

# CAMPUS NEWS

## Expansion

from front page.

our admissions criteria lies in high school GPA, while the rest lies in SAT or ACT scores."

For Madigan, who has been working at Behrend for 22 years, and as its Director of Admissions for 18, those admission criteria have been the biggest change she has seen at the college. "We've grown up," she says. "We used to be open admissions, really. Kind of a 'backup school.' Now, we have high admission standards, high quality of programs, students, and faculty."

Admission numbers become increasingly difficult to predict, though, due to personal factors within first-year college students. Dave Christiansen, the Associate Dean at Behrend, says that the "summer melt" could throw off the numbers significantly.

"Basically, we send out acceptance letters to a certain number of students" Christianson says. "The number of students who actually act on that acceptance usually goes down over summer. For various reasons: they might get their first tuition bill and decide they do not have the money for college, they might head somewhere else."

With the recent state of the economy, he says, financial concerns will very likely drastically increase the summer melt before the fall semester. Even that is speculation, making it difficult to aim for a certain number of students.

### How has Behrend gotten so big?

According to Mary-Ellen Madigan, the reason for Behrend's drastic growth over the last decade or two has been

due to the increased interest in academics at the university.

"With the creation of the REDC," she says, "we saw a jump in admissions. When they built Senat, too, we saw a bigger ability to grow without raising incoming criteria."

The growth of campus is partially an interesting phenomenon. Behrend is only permitted to "recruit" students out of high school in the Erie area - including only four or five counties nearest to Behrend. That rules out being able to recruit as heavily in places like Pittsburgh.

So, what has caused so many students to have an interest in the Erie commonwealth campus?

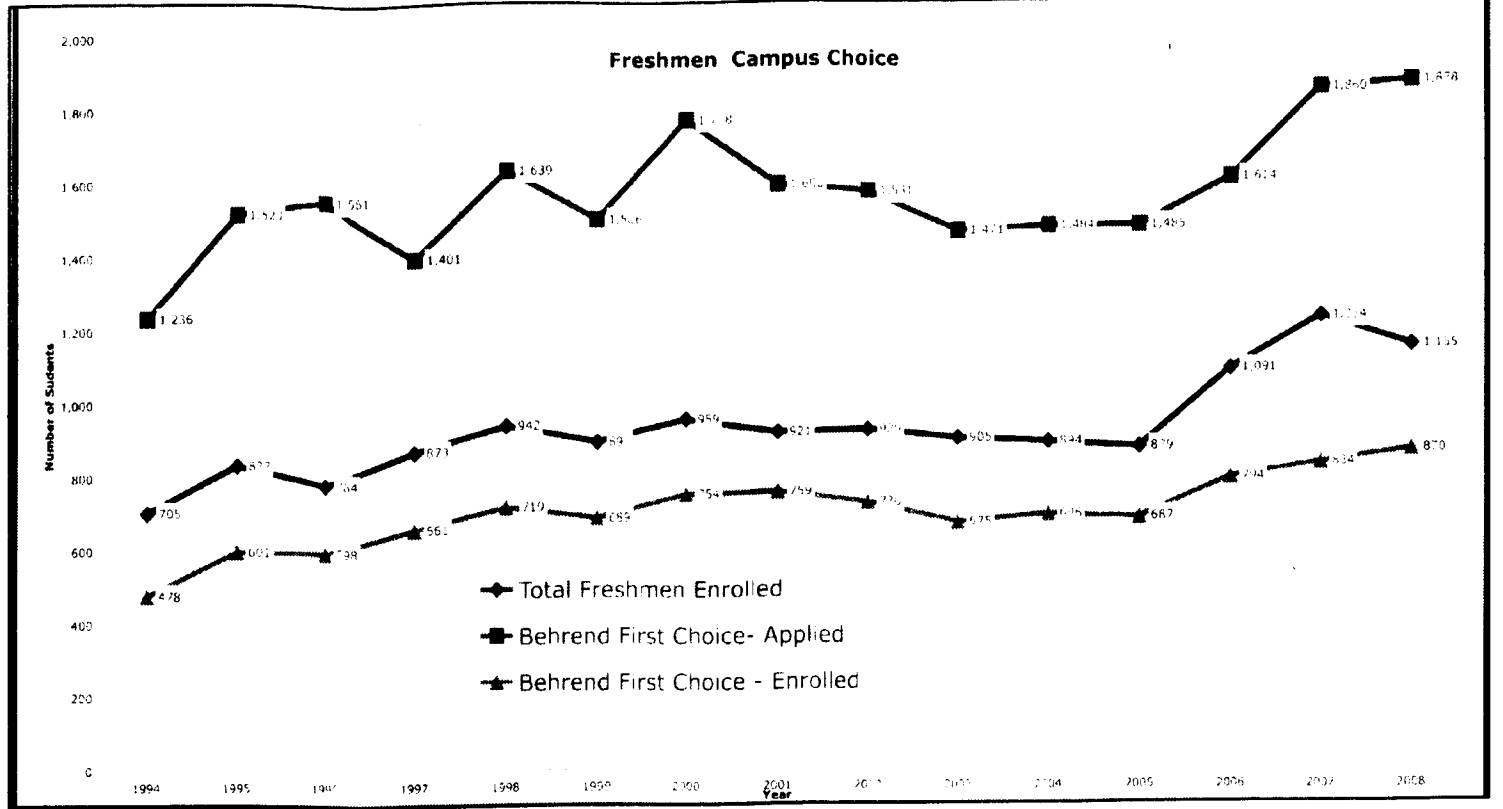
"A lot of our growth is helped by alumni," Madigan says. "We have a lot of alumni out there that not only advertise for Behrend by word of mouth, but by their actions. A lot of them are very successful, and it speaks a lot for the college."

Also, she says, the continuity of leadership at Behrend sets it apart from other commonwealth campuses. The strategic vision of administrators has provided the University with a common goal of expansion, and the Admissions Department has been able to follow that.

As with any discussion of growth, the obvious question remains, though: how far does the school plan to go?

### Behrend: The next University Park?

Forty years from now, alumni will return and view a completely different university than what they remember in the 2000s. What, though, will they see? A campus of tens of thousands of students?



JEREMY KORWEK The Behrend Beacon

According to Dave Christiansen, the answer is likely a no.

"We can't expand up to ten, fifteen thousand unless the University supports that," he says. "And I really don't see that happening."

Space concerns, he says, will limit Behrend's expansion as far as admissions go. "Housing always has affected admission yields," he says. "As beds increase, the yield of students increases. But it goes beyond housing. Most of our classes are pretty close to one hundred percent full, too."

More than that, most administrators at Behrend express a desire to stay with the characteristics that make students stay at the college for four years. "We don't want to lose quality," Madigan says. "We want to offer students the ability to study at a small college, with classes taught by faculty. We don't want to reduce the quality of our faculty, or the

campus, because by doing so we reduce the quality of our students."

### Behrend "Loyalty"

Perhaps the most interesting statistic over the past decade has been the rise in both students who are applying to Behrend as a first-choice campus, and students who choose to stay at Behrend rather than transfer to University Park.

Since 1994, there has been over a 50 percent increase in students who marked Behrend as their first-choice campus over University Park on applications. In the same span of time, there has been an 82 percent jump in how many of those "first-choice" students are admitted.

According to admissions data, 870 students who marked the Erie campus as their first choice were enrolled last year. This group of students

accounts for a whopping three fourths of the entire freshman class.

The results point to Behrend quickly shifting away from a "branch" or "back-up" campus, and indicate that the college is a sought-after destination by a majority of their students.

Also rising is the amount of students who are choosing to stay at Behrend for four years rather than transferring to University Park after their second year.

"Right now, we're at about twenty-five percent for students who choose to transfer," says Christiansen. "You can compare that to about fifty or sixty percent that transfer out of other commonwealth campuses."

An interesting comparison, he adds, is to Behrend itself - a decade or two ago, the college saw opposite statistics, with two-thirds of its students transferring to University Park.

With such obvious trends, it

is easy to see that Madigan's assessment of Behrend having "Grown up" is more precise than most realize. Surely, some of the increased student interest in the campus is due to expansion within buildings like the REDC, Senat, or even other improvements currently taking place.

Most faculty at the school, though, will smile and refer to the school's name as an adjective in describing why students stay. "We want to stay Behrend," most administrators will say.

Madigan, in her two decades in the Admissions Department, knows what that means.

"We used to be a two-year college. Mainly commuters, technical students," she says. "Now, we're a full-fledged college. We offer a successful, high quality program here that clearly sets Behrend apart."

## Behrend alumnus recognized for academic performance

By Ashley Rodrigo  
staff writer  
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"I know I did a lot during school, but not the giant accomplishments that would draw the attention of this type of award" said Julie Elkins, recipient of the 2009 Ralph Dorn Hetzel Memorial Award.

Elkins expressed her gratitude for receiving the Hetzel award. "On one hand, the knowledge and experience that I gained, plus achieving the goals I set for myself, made all the time and effort entirely worthwhile. On the other hand, it is a tremendous honor to be recognized, and it is really nice to know that others thought I was on the right track and making a difference," Elkins said.

The Schreyer Honors College student holds a dual degree in political science and

psychology, along with a 3.97 cumulative grade point average. Additionally, Elkins was a receiver of an Academic Excellence Scholarship and Chancellor's Scholarship.

Finishing up her college education, Elkins wrote an honors thesis entitled "Defibrillating the Freshwater Heart of Africa: The Plight of Lake Victoria and Responses to the Local, National and International Levels" and accomplished a research project titled "Democratic Engagement: The Influence of Relationships and Participations." She was constantly involved with her school, from academics to community service.

Elkins was a Center for Strategic and International Studies Global Strategy Institute intern. In addition, she held other job positions such as a peer writing tutor, campus tour guide and teach-

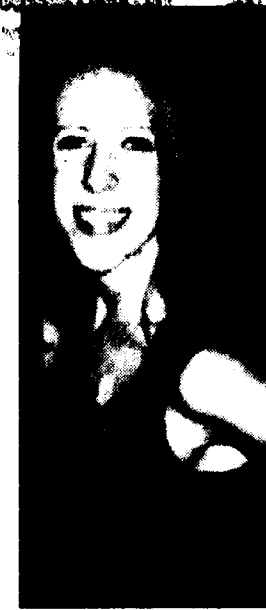
ing assistant. Elkins exhibited leadership skills as both treasurer and vice president of Behrend's College Republicans, and as the president of the Psychology club and Omicron Delta Kappa Honor Society.

Community service, being one of the requirements for the Hetzel Award, has also been a big part of Elkins college career. She has volunteered as a You "Can" Recycle Aluminum Can Drive coordinator, English as a Second Language student visit coordinator, and an English tutor for recent immigrants. Also, she was a V.O.I.C.E. student visit leader as well as a Lake Erie Coastal Cleanup volunteer.

Being such an active student, Elkins had to prioritize her time in order to manage all of her activities while maintaining top grades. "Of course, it wasn't the easy route, and at

times it was overwhelmingly stressful. Every sequential semester, I would think, 'this is my worst semester ever,'" said Elkins. However, she kept at it and continued to work hard. "I wouldn't accept failure as an option, though. I pushed myself to keep going, and now I can look back and be proud that I made it through without losing sight of my goals," declared Elkins.

Elkins and her incredible award will hopefully inspire many students to achieve the same goals. As an intelligent and well-rounded student, Elkins revealed, "To me, the most important thing is to figure out your goals and decide your priorities. Set ambitious goals; don't sell yourself short. You have to be willing to try new things, to commit, and to push yourself to keep going even when things are hard."



Contributed photo  
Julie Elkins

Interested in writing news for The Behrend Beacon? E-mail Matthew Schwabenbauer at mjs5387@psu.edu for more information.

## Warrant

from front page.

served at the warehouse. State police and liquor control officers cited 82 individuals at the party for underage drinking. Additionally, 30 gallons of beer, tap equipment, six beer kegs and \$395 were seized. According to a receipt of seized property attached to the warrant, the confiscated items

belonged to Nicholas Mahoney and Glenn Palmer, both Behrend students.

According to the document, 12 officers took part in the raid: three troopers, two sergeants, six liquor enforcement officers, and one supervisor.

No other information was available as of press time. The investigation is ongoing.

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State police warrant

## Breach

from front page.

computer was only compromised for a matter of three hours. The University has taken a cautionary stance involving the matter despite a lack of evidence suggesting any Social Security numbers were released.

On Saturday, University Park mailed letters to each alumnus whose information

was compromised. The letters contained instructions on notifying credit-reporting agencies about the situation. The alumni will then have to place an initial fraud alert on their file, which will let creditors and other agencies know that they are a potential victim of identity theft. In some cases, this could decrease their chances of receiving credit.

"It's important to note that it is a potential breach. We've found no evidence that suggests that Social Security numbers actually left the computer, or were received by any other third party."

Bill Gonda

Director of marketing communication

<p><b>Monday</b></p> <p>High: 52°F Low: 35°F</p>	<p><b>Tuesday</b></p> <p>High: 51°F Low: 39°F</p>
<p><b>Wednesday</b></p> <p>High: 51°F Low: 37°F</p>	<p><b>Thursday</b></p> <p>High: 56°F Low: 43°F</p>

Interesting weather fact:  
The difference between the hottest and coldest air temperatures ever recorded on the surface of the earth is 264 degrees.

Weather forecast courtesy of student meteorologist Matt Alto.