

Professor Spotlight

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When one thinks of an accountant, they may imagine a dull number-cruncher with masking tape holding his glasses together and pocket protector in place. However, Dr. Thomas Buttross does not fit the average mold. This assistant professor of accounting at Penn State Harrisburg is bringing life to the boring old image of his field.

Buttross came to PSH in the summer of 2000 to teach Managerial and Cost Accounting. He is a certified public accountant and a certified management accountant.

He co-authored an article entitled Understanding Capacity Utilization at Rocketdyne, which appeared in the winter 2000 issue of Management Accounting Quarterly. The article was awarded the Lybrand gold medal.

Penn State Harrisburg offers a great atmosphere and conditions for educators, said Buttross. The courses he teaches include Cost Accounting, Advanced Management Accounting, Master's Management Accounting and Master's Strategic Cost Management. Buttross enjoys the transfer of information, ideas and concepts from teacher to student.

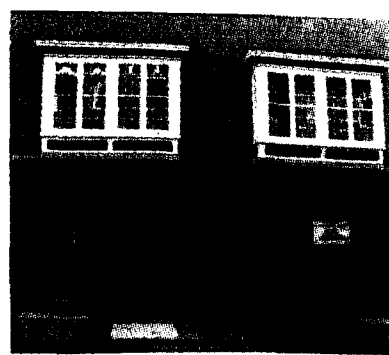
Buttross was recently appointed

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What's on 7

Former PSU Lady Lion returns to the university with a new position at Penn State Harrisburg. Details inside.



What's on 9

The Capital times visits Molly Brannigan's, one of downtown Harrisburg's newest hangouts. Details inside.

Casting director visits PSH

By Thomas LeClair
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Much to the delight of every film student and fan, Don Finn of Mali Finn Casting Associates was able to pay a two-day visit to the Penn State Harrisburg campus. With great appreciation and thanks to the Student Affairs Organization and the Penn State Harrisburg Humanities Department, Finn held a workshop for actors and others who were interested in knowing more about what it takes to make it big in Hollywood, including what to avoid during the audition process.

Finn, who has been casting films since the mid 1980s has numerous blockbuster, record-breaking films to his credit including The Client, LA Confidential, and The Matrix trilogy just to name a few. His company is also responsible for casting young actors Brad Renfro in The Client and Edward Furlong as the young John Connor in Terminator 2. Both of these kids had no acting experience at the time they were cast.

Finn reassured the members of the audience about working in Hollywood. "Believe that cream will rise. If you are qualified, good, and trained, you WILL work," he said.

Finn began his presentation with a background of his job qualifications. His company, Mali Finn Associates, named for his wife and business partner, works for casting studio film productions that range from \$40 million to \$200 million to make. Speaking about working for studio productions, "We charge

double for the hassle, all the negotiations and hassles of working with agents and corporate vice presidents," Finn said.

Mali Finn does not cast extras; they only cast speaking roles. Finn said it takes an average of ten weeks to cast a film. However in the film Titanic, there were 102 speaking roles. "With between fifty and sixty people auditioning for each role, and Jim

their liking, they will make contacts for the film to be financed and produced. Finn told the audience Hollywood is more business than fantasy. People are investing money in projects and are hoping to not only make that money back, but to make a profit as well. "Only about 30 percent of the total revenue of a particular film is made in the United States. The bulk of the profit is

information about you. I am not interested in your Kindergarten play. That tells me absolutely nothing about you."

He also warned not to do what he calls the "Kevin Costner effect," which is auditioning for a part that requires a specific dialect that you cannot re-create - because you will not get the role. It is called the Kevin Costner effect because of

\$17.8 million just for casting. If Leonardo DiCaprio is signed on for the main role and gets \$17 million as his fee, then that leaves 32 speaking roles that still need to be cast with only \$800,000 left to pay out. "It makes it very difficult for a character actor to make a living only working for the minimum that can be paid," said Finn.

After the workshop concluded, an exclusive interview was conducted with Mr. Finn. Finn was asked about starting his business in California. "In the 1980s, the Mali Finn Casting Associates was created, and my wife and I have been casting films for the better part of twenty years".

Finn has a reputation in Hollywood for casting films. "It was a struggle for about five years, and then the film Flatliners for director Joel Schumacher came to us, and it was that initial break which helped launch our career," said Finn.

His answer led to the next question about casting for particular directors. Finn's resume contains several films, which he cast for the same directors. For James Cameron, Finn cast Terminator 2, True Lies, and Titanic. For Curtis Hanson, Finn cast LA Confidential, Wonder Boys, and 8-Mile. As for Joel Schumacher, he cast movies such as The Client, Batman Forever, and Flatliners. Finn was asked if there was a comradery that was gained among these directors and him, or if it was the challenge of filling roles for these directors that kept him working for these directors. He said it was absolutely a comradery, and

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Photo courtesy of Dean Robinson/Humanities Dept.

From left, Casting Director Don Finn and Capital Times film critic Thomas LeClair recently discussed the movie industry and Finn's extensive work in the field.

Cameron's attention to detail, it took thirteen months to cast that film."

Mali Finn also works as a financing arm for independent films. Although they will not necessarily cast roles for the independent work, if the script is to

made from worldwide box office and video sales," said Finn.

During the workshop, Finn advised graduating students about what gets noticed during the audition process. "You need a defining resume, which shows training and outlines significant

Costner's inability to maintain his English accent in the film Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves.

Finn concluded his program by talking about what he sees as the film industry's biggest problem, the budget for casting. His example was a film that budgets

Students donate life

By Jim Dougherty
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To some, it is a pain too great to handle while for others, it is a small price to pay to save lives. Either way, the pinch of a needle was experienced by many Penn State Harrisburg students as they gave blood to support the blood drive held by campus organization, Chi Gamma Iota (XGI). The event was held from 10 am to 6 pm on November 10, in association with the Central Pennsylvania Blood Bank.

Chartered in 1968 for PSH, XGI is the oldest organization on campus and is usually a main sponsor for many campus events. Chris Kramm, a sophomore electrical engineering major and one of the leaders of XGI, said, "What some people don't realize is that XGI is actually a play on words. The letters actually spell out 'Ex-G.I.', which is what most of us are." XGI is a co-ed organization that helps students make the transition from military to campus life. "It's not an easy transition from the military, where others were in control of your life, to campus life. When you're in college, you are in complete control of your

life," said Kramm. XGI ensures the veteran voice on campus and is open to any service including Coast Guard and National Guard, for either those honorably discharged or those on active or reserve duty. Those in the ROTC program also qualify to be members. It is dependent on the input and active participation of its members and the surrounding community.

Kramm said as part of the group's charter to service, they try to create projects that give back to the community. "Blood is always in short supply. A blood drive saves lives and it's easy to develop. We've had a blood drive here for twenty or more years on campus and we usually generate a large group of supporters." when asked if XGI had any goals for this semester's blood drive, Kramm said, "We hope to get a hundred pints of blood today. Last spring, we managed 69 pints." While an impressive number, it certainly looked to be improved upon as PSH students rushed to donate blood.

Chrissy Meck, a senior english major, said that she was excited to give blood. "It's for a good cause and the blood will go to people who need it. It feels good to do help out." Paul Jackson, a

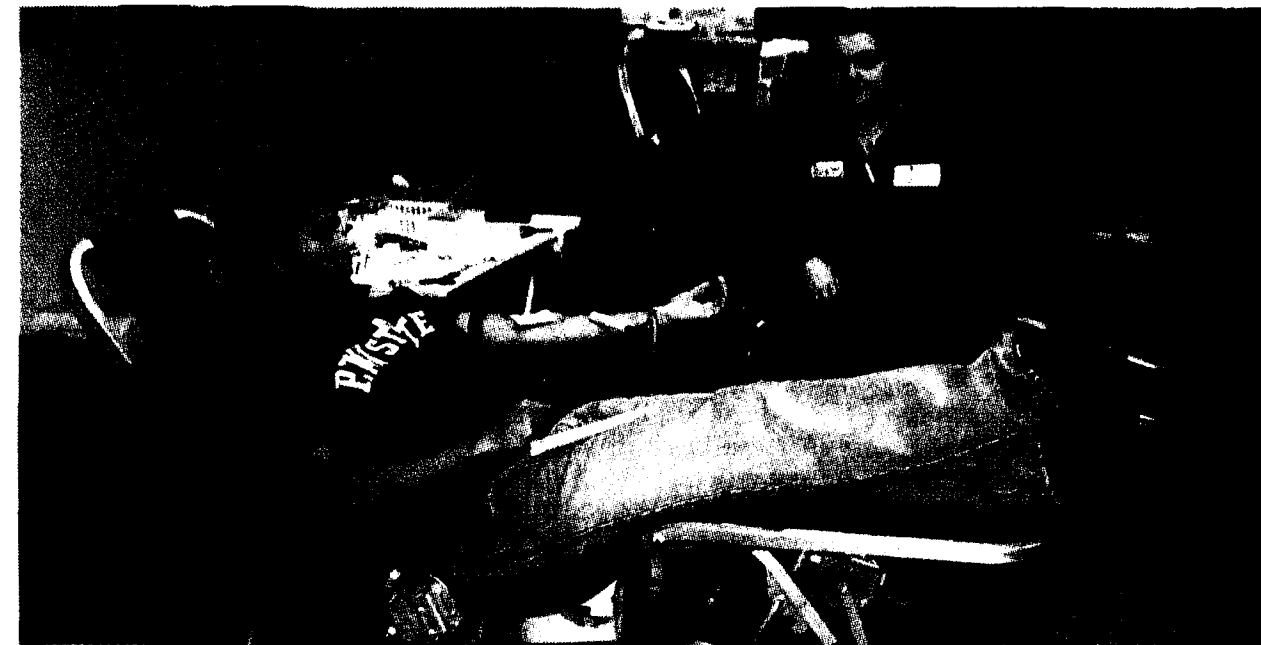


Photo courtesy of Chris Kramm/XGI

Senior Communications major Christian Torres donates blood to the Central Pennsylvania Blood Bank as part of the XGI's recent donation event.

graduate student in the health education program, said, "There are many needy people out there, especially children. A couple pints of blood could be the difference between life and death. Excuse me; I'm being called to donate. Wait, no! That guy took my spot!" It is nice to see that the rush to donate blood, even if it meant longer waits because someone took your spot.

Other students were not quite as relaxed about donating blood. First-time donor Rodney Horton said that he was "scared, but I'm giving blood to help out and I like to help out anyway I can." As a first-time donor, Horton, a junior public policy major and Student Government president, seemed at ease while donating and looks forward to helping again.

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