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Professor Spotlight

Engineering professor takes science education and resources to Uganda

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When Dr. Peter Idowu first decided to attend college, he applied to an engineering school as a joke. Today, he is an associate professor of engineering at Penn State Harrisburg.

"I had absolutely no interest in engineering," he said. Despite his initial lack of interest, engineering has become a large part of Idowu's life, and it has led him around the world.

Engineering seems to have sought Idowu far more than he sought engineering. At every level of his education, he tried to steer himself toward a different field but somehow always ended up back at engineering. A Nigerian native, Idowu first came to the United States in 1982 after earning a degree in electrical engineering from The Polytechnic Ibadan in Ibadan, Nigeria. At the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut, he earned a master's degree in electrical engineering and had a doctorate in the same field by 1989.

Perhaps Idowu was not meant only to engineer, but to help others as well. Approximately two years ago, Idowu was attending a conference of the American Society of Engineers in Nashville. At the conference, Please see IDOWU on 2



Cancer survivor finds new meaning for life

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Local resident and Penn State professor Leigh Hurst has turned her experience with breast cancer into a positive awareness campaign.

After her diagnosis at age 33, Hurst felt she needed to send a message to young women about the dangers of breast cancer for younger women. "It is thought of as an older women's disease, and while it is less frequent for my age group, it is still a risk," said Hurst. The campaign is targeted at women under 40. Most doctors advise women to begin getting mammograms at age 40. "Self breast exams are the primary way of detecting breast cancer for younger women," said Hurst. With the help of friends and family, Hurst began her Feel

Your Boobies campaign September 2004. The main focus of the campaign is on spreading the word of the importance of self-breast exams.

Hurst said she had to make the unattractive idea of self-breast exams appealing to younger women. Hurst and her team chose "fun and funky" T-shirt styles with an unusual and attention getting slogan, "Feel Your Boobies." Two friends who work in the art field, Liz Ammon and Kristy Tunnell, worked together to design the logo, post cards and other informational materials. At the same time, Hurst's father, a retired accountant, does most of the order tracking and financial bookkeeping. Hurst is very busy with the public relations aspect.

During her battle with breast cancer, Hurst noticed a lack of support for younger women with

the disease. "Not only do you feel different because you have this disease, but now you're different because you are younger," said Hurst. Although she connected with other women, she still felt a void of support for her age group. One of the main plans Hurst has for Feel Your Boobies is to "create a network of young women to provide support for each other after they are diagnosed." Another goal of Hurst and her team is to possibly expand her services to one hour seminars for college students discussing the benefits of self-breast exams.

Hurst was diagnosed with stage one breast cancer in March. She had a lumpectomy in April, which was followed by four rounds of chemotherapy and seven weeks of radiation. The cure rate for early stages of breast cancer is 97 percent. "If I had waited until I

was 40 I would be in a whole different situation right now," said Hurst.

The team began the campaign in September 2004, and within four weeks Hurst said they had sold over 600 T-shirts nationwide. After celebrating the end of her treatment on October 7, 2004, Hurst and some friends traveled to New York City for the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer. Sporting the T-shirts, Hurst arrived prepared with a big backpack full of t-shirts and postcards to sell to other walkers.

During her stay in New York City, Hurst and some friends visited the Today show set holding "Feel Your Boobies" signs and wearing the shirts. Hurst was able to hand Katie Couric a post card, and Couric later showed it to her co-hosts on the air, making the campaign nationally known.

The feel your boobies Web site, designed by Sharon Colombo, had received 940 hits before the NYC walk, and over 2,000 in the wake of the Avon walk and the Today show publicity. The Web site has now received over 5,800 hits. Entries in the Web site guest book come from every corner of the U.S. and into other countries such as Germany and Italy. The Web site is an easy way of placing T-shirt orders and making donations. The Web site can be found at www.feelyourboobies.com. T-shirts cost \$20 plus \$2 for shipping. The team is now gearing up for possible increase in orders during the Christmas season. "They make great gifts," said Hurst.

Each T-shirt comes with two or three post cards that have the Web site for Feel Your Boobies



Photo by Kathryn Herr

Leigh Hurst founded Feel Your Boobies after her experience with breast cancer at a young age.

on the back. "The post cards are a key component in the campaign because they help keep the message going," said Hurst. T-shirts can be bought locally at some shops and boutiques in the Harrisburg area. Locations are listed on the Web site. The Feel Your Boobies team is working on other products such as magnets and stickers with the logo on them to raise awareness.

The team recently held an event at Noma in Harrisburg named "Think and Drink Pink." "It was a great way of getting people out in support of the cause," said Hurst. The event raised \$1,600 and sold 50 T-shirts in two hours. Approximately 200 people attended the event and the bartenders wore the T-shirts in honor of the occasion.

Hurst is working to make Feel

Please see FYB on 2

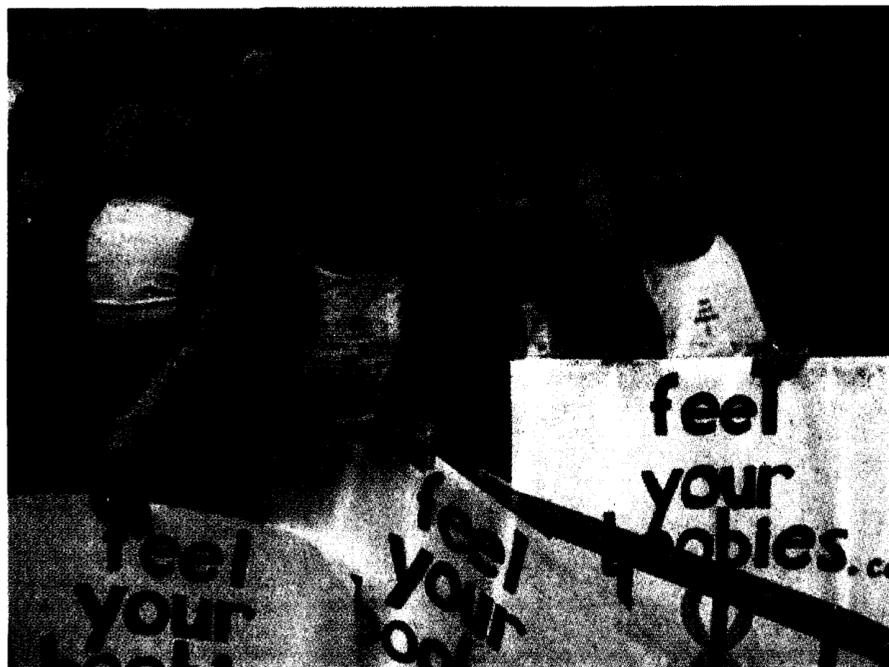


Photo courtesy of Feel Your Boobies

Feel Your Boobies fans (left to right) Tracey, Jill and Gwen and FYB founder Leigh Hurst proudly support their cause recently outside NBC's The Today Show.

Visit
www.feelyourboobies.com
for more information.

What's on 7

The Red Sox break the curse, beat the Cardinals to win the World Series for the first time in 180 years. Details inside.



What's on 9

The Capital Times visits Guido McNeal's. Friendly, laid back atmosphere waiting to welcome PSH students. Details inside.

Resignation takes toll on Humanities Dept.

By Kathryn Herr
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The Communications program is undergoing changes to its teaching staff after a recent abrupt resignation of one key professor and the emergency medical leave of another. Both students and faculty now have to adjust to new professors and added classes in the wake of these events.

Six weeks into the semester Dr. Victor Viser resigned from Penn State Harrisburg's School of Humanities after being denied tenure this year. Viser cited in an emailed letter to his students and colleagues that he was denied tenure for reasons undisclosed to him at the fault of the newly appointed director of the School of Humanities, Dr. Kathryn Robinson. Robinson declined an interview with Capital Times reporters.

After a professor is denied tenure they have one year to find another job while continuing to work at PSH. However, Viser

wrote that he was unable to conduct classes due to a clash of his interview schedule and class schedule. In addition Viser had to fly to PSH from his Texas home each week to conduct class.

Students had mixed feelings about Viser's online assignments and skipped classes. Some liked having no classes and others said they were not receiving the education they had paid for. "Students were not used to a distance type of learning," said William Mahar, assistant provost and senior associate dean for academic affairs. Several students made formal complaints about the situation, which were brought to Robinson. Viser was then instructed to conduct class as scheduled. "Shortly after we took action, he took action," said Mahar.

Viser wrote in his letter, "The Director of the School of Humanities has informed me that I may not utilize the long-standing cooperative tradition of having course coverage by my well qualified faculty colleagues

during necessary absences for prospective job interviews. That in fact, I may not attend any interviews that would necessitate classroom absence for the remainder of the semester. I have a Monday/Wednesday schedule and some of my interviews planned thus far overlap at least one of these days. The equivocality and inherent unfairness of her baseless reasoning is both perplexing and disturbing. Therefore, sadly, I am left with no alternative but to resign my position as Assistant Professor of Humanities and Communication, effective immediately."

Viser was the main public relations and advertising professor for the Communications program.

In the wake of Viser's resignation the faculty met several times to decide how to remedy the situation. "Everyone contributed to come up with a solution," said Professor Eton Churchill, Communications program coordinator. "The program is in good shape." Churchill had the

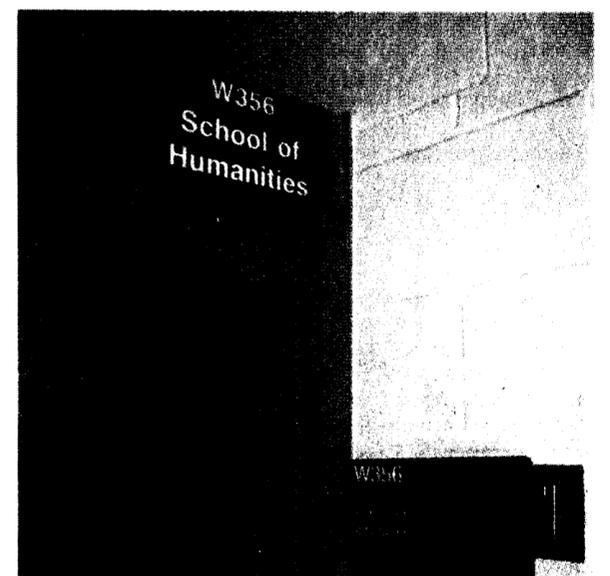


Photo by Kelly Nagurny

The school of Humanities office is a busy place in the midst of a semester of change for students and faculty. Any questions or problems with the Humanities dept. should be brought to this location.

unpleasant task of finding emergency replacements for Viser's classes not only for the remainder of the semester, but also for the already scheduled spring semester classes. "Our main concern for all of this is for the students and that they get the best education possible," said Mahar.

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