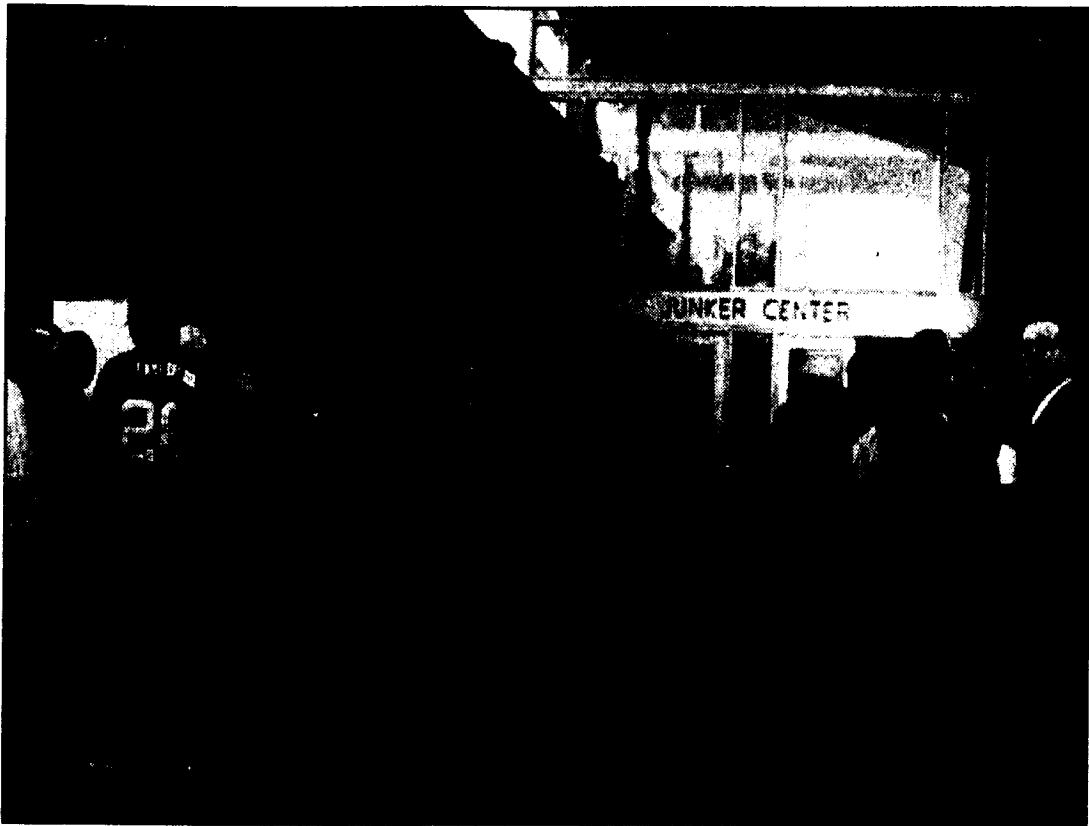


SPECIAL PRIMARY COVERAGE

College community irate over ticket shortage Behrend allotted only 250 student tickets



Daniel Smith/CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Obama supporters wait in line outside of the Junker Center before the candidate arrived.

By Matthew Schwabenbauer
assistant news editor
mjs5387@psu.edu

Senator Barack Obama's (D-IL) appearance on campus is considered to be the biggest political event ever at Penn State Behrend. For some, it was a dream come true to see the man who may become the next leader of the country. When it was announced that he would be speaking at our campus on Friday, April 18, many students were ecstatic to hear the news.

Unfortunately, many of those students didn't get the opportunity to hear the senator speak. Junker Center, the venue for the event, has a capacity of 2,500. However, only 1,800 tickets were given out to those interested in attending. Out of those, only 250 were allotted to Penn State Behrend students.

Chris Alphen, a member of the College Democrats Obama committee said he was not satisfied with the situation.

"As College Democrats, we are looking out for the best interests of the student body, and the student body is frustrated with only getting 250 tickets for such a huge event," he said.

"It's important to stress that the student body is upset with this situation. As College Democrats, we agree with that."

With such a small amount of tickets dedicated to Behrend students, many were let down.

"I was planning to go, but by the time I found out, tickets were already gone," said Chelsea Lecker, a freshman marketing major.

Although Penn State Behrend is hosting the event, it is not strictly for Penn State students.

President of College Democrats, Paul Witt, explained the situation.

"It's a town hall format, and there are many people in the community that have done a lot of work to bring Obama here, that need to be at the event."

Other college campuses in the area also had students interested in attending the event.

"The use of the Junker Center sadly does not guarantee easy tickets for Behrend students," said Chris Cook, an assistant professor of political science. "In fact, tickets were available downtown which probably made it easier for Gannon students to get them than us."

Josh Snyder, chair of the College Democrats Obama committee, saw the low amount of tickets available to Behrend students as an insult.

"Candidates always say that it's college students who make a difference," he said. "When it comes time to have an event, they give 250 tickets to a campus of 4,000. Not counting all the other campuses around here with students who want tickets. It almost seems like a slap in the face. You guys are the bulk of our campaign, but we aren't going to let you in."

Others felt the same way.

"They want to get more college kids to vote, but it's like they are doing the complete opposite," said freshman mechanical engineering Andrew Kapp. "It's like they're telling us we're unimportant."

Some students felt used by the Obama camp, considering our facilities hosted the event, but few of our students were in attendance.

"It's like they're just using Behrend for a place to go," said Mike Foerstner, a freshman mechanical engineering major. "If they're going to come to Behrend, have the Behrend college kids be there. I wanted to go, but now I can't get in."

"They sent an e-mail saying he was coming here, but by the time I got it people were already lined up and I couldn't get a ticket," said Andrew Combs, a freshman elementary education major. "We all deserve to go."

"They're just using our gym, that's not the way it should be," Snyder said.

Some had no trouble obtaining tickets to the event, and were excited to hear Sen. Obama speak.

"I just found out about it yesterday," said freshman finance major Robbie Sealise. "I waited in line for about an hour and got my ticket."

"Faculty and staff had to go to Obama headquarters downtown to get a ticket," said Mary-ellen Madigan, director of admissions and financial aid. "I received a ticket, as did my colleagues."

Still, the fact remains that Behrend students were in the minority at the event.

"As College Democrats, we represent the entire student body and we fought the Obama campaign to increase the amount of tickets to be given out, because we feel that as College Democrats, and as the college community, there should be the maximum amount of penn state students at this event," said Alphen. "It's frustrating not to see the whole thing packed with Penn State students, the way it should be."

The Beacon expands coverage digitally

By Connor Sattely
entertainment editor
cis5060@psu.edu

The Behrend Beacon expanded its coverage to include live streaming audio and video, a live blog, and interaction with viewers during Sen. Barack Obama's (D-IL) speech Friday April 18.

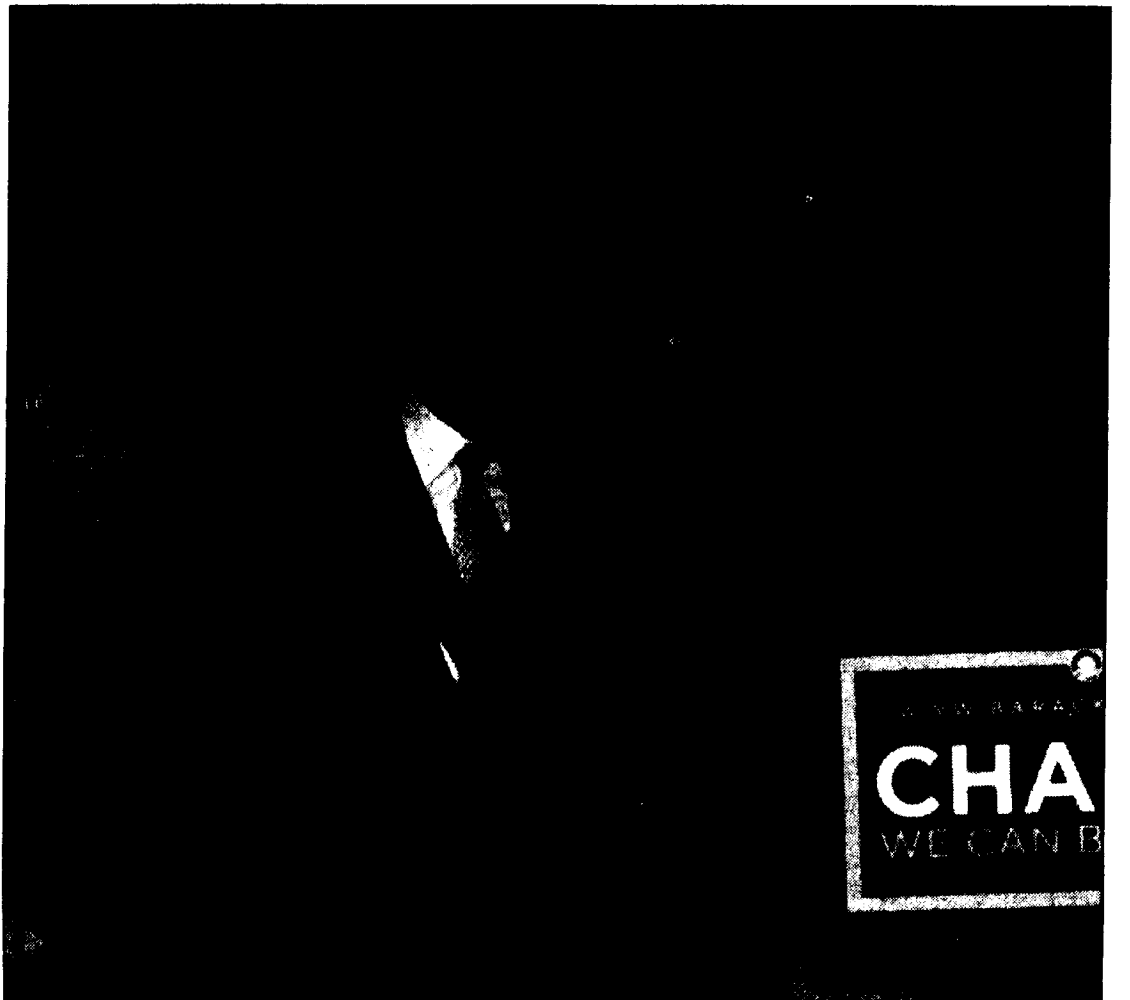
The live blog featured audience responses, important quotes from Obama and analysis of the event. Operated by News Editor Lenny Smith, the live log allowed viewers to experience the mood of the crowd without being in the Junker Center, where the event was held.

Audio and visual streams went online around fifteen minutes before the presentation was slated to begin. Though initial difficulties in sound quality

prevented viewers from understanding much at the beginning of the video, the problem was fixed as Obama took the stage, allowing viewers to watch and listen online. A live chat room featured reactions from those watching, and Beacon reporters took questions from viewers and sent them to audience members, trying to get responses.

Around 275 viewers tuned in to the live Obama event stream. The Beacon website, www.the-behrendbeacon.com, received over 800 hits, many directed from Penn State Behrend's website and a mass e-mail sent by Student Affairs.

Behrend Beacon editors are excited about exploring new forms of news coverage. With the 2008 general election quickly approaching, these types of broadcasts will be improved and expanded to bring speeches to the entire campus.



Keegan McGregor/THE BEHREND BEACON

Sen. Barack Obama (D-IL) takes questions from the audience during his rally at the Junker Center.

Obama rallies support in first Erie visit

Continued from page 1.
foreign policy and education reform.

"Hillary Clinton tried to fix the healthcare system in 1993," he said. "The problem was, she did it behind closed doors. I will do it out in the open, and consult the American people about what they think."

When talking about foreign policy, Obama drew upon many popular thoughts as he spoke about the Middle East. "We're fighting two wars right now," he said. "One we must win, and that's the war in Afghanistan. The other, I think we never should have started. I opposed that war in Iraq in 2002, and I will end it by 2012."

Obama's plan of withdrawing from Iraq included free Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder screenings for all veterans and mental assistance to all soldiers returning from war. "We need to start taking care of our veterans," he said.

He said that his plan for the education system was an added emphasis on early education to close the achievement gap. College students would be

offered tax credit in exchange for community service.

In the question and answer session, Obama seemed confident and poised as he answered questions regarding college loans, veteran disability and healthcare.

For the last question, a disabled veteran was given a microphone by Obama personally, and simply thanked him on behalf of veterans for running. The crowd gave the man a standing ovation, and Obama used the energy to finish his speech with repetitions of several phrases he had used earlier.

"How do you get yourself out of a hole?" Obama asked. "Stop digging."

After Sen. Obama had left, the crowd filed out, buzzing with energy. Troester says it was then that he realized how much the speech had changed him. "The energy in the room was great," he says. "There were so many people in there agreeing about stuff that makes sense." He paused a moment to reflect. "I'm sold," he said. "I'm voting or Obama."

Chelsea Clinton uses 'boro to connect to college students

Continued from page 1.

Chelsea also discussed ways her mother plans to make filling out the Free Application For Student Aid (FAFSA) form.

"She will change the FAFSA to a check box," Chelsea said. "When you are filling out your taxes, all you will have to do is check a box."

Also in her mother's plan to make college more affordable is loan forgiveness. "People that get jobs in the public interest, such as teaching, nursing, and the police force will have their debt forgiven if they still have it after 20 years," she said.

Chelsea received a large round of applause when she told the audience that her mother plans to end the No Child Left Behind Act.

A student concerned about special interest groups and taking money for lobbyists asked Chelsea about recent

ads by Sen. Barack Obama (D-IL) saying he is the only candidate that is not swayed by these groups.

"I don't think [its] true [that no candidate takes money for lobbyists]. All candidates take money," Chelsea said.

Edinboro freshman Rachel Renaudin said, "I have a lot of brothers and I want an intelligent way to pull out of the war."

"My mother would have ended the war yesterday if she could," Chelsea said. "My mom is the first candidate to ask the administration what its plans were to end the war. My mother will immediately begin planning to bring our men and women home safely."

"We need to do so much to repair what this [Bush] administration has done and what they haven't done," Chelsea said. "She has a deeper understanding of the job, what to do with Congress and how to balance it."



Daniel Smith/CONTRIBUTED PHOTO