



# THE BEHREND BEACON

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## Behrend celebrates the King holiday

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The birthday of a man that would change the way many people view the world will be celebrated this week at Penn State Behrend. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would have celebrated his 79th birthday on Jan. 15. However, his life was cut short in a 1968 shooting that claimed his life.

Multi-Cultural Council President Adell Coleman thinks that the celebration of King's birthday is very important. "It is an appreciation for the life and legacy of him," she said.

The highlight of the week-long list of activities will be on Jan. 24 when the Rev. Al Sharpton speaks at Behrend.

At 7 p.m. in Erie Hall, Sharpton, president of the National Action Network, has been involved in political and social issues for many years. A Democratic Presidential Candidate in the 2004, Sharpton has had a major impact on the political issues in the United States. The *New York Daily News* called Sharpton, "the most prominent civil rights activist in the nation" in Feb. 2007.

The celebrations began on King's birthday. Members of the Multi-Culture Council handed out free birthday cake to students outside of Bruno's.

On Jan. 21, Key Arts Productions will host a two and a half hour multi-media event, scheduled to be at 11 a.m., to celebrate the life and legacy of King. According to Behrend's website, "King's Dream: A Live Concert Multimedia Presentation Dedicated to an American Legend," will include songs, live narrative, and powerful film footage reveal the historical roots and the social implications that led to an era of social unrest in America during the turbulent 60's. A 50 minute, musical presentation will begin at noon.

The Philadelphia-based group began in 1987 and has since performed in places like Europe, South America, Japan, and more. The group transforms historically significant events into innovative, multi-media productions.

*Sarafina!*, a movie-musical starring Whoopi Goldberg, will be shown at 7 p.m. in Reed 117. In a time of segregation in South Africa, Sarafina, a student in a South African school dreams of a better life. Teacher Mary Masembuko, played by Goldberg, inspires Sarafina and the rest of her class to not simply accept life, but to examine the struggle for freedom.

Members of the Association of Black Collegians and Behrend Alumni will sponsor a fun, trivia game called, "Say Word." The game will test players' knowledge of the Civil Rights movement, along with other facts on Jan. 23 from 7-9 p.m. in Bruno's.

A night of expression, full of poetry and other personal works, will be shared on Jan. 25 from 8-10 p.m. in Bruno's before the week ends with a service project on Jan. 26. Students will be taking part in a Habitat for Humanity event in Erie. "We hope people will come out and help us build homes for the misfortunate here in Erie," Coleman said.

## Behrend facilities earn national recognition

By Sara Breese  
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Some may complain about "dreary Erie," but Penn State Behrend continues to shine into the spring semester. While the city of Erie has been accumulating snow, Behrend has been racking up national recognition.

In three national publications, Penn State Behrend was acknowledged for three schools and two buildings on campus. One of the newest buildings on campus, the REDC, earned recognition as a "2 for 1" deal.

In the Oct. 2007 issue of the American Society of Engineering Education's *Prism* magazine, the Sam and Irene Black School of Business and the School of Engineering, both housed in the REDC, were honored for creating a collaborative, "2 for 1" learning experience.

The benefit of combining the two schools within one building proves to be beneficial to many students on Behrend's campus. Senior Anthony Spoto has been studying engineering throughout his career at Behrend and has reaped the benefit of having his engineering classes in one building.

"The REDC has great lab facilities that are accessible to upper level engineering students whenever we need to use them," Spoto said.

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## 'It was worth it' Behrend student travels to Africa to work at orphanages



Amy Sahlmann poses with a group of boys from an orphanage she volunteered at in Nyeri, Kenya.

By Lenny Smith  
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Amy Sahlmann, a junior biology major at Penn State Behrend, left on Dec. 30 for a two week journey that took her from Erie, Detroit, and Amsterdam before she finally arrived in the African country of Kenya 18 hours later.

Obsessed with living her life to the fullest, Sahlmann knew that needed to include charity work. "For a long time, I wanted to do some type of international volunteer work and then finally one day I said, 'You know what, I'm gonna do it,'" she said.

Over the last several years, Sahlmann has been diligently saving money from her paychecks, Christmas presents, and birthdays to fund the trip that cost approximately \$4,000.

To prevent spending the money, she hid all her savings in a dresser drawer.

"I was able to do it because I could physically see that the pile was growing higher and higher," she said. "I went to Wal-Mart to do a money order to send it all off and it was like sending away my baby."

After a trip to the Congo over the summer was canceled due to civil war, Sahlmann's mother, Jann Bowman said that Sahlmann would need to organize her trip through an organization. After researching a list of volunteer organizations, she found the Global Volunteer Network. "They seemed to be the least expensive, which was definitely a factor," she said.

"I felt better than in the summer when she wanted to go to the Congo," Bowman said. "I kept getting teary eyed."

That was before Bowman finally heard about the rioting in Kenya. "We were so busy getting her ready that we didn't even know about the presidential election or anything," Bowman said. "At that point you just hope that everything you've said to them and taught them in their lives has sunk it. And that it was enough."

Upon arrival in Nairobi, Sahlmann's plans immediately changed. Originally planned to volunteer at an all-girl's orphanage near Nairobi, Political unrest after last month's presidential election forced Sahlmann and her group to move.

"When I got to Nairobi we had to wait for three hours for someone to pick us up," she said. "When I go to the airport (in Nairobi), I was freaking out because it's complete chaos over there."

Sahlmann and the rest of the volunteers were moved to the safer city of Nyeri. "At that point, five or the 10 volunteers decided they were going to go back to the States because they thought it was too unsafe."

In Nyeri, Sahlmann stayed with a host family and quickly learned their views on women are a lot different from the United States. "Women are below your animals, it was hard for me to see that. Women [in Kenya] are expected to get married, have children, and are homemakers."

When the father of the host family asked Sahlmann what she was going to school for, he could not comprehend that she wanted to go to medical school. "He kept looking at me like I was crazy," she said.

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## Faulty ANGEL service disrupts finals

By Matt Schwabenbauer  
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Students expecting to use the Angel Course Management System faced many complications during finals week. The online system was not prepared to handle the large amount of users accessing the resource. As a result, many students were unable to access many of the features they needed for their upcoming tests. Many professors post student assignments, notes and grades on Angel, so being separated from such a crucial resource was detrimental to many students during the busy finals week.

The first sign of problems with ANGEL began on Monday, Dec. 17. Users found they were either unable to load the Angel page entirely, or the use of certain features would result in an error message. Later in the day, there was a post on the front page of ANGEL, which gave a few details about the problems. "Beginning around 5:30 p.m. today, ANGEL again began experiencing intermittent periods of slowness with errors on some pages."

Throughout the span of the week, there were numerous Information Technology Services (ITS) alerts notifying users to expect problems, most ending with the same claim, "The ITS team is currently investigating this issue and working to resolve it as quickly as possible." Although ITS claimed to have researched the issue, student found that ANGEL continued to be unreliable and inconsistent throughout the week.

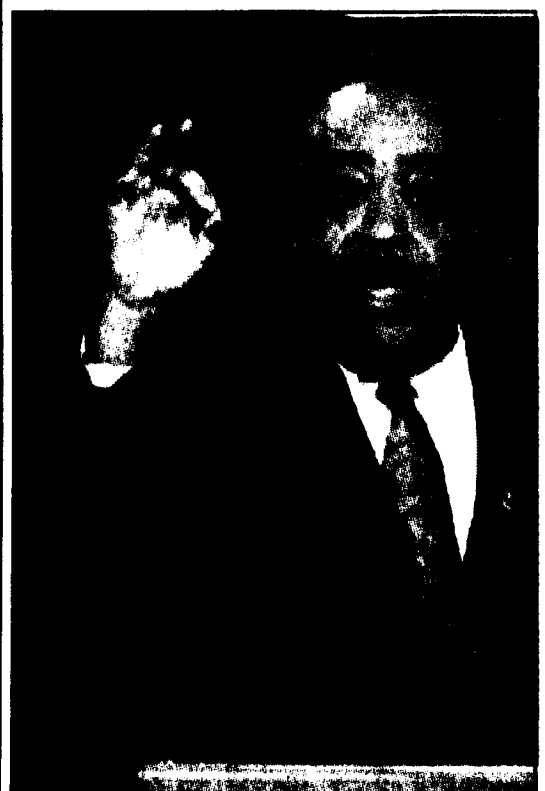
With so many students relying on ANGEL to study for or take their finals, the outages were quite problematic. "When I tried logging onto Angel Tuesday morning nothing would work and I couldn't access my account," recalls freshman James Svolos. "I needed to study for one of my finals, and my notes were on Angel, so I wasn't able to properly prepare for the test."

Such limitations were all the more devastating to the many commuters that attend Behrend. "ANGEL wasn't working for me at home, so I was forced to find computers on campus to check if it was working or not," said freshman Bill Frackowiak.

ITS posted a response on the main page of ANGEL on Jan. 10, which detailed how they are trying to prevent further complications with Angel. The post contained a number of bullet points which attempt to give insight into the efforts of ITS in trying to remedy the situation. From the post: "We have doubled the number of Web servers for transactions. Additionally, we are in receipt of a larger, faster database server and will begin acceptance testing as soon as we possibly can." The post ended with examples of how users can speed up their ANGEL experience.

Despite their admittance of solving the problems, ANGEL was still experiencing problems on Monday, Jan. 14 when students returned for the spring semester. From the front page of ANGEL: "Angel is currently experiencing performance problems..." the post concluded with a list of certain features that were disabled in order to correct the issue.

Some students are disappointed with the service on the whole. Students with technology-oriented  
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To help celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, Rev. Al Sharpton is slated to speak on Thursday, Jan. 24 in Erie Hall.  
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