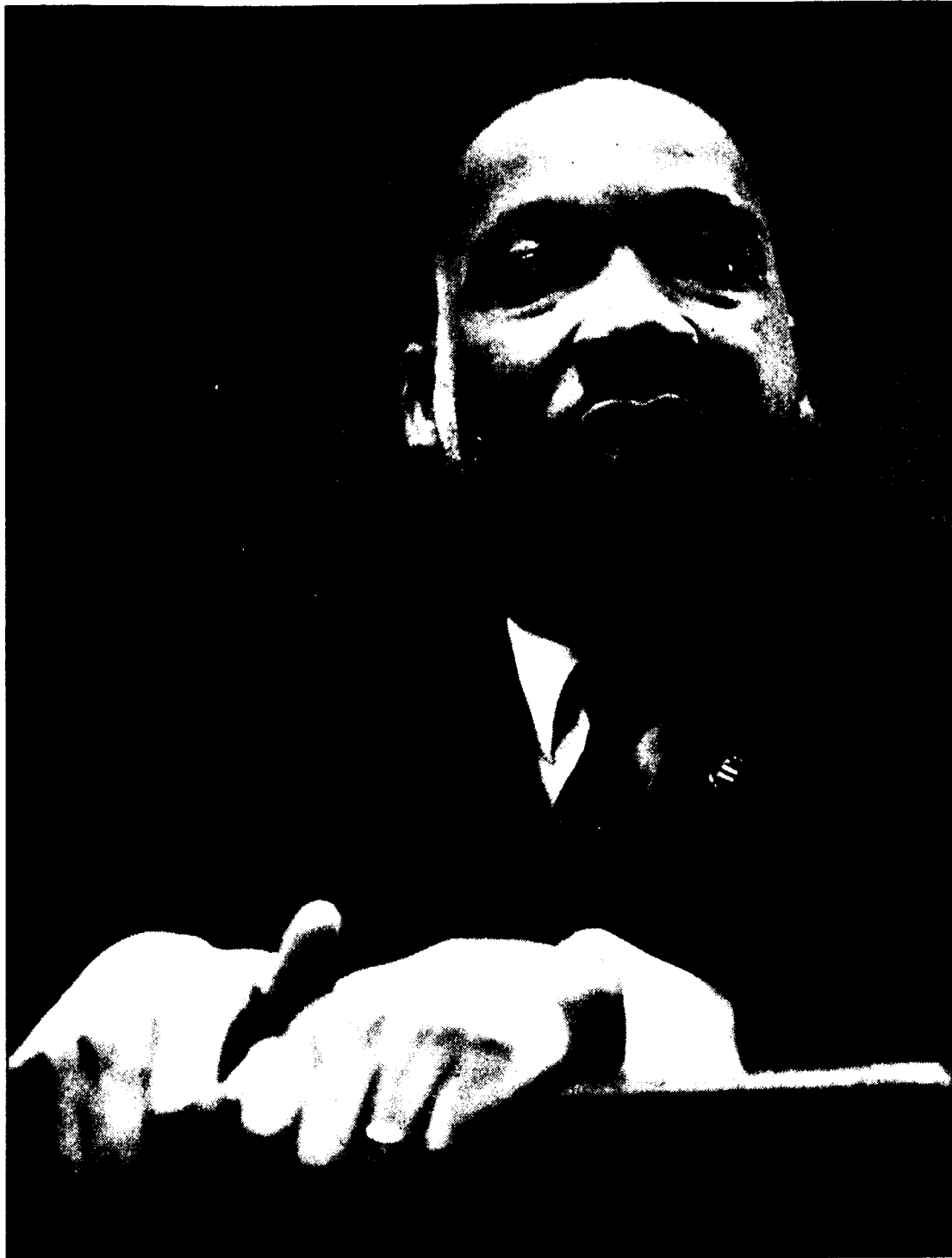


CAMPUS NEWS

Celebration honors Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with a week of events



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The 2009 Martin Luther King Commemoration Committee has organized a week of events promoting diversity and equal justice.

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"Dr. King's vision had a message of peace, not war; equality; and love," Herrera said. "These are the main aspects of this celebration."

The first event is scheduled to begin Monday, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and will feature a brunch and a reading based on the play *Montgomery Footprints* by Ossie B. Davis. *Montgomery Footprints* tells the story of Rosa Parks refusing to give up her seat on a public bus in Montgomery, Ala., which led to a widespread protest of the Montgomery public transportation system. Participating in the reading is a cast made up entirely of Penn State Behrend staff and students. The brunch will start at 11 a.m. with the reading beginning at noon.

The following day is the presidential inauguration of Barack Obama, which is being shown on the projection screen at Bruno's Café beginning at 11:00 a.m. Free doughnuts and hot chocolate will be available at the viewing, courtesy of the 2009 Martin Luther King Commemoration Committee. At 7 p.m. Monday evening, the film *Higher Learning* will be shown in Room 117 of the Reed Union Building. The film is set in a fictitious American college where students are forced to deal with escalating racial tension.

On Wednesday morning, students and staff will be organizing activities and reading for children at the University's Early Learning Center starting at 10 a.m. That evening, the Commemoration's Featured Speaker, Jabari Asim, will give a presentation in McGarvey Commons at 7:00 p.m. Asim is the Editor-in-Chief of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's magazine *The Crisis* and has made television appearances on *The Today Show*, *The Colbert Report*, and more. Asim has just written a new book titled *What Obama Means*, which will be released on Tuesday, the day of the inauguration.

Scheduled to begin at 8 p.m. on Thursday is a presentation in Bruno's titled *99 Questions You've Always Wanted to Ask an African American, but were too afraid for fear they'd break their foot off in your ass*, from actor and playwright Mark Cryer. Cryer, an Associate Professor at Hamilton University in Wyoming, wrote the multi-media play after a racial slur was written on a college student's door. With the play, Cryer hopes to break down racial barriers and initiate what he sees as long-overdue conversations about race.

For Friday night, the Association of Black Collegians and the Multi-Cultural Council have organized "Black Expressions," - a night of poetry, spoken word and other presentations. Anyone from the campus community is invited to the event and encouraged to share their work. Complementary cookies, hot chocolate, and coffee will be available.

Throughout the entire week, the 2009 Martin Luther King Commemoration Committee will be at various places around campus accepting donations which will go toward the Martin Luther King Jr. National Memorial being built in Washington D.C. Along with taking donations, committee members will also be distributing free wristbands that display the words "Yes we can fulfill the dream."

"I think the campus as a whole can live out 'Yes we can,'" says Herrera. "I believe the Behrend community can practice equal justice and be a society that is respectful of cultural differences."

Herrera hopes the celebration will open minds around Behrend and cause people to contribute to King's vision. "Hopefully some people will reflect on this and make a difference in society," he said.

Although the project is nearly complete, some students are frustrated with the lengthy construction time. "They really need to open that place," said Matt Kirkpatrick, a

Economic downturn gives Behrend students little reason to panic

Penn State Behrend is standing up to an economic downturn that is wreaking havoc on other U.S. colleges and universities.

Penn State University President Graham Spanier says that this is because Penn State has always spent conservatively. "We are taking steps to make sure that our financial stability will continue through this recession and beyond," he says in a University-wide e-mail that was released over winter break.

Other colleges are laying off faculty and staff, increasing tuitions dramatically, and cutting back on scholarships and financial aid in order to make ends meet this academic year. Although Penn State is experiencing some budget cuts that will make some changes, none of these drastic measures are necessary.

Specifically to Behrend, there have been two cuts since the beginning of the year, first for \$211,000, and again for \$141,000. The Chancellor is expecting a permanent reduction for the next academic year of 1.5 percent, or \$428,000. Another potential challenge for the school includes a probable increase in utility costs.

To make the budget, Behrend is expecting a tuition increase for the near future, but the Chancellor does not know what the increase will be yet. The Chancellor also said that there is a "99 percent chance" that there will be no pay raise for employees this year.

However, that looks to be the extent of the damage for this year. "We tried to make it as business

as usual here as possible," said Burke. Anticipated hiring for vacated positions are still going forward as planned. Construction projects, like the renovation of the Reed Union Building and the construction of a new Alumni and Admissions building, are still on track. The Chancellor said that he was not as sure of the planned Dobbins renovation, since that is a Housing and Food services project and is separate from the other building projects.

Although endowments are down, Penn State depends very little on these contributions for operating costs. Also, unlike other private colleges who are losing 30 percent in stock, Penn State has only lost 18 percent or 19 percent.

The Chancellor says that the recession is one of the main reasons he delayed his retirement. "It's crazy. I've never seen anything like this. It's not a good time to leave the ship."

Dr. James Kurre, Associate Professor of Economics at Behrend, says that not only Behrend but also the Erie community is faring unexpectedly well.

This is unusual for a city that tends to suffer more in a recession than the rest of the nation on average. "Erie downturns before the rest of the nation, and comes up after. But this time is different," says Kurre.

According to Kurre, one of the main reasons for this stability is General Electric. The company has a national corner on the market of green locomotives that are more fuel-efficient and have fewer emissions. These locomotives

are selling well all over the world, especially in China and Egypt. "When GE does well, it spills over into the community," says Kurre.

Another reason for stronger economy is the healthcare sector. No matter what else is going on, people will still need healthcare. Kurre says that "it doesn't take the biggest hit," in a downturn.

Finally, higher education is acting like a buffer between Erie and the country's economic woes. The area has five schools including LECOM (Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine), which Kurre says is actually the largest medical school in the country. When people have less money-making opportunity, they are more inclined to seek more education.

Since there are less job opportunities, many graduating students find it more sensible to go on to graduate school rather than try and find employment. Also, professionals who have been laid off have better opportunities for finding another job if they return to school and learn new skills. Enrollment can be expected to go up even as the economy goes down.

Even though the national news on the financial situation is anything but optimistic, Penn State Behrend students have many reasons to feel more secure than most. Between the status of the local community and the benefits of pursuing higher education during a recession, a Penn State Behrend student is one of the most fortunate things a person can be right now.

Behrend THON Dancers to participate at University Park

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"I'm looking forward to the emotional experience," says Allison Shearer, one of the four dancers. "It is a tragedy for a kid to have cancer."

Shearer says it is a great chance to help "relieve the horror" the parents and children must go through.

Jamie Mayer, another of the four dancers, says that when she went to observe the event last year "it blew me away."

"It is such a good cause," Mayer says.

Julie Colvin says she is "expecting [it] to be fun. And

very hard."

And Alyssa Beck, the fourth dancer, says she has never been to a THON event.

"I expect just so many different emotions," Beck says. "I really feel I'm going to learn so much."

All four of the dancers have participated in the 24-hour dance marathons here at Behrend, but none of them have had to endure the near double-length event. They will head down for it on Feb. 20.

Molly Thomas, the Behrend THON team chair, says that this is already a record year.

The campus raised \$18,015 through canning and other fund-

raising events over the course of the last school year. She says that this year they have already broken that record.

"Our goal now is \$30,000," Thomas says. If the team can gather more than \$25,000, they will be able to send six students instead of just four.

Thomas was a dancer last year. She says the highlight of the event for her was when she spent time with a seven-year-old girl with T-cell lymphoma, a cancer that affects certain white blood cells.

Roughly 700 dancers participate at the University Park event each year. Thomas expects around

Business school receives accolades from *The Princeton Review*

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The Behrend website states the school is officially recognized and supported by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International, which is an association dedicated to improving the higher education, according to the AACSB official website.

Straight from the Gut is a memoir by Jack Welch about "the most talked about and widely emulated manager in business history," according to straightfromthegut.com. Welch is quoted citing the work of Behrend MIS students. He states, "With a couple of Penn State students and some help from our software engineers in India, McNamee

built a prototype in three weeks for \$17,000. Two weeks later, they held the first on-line auction - for industrial gloves."

The school has also been called by some people as "one of the rising stars among eastern business schools" as stated on the Behrend website.

Hungry Howie's Pizza will soon offer students off-campus dining

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"When we finally found one thing that got started pretty fast," said Kliszewski.

Kliszewski goes on to say that his crew has run into some common construction problems during out the project, and has set a new goal of January 27 to open.

Although the project is nearly complete, some students are frustrated with the lengthy construction time.

"They really need to open that place," said Matt Kirkpatrick, a

sophomore Plastics Engineering major. "There are a lot of people that live at U-gates and are going to give them a lot of business. It makes no sense for them to wait this long to open, they're sitting on a goldmine."

"I'm frustrated," says Andrew Young, a junior majoring in Software Engineering. "There's nothing on campus to eat, especially late at night. Hungry Howies was supposed to be open by now, and it's like, what are we supposed to eat?"

Some students are upset with

the general lack of places to eat on or near campus.

"It's ridiculous that there aren't more places to eat around here," said Greg Matson, a sophomore Kinesiology major. "I pay \$20,000 a year for my education, and I want more food choices."

Anxious students won't be waiting much longer, as Kliszewski assures that construction is nearly finished. "Right now the biggest hold up is the floor," says Kliszewski. "We are waiting for the walls to be covered with sheet rock. Once that

happens then the plumbers can come in, and the floor can be laid down, and the equipment can be moved in."

When it opens later this month, Hungry Howie's Pizza will be located in a newly-built building at University Gate Apartments that also houses the management's office and a public laundry room.

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