

# Collegian column causes uneasiness at U.P.

Sharon Barris  
Capital Times Staff

A Daily Collegian column advocating violence against white people has had negative effects on University Park public relations, but left Penn State Harrisburg untouched, university staff said.

"I really don't think it will have any impact at all," said Joanna Williams-Dovi, admissions counselor of minority recruitment.

Tensions were ignited in the column by Chino Wilson, a journalism senior at University Park, who called on African-Americans to "bear arms (three handguns and two rifles, maybe a M-16) immediately and form a militia."

"The next time a white person physically threatens us we should send that person to the cemetery," Wilson wrote.

Wilson also accused white people of creating the AIDS virus, "to exterminate black people."

These highly controversial statements in the Jan. 28 issue added to the campus' history of racial problems.

University Park students, parents, faculty and administrators, as well as the national newspapers, reacted to the incident.

The New York Times reported that security was increased on campus, while phone calls flooded into the administration office.

"You're not doing your job if you don't beef up security when something negative like this happens," said James Stewart, vice-provost at University Park.

Concerned callers did threaten to cancel contributions to the university, but the actual extent of the damage was blown out

of proportion, Stewart said.

"It was a story in New York, but it wasn't a story here," Stewart said.

The national papers saw it as a story, and fed off the common stereotypes of racial issues, Stewart said.

"The students actually seemed to get along more amiably than ever," he said.

Luanne Lawrence, acting director of community relations at Penn State Harrisburg, said she anticipated concerned phone callers, but did not receive any.

"If there was any animosity toward our university, it wasn't expressed to us," Lawrence said.

The admissions offices had no inquiries either, said Andrea Williard, undergraduate admissions counselor.

"I think it was definitely blown out of proportion because it went national," said Joanna Williams-Dovi, admissions coun-

selor of minority recruitment.

"It really put Penn State under the fire, because this is the peak of our recruiting season," Williams-Dovi said.

However, Penn State will always be under fire because the majority of the students are white, she said.

"There will always be room for improvement," Williams-Dovi said.

Williams-Dovi does not believe that the incident will have any impact on the number of students recruited.

Nothing different is being done for recruitment to secure the public image of the university, she said.

She said she will assure any concerned students that Wilson's column was just one opinion, and anyone that is discriminated against at Penn State Harrisburg will be protected by university laws and penalties.

## Students, faculty speak out on Wilson column

Angela West and Gia Witmer  
Capital Times Staff

Penn State Harrisburg students and faculty interviewed recently defended the freedom of expression of a Daily Collegian columnist who called white

people "irredeemable racists." But many expressed concerns that his views would aggravate racial conflict, and some said he expresses the same racism he attacks.

Chino Wilson, a senior majoring in journalism at University Park, wrote in a column published Jan. 28 that black

people "should bear arms immediately and form a militia to defend our property, our beautiful black women, men and children."

"White people have made it clear that they intend to hold onto their power," Wilson wrote. "After looking at all the evidence there is only one conclusion:

white people are devils."

Penn State University President Joab Thomas attacked the Daily Collegian's decision to print the article as "irresponsible."

Simon Bronner, coordinator of Penn State Harrisburg's American Studies Graduate Program, agreed with Thomas.

"Considering what was reported, as far as content, the editor should have used better judgment," Bronner said. "A lot of the material was based on hearsay."

Peter Parisi, assistant professor of humanities and communication at Penn State Harrisburg, supported the decision to print the column.

"As a paper, they are responsible to reflect a variety of opinions, not polish the university's image," Parisi said. "I think the staff bore up under considerable pressure from the administration."

Linda E. Meashey, coordinator for academic development programs in the Student Assistance Center, said, "It was [Wilson's] right to express his opinion, but I think it was damaging to everyone who cares about bridging cultural differences."

William J. Mahar, head of the Humanities Division, agreed that Wilson has a constitutional right to voice his opinion. He added that there is also value in releasing anger.

Mahar said Wilson raised "tender questions" about how Americans treat people of different races--an issue worth thinking about.

However, Parisi said, "Chino Wilson was expressing views that are not dominant in the black community, but have been represented for years."

But Mahar added that he hopes the article will provoke discussion rather than confrontation.

However, some students said the article would provoke conflict.

Dawn Wagner, a junior in the Behavioral Science division, said the article should have been printed. But Wagner said Wilson's "ridiculous" accusations made for conflict in themselves.

In his column, Wilson said white people invented the AIDS virus to attack African-Americans. He urged black people

## Ribbon cutting opens Eastgate Center

Ann Feeney McGovern  
Capital Times Staff

The opening of Penn State Harrisburg's Eastgate Center will extend the university's "presence" to the capital city.

The center's formal opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony on Feb. 12 featured Ruth Leventhal, provost and dean of Penn State Harrisburg.

Leventhal described the Eastgate Center as an "important new presence, reflecting Penn State Harrisburg's mission to serve the development and advancement needs of the people who live and work within the inner city of Harrisburg."

Following her speech, Leventhal cut the blue and white ribbons which draped across the doorway of the center's microcomputer lab.

Senator John Shumaker and Representative Frank Tulli, 106th legislative district (Dauphin County), assisted Leventhal in the ceremony, which was held before 60 guests.

Leventhal said demand for the center's services is already evident.

"This spring saw an array of 26 courses, attracting 326 students," she said.

The university currently occupies 11,000 square feet on the second floor of the building, located at 1010 N. Seventh St. in Harrisburg. Included are a reception area, nine administrative offices, seven classrooms, a microcomputer lab, a student lounge, and an information resource center.

In addition to undergraduate and graduate classes, the Eastgate Center will provide non-credit certificate courses, continuing education and management development training for government and industry. The center will also serve as a testing site for the Graduate Equivalency Degree Program.

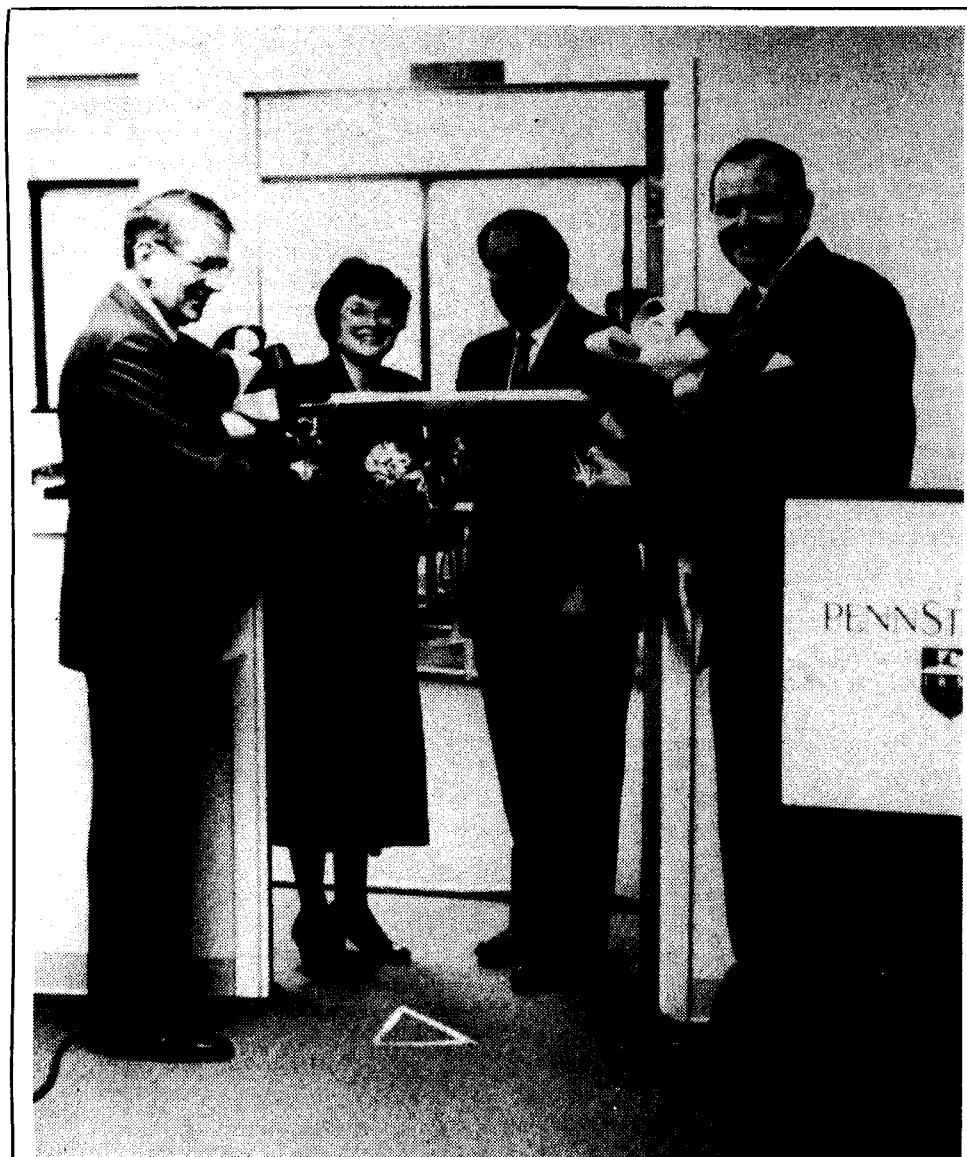


Photo by Mike Starkey

Performing ribbon cutting duties at the opening of the Eastgate Center are, from left, Senator John Shumaker, PSH Provost and Dean Ruth Leventhal, Representative Frank Tulli, and Chairman of the Board of Advisors James Meade.