

MY VIEW

Freshman Reset

BY NEIL JAMES
Opinion Editor

For most incoming freshmen, college is a beacon of hope.

High school students across the country are conditioned to believe that college is a utopian paradise. When I first signed into Senat Hall I half expected to be given a condom, a can of beer, and bump in to my soul mate in some romantic comedy style mishap. Needless to say, my freshman year didn't work out exactly as I had planned. I have plenty of regrets and would love to re-do my first year. Though, since I can't do that, I feel that it is my duty to inform the incoming freshmen of my errors, so that they may learn from my mistakes and have a better experience.

- **Actually get to know your roommate.** I can't stress how important it is to get to know your roommate. My old roommate was a super-cool dude, but both of us were just really shy and never really got to know one another. In retrospect we actually had a lot in common, and could have been great friends. The year would have been a much better experience if we'd taken the time to become more than just acquaintances.

- **Don't over do Bruno's.** Seriously, eating at Bruno's too much will drain your meal plan with lightning speed. If you eat there everyday, you'll be out of money by the end of October.

- **Exercise and Proper diet.** Maintaining a proper diet and a healthy exercise routine is a fantastic way to deal with stress and fight the Freshmen Fifteen. Sure, the Junker Center can get really busy at night; but staying in shape should be high on anyone's list of priorities. Not simply because it's healthy, but if you don't hit the gym at least once a week, you'll eventually out grow your pants.

- **Get involved.** A great way to get some fast friends is to get involved in one of the various

Behrend clubs. Whether it's Hall Council or Thon, pick a club and go with it. It provides food, friends and a pleasant break from normalcy.

- **Come to college single.** This is for those who already have a partner. Don't outright dump them, but it's worth giving your relationship some deep thought. You will change during your collage experience, and it's much easier to grow and develop when the only person you have to worry about is yourself.

- **Don't make finding a Partner your only goal.** If you are single and are dying for a relationship, you freshmen year is not the time to worry about it. Focus on your grades, or else you won't be in college long enough to stay with that special someone.

- **If you need help, get it!** There is no shame in getting a tutor or going to office hours. Professors can't help you if you don't show interest. If you don't get involved then you'll just be a number, but if you show interest in your grades then they'll feel more inclined to cut you some slack.

- **Be Patient.** College is going to test you in a lot of ways and at some point your going to be ready to pull your hair out. Whether is floundering in a class or dealing with idiots, you'll be ready to hit critical mass eventually. Just stay calm and keep your cool. People can be annoying and classes are not fun, but panicking and throwing a fit won't help the matter. Just take a break, step back and look for a new way to solve the problem.

These are just a few things that I'd re-do, but we don't go to college just to get a degree. By making mistakes we learn about who we are and who we want to be. Mistakes are actually the best learning tool that we have at our disposal, just don't kill anybody and you should be fine.



Mike Keefe THE DENVER POST 8-23-09

www.caglecartoons.com

MY VIEW

Metamorphosis

BY EVAN KOSER
arts editor

Three years. It's been three years now since I broke out of my metaphorical chrysalis that was the high school experience. While it may seem cliché to use the caterpillar-to-butterfly analogy, consider this question for a minute: is the final product, the butterfly, still the caterpillar he once was?

That's what I've been trying to figure out for three years. Am I free to fly in a gentle breeze now, or has my metamorphosis not taken place, let alone finished? In terms of changing, I haven't stopped since I first set foot on this campus, and I don't see my growth as a person coming to a halt any time soon.

Though before I start questioning whether or not change can be a good thing, the best first step into this sort of self-reflection is to ask myself what I've learned and where I've grown. First and foremost, college has done more for my personal growth individually and responsibly than any amount of parental harassment through high school. I've learned that an argument is nothing but a fight for fight's sake. An open ear and attentive mind can take you further with anyone than money, looks, and false sympathy ever will. Most importantly, responsibility is a DIY program; until you understand that no one is going to hold your hand through college, then you'll never find yourself able to step out the door into the real world.

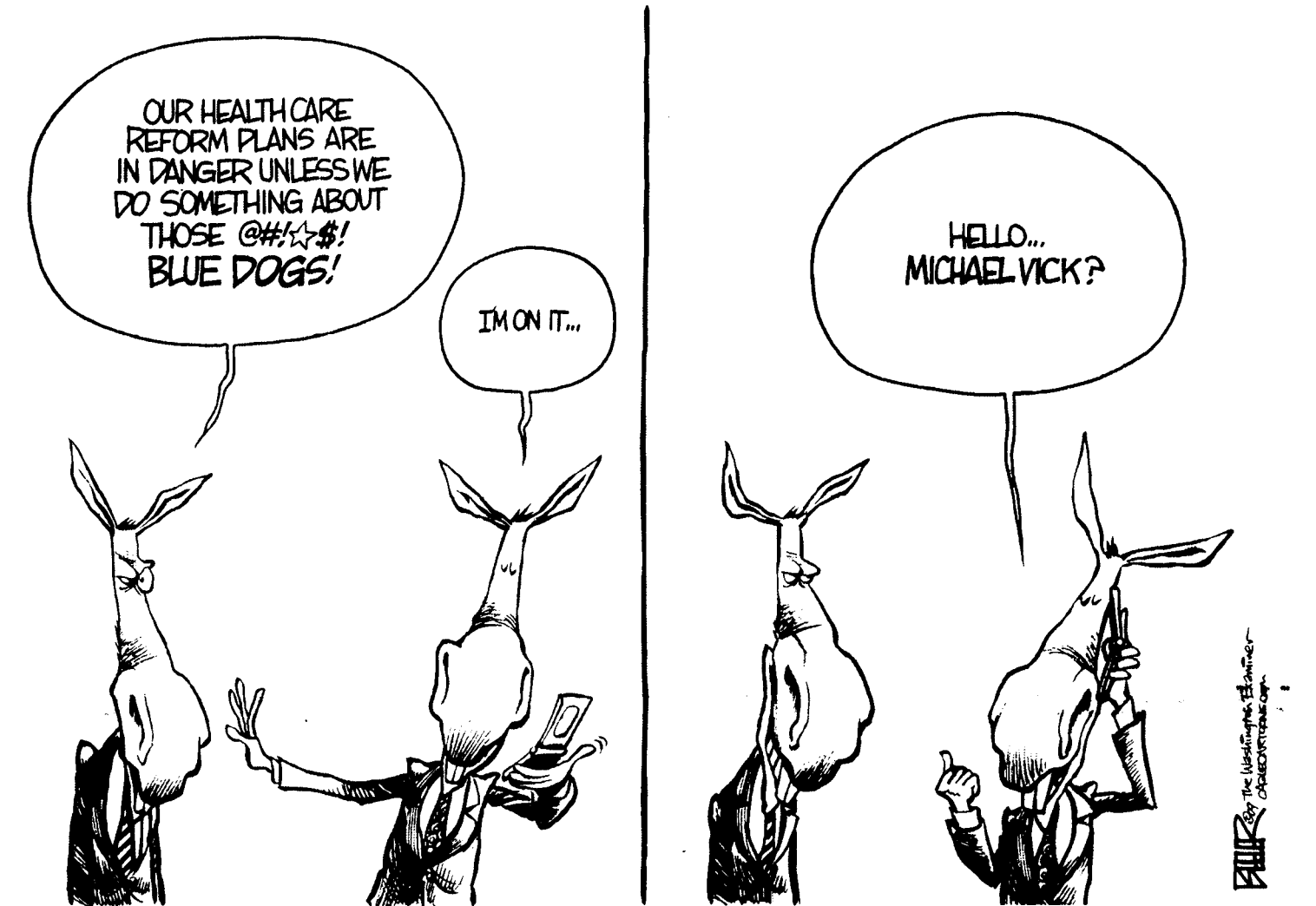
Through just the few things I've learned, I can revisit my prior analogy and mold it, just as college molds - not changes - someone into something altered and unique, but ultimately unscathed. I can safely say, even now entering my junior year, that who I was before college, and who I am after I

graduate are always going to both be Evan Koser. As college stands as a transition between high school and the "real world," it becomes the chrysalis many search for. College becomes the vessel for change.

And what better place to seek change and a new "identity" than in college? No one knows who you are, where you come from, or what your interests are. Now, the beginning of your freshmen year especially, is the perfect time to reach deep down inside and become the person you've always wanted to be. Some may criticize me for advocating against the "be yourself" mentality, but I rebut: are you not yourself if you start to live out your deepest desire? To become someone you aren't is to remain yourself. Who you are wishes to be something else - so in becoming that something, you do nothing more than fulfill your ultimate wish. A person can do his or herself the ultimate service by acting independently, taking others into consideration, and putting effort into his or her aspirations.

I am still changing, still growing. Are who I was three years ago and who I am now the same Evan Koser? Yes and no. For the most part, none of us ever make the same mistake twice. Through trial and error, we learn what works and what doesn't. If there is anything a first-year student should take away from this article, it's that now is your chance. Now is the time for all of you young caterpillars to gather the knowledge you need to manifest your own chrysalis through college. Now is one of the only opportunities of your entire lifetime to become what you've aspired to be, to overcome what you've always felt was an obstacle, or to shape your life the way you want it to be.

Is the butterfly still the caterpillar he once was?



Mike Keefe THE DENVER POST 8-23-09

OUR VIEW

Change comes bearing gifts

As a staff, we want to make the Behrend Beacon the best newspaper that we can possibly create. We have made a lot of changes to the newspaper this year; many of these you may have noticed in this paper, many are yet to come. Why now? Why so suddenly?

Change for the sake of change isn't worth it, but we also feel that letting ourselves get stuck in the rut of what we've "always done" is just as bad. While we could have brought in these new changes gradually, we instead chose to start off the year with a complete redesign. We want to give you the best newspaper possible, right away. We are going to try a lot of things that have never been tried at this school, and the best time to start is right now.

First, we have completely redesigned the styles in the newspaper. Fonts, titles, bylines - all intended to give you, the reader, an easier time navigating your news. More importantly, though, we

are narrowing our focus on what Behrend students care about. We promise that every week we will have something that interests each student. Along these lines, we have added and will soon add many pages: pages designed for engineers, scientists, businesspeople, and humanities majors; a page covering world and national news; a "Week in Photos" page, on page two this week; a page covering fraternity and sorority life; and many more.

With each of these new pages, we will strive to keep the quality of the Beacon at the utmost highest.

The most important change of this school year, however, is the fact that we are no longer content being the "student newspaper;" we instead intend to be a student media center which will provide video, photos, audio, networking, and on-line information.

To that end, we have scrapped our website completely, and rebuilt it; the effort has already drawn national at-

attention from other college editors, and we feel that our web product is outstanding. For it to be a success, though, we need your help; we need to know what you think of stories, so comment. We need to know what you think of videos, so watch. Every day, we will have something new on the website about your campus. Our plans are to show you exclusive videos of construction, plans for improving campus, and investigative videography.

Our website is located at www.thebehrendbeacon.com. While we hope that you send in letters to the editor, and comment on our website, we have also created a Facebook page that will allow for easy comments. We plan to launch one Twitter account for each section, allowing students to follow only that area that interests them.

The last thing we need, though, is you. We are recruiting students from every corner of campus to join in our efforts to create one of the best college

newspapers in the country this year. If you don't have prior experience, we will help you develop your writing skills. Whether you want to write about engineering, or music, or sports, we will find a place to allow you to build that resumé and get involved on campus. We offer paid positions for students who write for longer than one semester for the Beacon. If you're interested, or just want to see the various employment opportunities we offer, visit www.thebehrendbeacon.com/joinus.

So, new students, we welcome you to the campus. For returning students, we welcome you back. We hope that you will spend this year staying aware on what's going on around you both at Behrend, in Erie, and in the world. We will try our best to help you accomplish just that.

Christine Newby for the Editorial Board

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