

Oddo aims for state legislature

By Neil Myers

It's a long way from Harrisburg to McKeesport, but Student Government Association President Joe Oddo makes the trip home every other weekend. He has to. He's running for election there as the Republican candidate in Pennsylvania's 37th Legislative District.

Oddo, a senior Public Policy major, has had his sights set on public office for a long time.

"It goes back to four years ago," he says. "I was tired of working as a laborer. I've been training myself."

Oddo attended the McKeesport Campus of Penn State, then transferred to Capitol Campus where he worked in an internship in the state senate. At his job there, he watched a computer listing of candidates running for office this year.

"The deadline was approaching and nobody was signed up," Oddo grins. The Democratic incumbent was running unopposed, so he made a phone call to the Republican party and... presto, instant candidacy.

Oddo, 26, says he thinks his age will be an asset, not a liability. He plans to orient his campaign to youthful voters.



Photo by Jeffrey G. Shatzer

Joe Oddo, S.G.A. President.

"Younger voters have been somewhat alienated by politicians. They're never really taken seriously. I don't see why that should be."

Involvement is a theme Oddo stresses. He is supporting the current voter registration drive here on campus.

Oddo is currently working on his campaign strategy in conjunction with a course on campaigns and elections taught by Michael Young, Instructor in Social Science and Public Policy.

Much of his support will be from volunteers, Oddo says, because funding is tight. He began the campaign with "several hundred dollars" of his own money and solicited the signatures he needed to gain a spot on the ballot with the help of only one other person.

"I have the ambition," he says, sounding like a candidate. "I'm going to be working 10 or 12 hour days, which I've done before. I can sense the community is in need of a change."

Asked if he would vote to increase Penn State's budgetary allotment if he is elected, Oddo pauses.

"I listened to Dr. Jordan speak about that. I would say to keep it strong, but I'd have to weigh that against the needs of other state agencies."

Oddo is somewhat of an idealist. Though running as a Republican, he gives party affiliation little emphasis. In 1980 he coordinated the Pittsburgh Youth for Anderson, and in 1982 he worked for the Allen Ertel gubernatorial campaign.

He also has a touch of pragmatism. Even if he doesn't win in November, Oddo says he will still have gained in experience and name recognition. And, he can always look forward to graduate school.

"Of course," he adds, smiling, "I'm going to win."

Capitol organizes ambassador program

By Neil Myers

The Admissions and Public Relations Offices have announced the creation of a Capitol Campus Lion Ambassador organization to represent the campus to the public.

Lion Ambassadors, first formed at University Park in 1981, are students who serve at receptions, tours, and other events, according to Sherry Janis, Assistant to the Director of Campus Relations.

"We have some distinct features here that need to be recognized by the public at large," said Mary Gundel, Director of Admissions.

The Admissions Office sponsored two meetings on February 29 to explain the organization to prospective members. About 28 Capitol students attended in all. Also at the meetings were representatives of the University Park Lion Ambassadors and the Capitol Campus administration.

According to Pat Young, Assistant Director of Admissions, one of the Ambassador's major goals will be to gather impressions of how potential students and other visitors view the campus. Janis said the group might also serve at the annual phonathon, at receptions and in visits to other colleges.

The group will have a formal constitution and will be somewhat selective, according to Young. She said she plans to start with 11 or 12 members and work toward 18 or 20. Mary Gundel anticipated that the selections will be made

by mid-April.

The group will wear uniforms, Young said, and will have training sessions on how to relate to the public.

The group's proposed constitution provides for active members, alumni members and honorary members.

Kevin Murphy, President of the University Park Lion Ambassadors, said, "The primary thrust of the organization is to educate students. A lot of people don't know what a provost does."

One of the roles of Capitol's Ambassadors might be to represent Penn State's interests among state legislators, he added.

Lee Gianone, the University Park group's adviser, said the program is "probably one of the top three in the country" among student-alumni publicity programs.

Ann Westoff, a former Ambassador now employed by Quaker Oats, said the program helped her in her job search by allowing her to meet potential employers.

Gundel said she hoped the program would instill a feeling of unity with the rest of Penn State.

"In the early stages (of Capitol Campus) it seemed as though we wanted to separate ourselves from University Park. We will never be what University Park is, but we are a part of Penn State."

Applications for membership in the group must be submitted to the Admissions Office by Monday, March 19.

U. Park considers local news bureau

By Neil Myers

WDFM, one of University Park's student radio stations, has announced tentative plans to open a Harrisburg news bureau here. The bureau, if formed, will use the facilities of Capitol's WNDR to telephone reports of legislative and area news to State College, according to Joe Krushinsky, WDFM station manager.

"We just don't like what we're doing now," said Krushinsky. He said the station is looking for some volunteers who want experience in radio reporting to replace or supplement WDFM's current Harrisburg coverage. The station now uses a syndicated reporting service, according to Krushinsky.

"We're putting forth the idea," he explained. The station will make a definite decision in the near future, based on response to the proposal.

"It gives students a chance to work hard-core news," said WNDR program director Don Strausburger. He said WNDR would use some of the stories here.

Interested students can apply at WNDR, Strausburger said.

Reporters will be trained by the WDFM staff. Krushinsky suggested a three-night program to orient volunteers.

WDFM is a 1000-watt, 24-hour FM station run by University Park students. Krushinsky said the station has an annual budget of \$15,000 to \$20,000.