huge success," said Wilson. After the students of the ESL class looked through the collection of books, Wilson said they were excited to take their choices home, which will now Continued on page 3.