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John Vartan Shares His Business Expertise

by Vicki Koon

One good way to learn how to become successful is to learn the secrets of a successful person. John O. Vartan of Harrisburg is one such successful person.

Vartan, a 1973 graduate of Penn State Harrisburg's Master of Engineering Program, is a man who supported himself through college by digging ditches and cleaning out septic tanks. Today he is chairman of Independent American Financial Corporation, Dauphin National Bank, Casa Leasing, Inc., Gazelle, Inc., Vartan Property Management, Inc., and Vartan Enterprises, Inc. He is also the owner of American Investments, a real estate and investment company.

Vartan is well-known locally not only for his revitalizing efforts in the Harrisburg area, but as well for his civic and community activities. Mr. Vartan has served the College as a member of the Board of Advisors since its founding in 1979. A member of the University's Mount Nittany Society, his personal contribution to the Technology

Center stands as the largest gift by an individual to the College.

Vartan has been chosen as Penn State Harrisburg's 1987 Alumni Fellow. Being chosen as an Alumni Fellow is the highest honor bestowed upon an



John Vartan

alumnus of this College.

One of the traditions of Alumni Fellows is to spend some time on the campus while sharing their wealth of experience with the student body. During the week of October 19, Vartan gave several talks vocalizing his thoughts on American business, entrepreneurship, and the necessary ingredients needed to succeed in the business world today.

I would like to share with you some of his thoughts:

ON THE WORK ETHIC:

"The work ethic has been an omni-present ingredient in the American success story from the very beginning...From English settlers to Vietnamese boat people, the opportunity to work hard and benefit has been a beacon of hope.

"Very few of us fall into our lifetime occupation straight out of school, if indeed we have a sense of career at all. Don't worry about the job you are going to get, but worry about work and your attitude about work. Hard work is an absolute must to get anywhere in any occupation, and no one

has ever found a way around it. You do not have to be eternally in love with what you do, but you must be in love with work.

"The work ethic works. It will make you a valuable and desired employee. Hard work also enables one to acquire a personal bank of skills and experiences."

ON DISCRIMINATION:

"This past summer an obscure but important event took place. In Hungary and East Germany, the International Chemistry and Physics Olympiad, for high school students, were held. In it, top students from all countries compete to solve tough problems in their respective disciplines. The United States did not do so well. Rumania, a country we consider small, rigid, and backward, won two of three gold in physics. Out of the 10 silver and 14 bronzes, we took only three bronze. We placed 23rd and 34th in chemistry. I can't help but think that at least some of the medals we didn't win belonged to the

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New enrollments Reflect 30% Increase

By Jan Travers

Enrollment for the fall semester at Penn State Harrisburg has topped the 3,000 mark for the first time in the college's history.

Reflecting an increase of new enrollments of 30 percent over last fall, total graduate and undergraduate enrollment reached 3,069.

Sandra Zerby, director of enrollment planning, recruitment and admissions said the increase was a direct result of the number of admissions applications received. In the past two years undergraduate applications have risen from 1,204 to 1,650 while graduate applications went from 604 to 703 for the same time period.

The majority of new undergraduate enrollees at Penn State Harrisburg came from Penn State Commonwealth Campuses and University Park (47%) and Harrisburg Area Community College (31%). The remainder came from community colleges, junior colleges and four year institutions in the state (16%) and out of

state (6%).

In a statement issued by Ruth Leventhal, she credited the increase to the "ongoing effort to strengthen the academic programs most in demand and to promote the quality of those programs through a variety of recruiting efforts."

This approach has translated into a successful, aggressive recruiting campaign by the admissions team of

"We are hopeful they will have a good experience while at Capital College and become Happy Alumni, going back into their communities and talking to their friends."

Zerby, David Behrs, coordinator for undergraduate admissions, Diane Edwards, coordinator for graduate admissions, and Millie Landis, Burnette Tolbert and Joanna Williams-Dove, all admissions counselors. Zerby, along with her team of recruiters spent considerable time traveling to Penn State Commonwealth Campuses, increasing the visibility of Penn State Harrisburg. "Because we are a senior college, we are atypical. There are few [upper division

schools] in the country. It was surprising to see how many people in the Penn State system didn't know about our school," said Zerby.

In addition to personal contacts, open houses were seen by Zerby as a major emphasis in selling the college. Traditionally, admissions open houses were held during the week, which

discouraged many potential students and their families from attending because of school/work commitments, said Zerby. Beginning in 1986 the format was changed, holding them on Saturdays. This change has resulted in better attendance as well as allowing faculty and present Capital College students to be on hand to talk with prospective students.

Along with the overall enrollment increase, minority students

rose from 4.8 percent in Spring 1987 to 6.2% in Fall 1987. The most significant increase has been in the newly enrolled Black students, which reflect a 76 percent increase over the past two years.

Zerby attributes the jump to "heightened recruitment." Last year Penn State Harrisburg hosted its first Minority Visitation Day. The open house featured a keynote speaker and several workshop sessions on the emphasis of the benefits of higher education. Because of the success of this program, Zerby said a similar program will be held in November.

However, if the 76 percent minority enrollment increase is translated into raw figures, it shows an increase of 19 students to the total of 44 new enrollees. Zerby said she is pleased with the success of the increase, but that much more can still be done.

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