

## "Hi! Do You Know Me?"

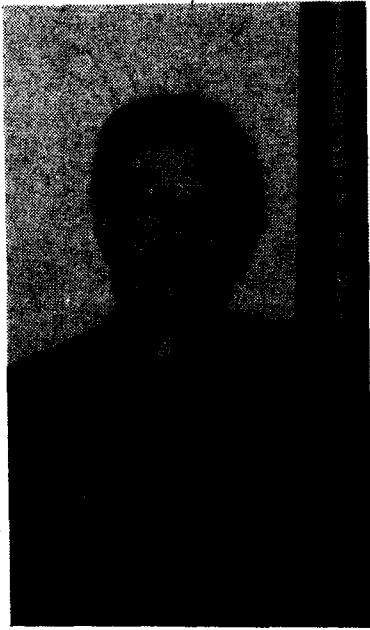
By Jan Travers

He'd be a natural for an American Express credit card commercial. If you didn't look at the uniform you'd never guess who the very young, easy going, ever smiling, bespectacled young man was.

But look below his chin and you see a major clue to solving his identity. He is the Rev. Kenneth Smith, campus minister at Penn State at Harrisburg. At 29, he is young enough to relate to youth, but after only a few words you realize he is wise enough to garner respect.

There is no campus ministry office so Father uses public gathering places to mingle with the students. Every Wednesday during the semester, from 9:30 to 4, Father sets up shop in the Lion's Den. "I want students to know someone from the church is there to share their problems, frustrations, or to be a friend," said Smith.

"Church is not a major part of college life, and as a result, kids will shy away," he continued. Therefore, the major focus of his attention for his first semester at PSU, Harrisburg, was to gain the confidence of the students. Through obvious exposure in the Lion's Den and library, in addition to word of mouth among the students, Smith feels he is beginning to have an effect.



However, one drawback of meeting in areas with a lot of people, according to Father, is that some may hold back because they feel uncomfortable asking for help in front of their peers. For those, Father is available in a more private setting every Sunday evening between 6pm and 9pm, when he is on campus to say 7:30 mass in the CUB.

"I'm not here to hit anybody over the head, but to reach out to these people to show them someone is there, whether to offer sacraments of the church or to direct or counsel them," explained Smith.

According to Smith, a campus is a place where a lot of

work can be done by reminding students the church is there to help. "Penn State is a highly geared academic school, which in turn creates a lot of stress." And even though he is of the Catholic religion, Smith is quick to point out that he is on campus to help all denominations. "I have no means of determining the religious makeup of the campus," said Smith, adding that the only way he can effectively serve the students is to have them respond to him.

Father has plans to increase his campus involvement. This includes examining needs of an adult campus population. "I find that undergraduate schools like Penn State have kept up on academics, but are lacking in the areas of faith and religion," said Smith. For this reason, Father would like to see the addition of adult education in scripture study, addressing morals, ethics, and justice.

In recent years, there has been a sharp decline in the number of people entering the life of service to the church. "By the year 2000, there will be 50 percent fewer priests than there are now," said Smith. "Young people have a lot to offer the church, but they need encouragement to step forward. I am in a position to initiate the process of growing closer to the church," offered Smith.

## Start Job Search Early

By Tom Boyle

Unless you're a top student you may have a hard time getting a job offer if trends established last year continue.

In a survey of 161 colleges and universities nationwide, there were 26 percent fewer job offers in the 12-month period ending June 1986 when compared to the previous year.

While the number of job offers fell, starting salaries rose as much as 10 percent, according to the College Placement Council's (CPC's) 1986 Salary Survey.

"I saw the same slowdown in job offers and some increases in salaries," said Peggy O'Hara, coordinator of Career Services at Penn State, Harrisburg.

It was a confusing year with cutbacks in hiring and employers competing heavily for top recruits causing salaries to rise, according to H. Edward Babbush, director of the career development center at California State University--Long Beach.

The slowdown in job offers was unexpected and some say a result of concern over the economic outlook in general including tax reform, the Gramm-Rudman balanced budget legislation, and competition from foreign imports.

"The last year when a lot of students had multiple job offers was 1982," said O'Hara. "Students who begin the job

search early usually do better than those who wait until close to graduation."

The slowdown in college recruiting had the biggest impact on several engineering disciplines, the computer sciences, social sciences and business administration.

1985 was an excellent year for college recruiting and a slowdown in 1986 still points to a healthy job market, according to John D. Shingleton, director of placement services at Michigan State University in East Lansing.

Liberal arts graduates improved the most when compared with other fields in 1986. However, employers and placement directors agree that the job market is still brighter for those with business and technical degrees than those with liberal arts degrees.

Masters degree graduates face the same job market trends as those graduating with bachelor degrees, according to CPC's Salary Survey. Although master level graduates at Penn State, Harrisburg differ from some other colleges and universities.

"The large majority of graduate students on campus attend part-time while gaining valuable job experience full-time and fare much better when they graduate than those without work experience," said O'Hara.

CPC's Salary Survey is based on offers, not actual hiring and reports on job offers made from September 1985 through June 1986.

## Engineering Surcharge

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in relation to the present cost of lab equipment is an inadequate amount. Shoup feels that while it is an additional burden to the student, the surcharge has made a difference not only in equipment but also in faculty moral.

A source of regular funding relatively free of bureaucratic red tape has allowed many of the engineering faculty to develop new programs. Some areas of new equipment purchase include oscilloscopes, microcomputers, software packages and robotics equipment.

The problem with the surcharge is in the interpretation of the system by the departments and the administration. Presently the university's strategic plan calls for expanding and remodeling the mechanical engineering technology lab and continued purchase of laboratory equipment.

Dr. Robert Graham, associate provost at Penn State, Harrisburg, indicates that the administration received two signals from the faculty to upgrade the facility and continue improving lab equipment. Accomplishing this requires

additional funding and the provost feels that the surcharge is intended to cover the cost of the MET lab expansion. According to Graham, the application of the surcharge was established by the strategic plan as the main vehicle for establishing the university's priorities.

The strategic plan is supposed to be developed jointly by the faculty and administration. Yearly modifications are made to the plan as specific needs arise and are recognized in importance by the faculty and administration.

Presently the engineering surcharge is administered by the provost's office. A freeze is in effect for the purchase of any new lab equipment for the Spring semester. It is generally felt by many in the engineering department that the money was intended for lab equipment and not facility expansion.

Professor William Aungst, mechanical engineering department chairman, feels that it is not the student's responsibility to pay for the improvement of an existing facility. Shoup said that while he has not seen a

university policy statement on implementing the surcharge, his impression is that it was intended for equipment purchase. According to what he has learned from University Park, so far only equipment has been purchased for the engineering programs at Main Campus.

A possible solution to the growing dilemma facing both the faculty and administration over the use of the funds, according to Shoup, would be to

establish a divisional review for the monies instead of the present system of the provost's approval of the surcharge budget. He cites the fact that the provost's position is far removed from the source of the need and cannot appreciate the full potential of the surcharge to the respective programs.

When asked to establish a priority, equipment versus lab facilities for the MET programs, Aungst pointed out the difficulty in making a decision. "The MET lab has been waiting for remodeling for three years while the Met program has gone without equipment for 15 years. The department has gotten by

with cramped lab space and inadequate equipment in the past and will continue to do so.

Professor Cheryl Ebel, EET program, points out that lab equipment is essential to the program for accreditation. "The electrical program doesn't have its accreditation due to inadequate equipment. If the facilities for the mechanical department are not upgraded they may lose their accreditation," she said.

A general concern expressed by the engineering faculty and students is the lack of controls placed on the surcharge. Many students as well as faculty are wondering if the application of the surcharge funds toward the remodeling of the MET lab may not set a precedent. A common joke among engineers is that the trees and sculpture garden appeared on campus at the same time as the engineering surcharge. Some students

question if the surcharge funds will be used to help build a new library. The general interpretation being that since engineering students use the library they should contribute to its expansion.

The debate surrounding the use and purpose of the surcharge shall continue to grow. An initially good idea seems to

be flawed by two different interpretations. During the course of interviewing administration, engineering depart and faculty, no one could produce a copy of the university's policy as issued by Main Campus. Efforts to contact the administration and engineering departments at University Park prior to finals yielded no concrete information concerning similar problems of interpretation.

Perhaps it is time for the administration, faculty and student body to reevaluate their priorities. Before this can happen all parties involved will have to take a hard look at what they want in relation to what is needed. Resolving the conflicts involved with the surcharge will require all parties to communicate their priorities, listen to and acknowledge the importance of differing opinions and agree to compromise.