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## Professor Spotlight



By **RABYIA AHMED**  
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He was a Peace Corps volunteer for two years in Los Andes, Ecuador. He served as the agricultural extension agent, where he worked with farmers and women's groups. His main interests lie in drugs and terrorism, but in Latin America as well.

"The Peace Corps was a great experience," said Michael Kenney, assistant professor of public policy. "I really learned a lot."

His own experiments with drugs in his youth sparked his interest for them. In fact, working with the farmers in Los Andes, he was on the Columbia border where they dealt with drugs a lot. Using the organizational theory, which investigates human organizations to better understand their structures, functions and properties to enhance their productivity and satisfaction, as stated in the international society for complexity, information and design encyclopedia, he was able to help the farmers with their drug problems. He applied the same theory when 9/11 happened in the United States.

Kenney described the country as a developing country but very beautiful. And the people were very good to him, he said with a smile on his face. "Very friendly and inviting."

One incident he said he will never forget as a Peace Corps volunteer, was when he wanted to get educational books for the groups he worked with. He ordered several books for free from the United States. When they finally arrived, the postman told him that he had to pay an "exorbitant" tax.

"The point of ordering those books was because of the fact that they were free," said Kenney. "But adding that ridiculous amount of tax to them really defeated the purpose."

So, knowing there was no way he was going to pay the tax, he looked to his friend standing next to him and said, "get ready." Kenney told the postman that he wanted to see the books before he would pay the tax. As the postman gave him the books for "inspection," Kenney's friend and he ran off as fast as they could without paying the tax. Of course, later Kenney was contacted by the Peace Corps about the matter and was told to pay what he owed to the postman. Luckily, he only had to pay a significantly reduced tax, one that was much more affordable.

"A lot of corruption goes on sometimes, and they get away with

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# Plans to tax you to help PSU

By **JAN MURPHY**  
 The Patriot-News

It would cost more for a bottle of water, a haircut and a set of Hershey Bears tickets so Penn State University tuition could go down if state Sen. Joe Conti has his way.

The retiring Bucks County Republican wants to remove the exemption of 11 items from the state's sales tax to reduce the university's tuition and fees by 60 percent.

Penn State would be one of the first - if not the first - universities in the country to have this type of arrangement with its state government, said Dennis Jones, president of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems.

Conti said he knows the idea stands about as much chance of passing in final weeks of this legislative session as Joe Paterno's Nittany Lions have of going to a national championship game this season.

But Conti also thinks it's worth getting the conversation started to try to rid Penn State of its title as the nation's most expensive public university.

"For a few cents more on a bottle of water or a tax on your dry cleaning, when you weigh that versus 60 percent reduction in tuition for Penn State ... it's something for future legislatures and the governor to consider as they try to maintain the cost of college tuition in Pennsylvania," Conti said.

As with other public-funded universities, Penn State officials come to Harrisburg annually to ask lawmakers for more

money. They usually get more, but tuition still goes up.



Old Main stands proud at University Park. Sen. Joe Conti proposes to start taxing non-taxed items such as dry cleaning and haircuts in the hopes it will raise more money for the Penn State system, lowering tuition and fees campuswide as much as 60 percent.

This year, Penn State received \$258 million in state money, a 4.5 percent increase, to support its operating budget. Tuition rose by 5.6 percent at University Park in State College and by 2.9 percent at its other 19 campuses.

Conti knows the routine well. He sits on the university's board of trustees.

He is a Penn State alum. And as

he makes his exit from a Senate that annually votes on money for Penn

enrolled, it has a presence in all 67 counties through its 20 campuses and cooperative extension.

"Not that the University of Pittsburgh or Temple aren't deserving," Conti said. "But Penn State is uniquely sized and tasked, frankly, by the state government."

The \$258 million Penn State receives from the state to support its operating budget could be directed to the other public-funded colleges and universities to lower their tuition rates, he said.

Penn State also receives \$83 million for such things as its medical school, Penn College of Technology and agricultural research

that Conti would want preserved.

Officials at other state-funded institutions didn't embrace Conti's plan. Spokesmen for two of them - Pittsburgh and the 14-school State System of Higher Education - chose not to comment.

Temple University spokesman Hillel Hoffman said he welcomed the proposal, but only in the sense of hoping it would lead to a "discussion that might lead to a comprehensive plan for increasing state support for Pennsylvania's public colleges and universities."

Not surprisingly, Stephen McCarthy, Penn State's vice president for university relations, liked it.

"We support the idea of a dedicated funding source and appreciate his main focus on making higher education more affordable," McCarthy said.

Penn State student government leader Nick Stathes of Delaware County said he would favor the idea if the money came directly to students in the form of a tax credit or some other direct payment.

"If you throw another huge allocation to the university, there's no incentive to spend it correctly," he said.

## Campus and community crime rates relatively low

By **JORDAN WISKEMANN**  
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With only two violent crimes reported in 2005, Penn State Harrisburg students and staff continue to keep campus crime rates low.

"I never really hear of any crimes happening on our campus," said Shirin Adams, Communications, whose hometown is Philadelphia. "I think the campus police are keeping our campus very safe."

Out of about 3,700 students enrolled at PSH, there was only one reported weapons possession and one reported sexual offense last year. The remaining 36 reported crimes included theft, vandalism, driving under the influence, underage drinking, disorderly conduct and vagrancy.

According to Chief Kevin Stoehr of the PSH campus police, crime rates are only as accurate as the people reporting the crimes. Sometimes, people don't know the differences between crimes. For example, a student could accidentally report a crime as a misdemeanor, such as theft, when that crime was really a felony, such as burglary. Regardless, Stoehr is pleased with PSH's low crime rate.

"If theft is the worst thing that happens here, well, I don't like it, but I can live with it," said Stoehr.

Stoehr has been with different municipal departments for 20 years and the PSH police for the last 10. The worst crime he has witnessed at PSH was an aggravated assault which occurred on his fourth day on the job 10 years ago. Stoehr received a call from a man telling him another man had a knife and was attempting to rob him in the Olmsted parking lot. The man with the knife held it to the victim's throat. When Stoehr arrived, he discovered the men knew

each other and had been in the same car together. There were no injuries and neither of the men had any relations to the school.

Stoehr explained that some factors in PSH crimes are our location and our openness to the public.

"There's a turnpike behind us, interstates around us and an airport across the street, so there's a lot of traffic through this area," said Stoehr. "Also, we're an open campus. We invite the public onto campus which is great, but sometimes that opens us up to people we don't necessarily want here. That can cause problems."

Not including Stoehr, there are six full-time officers and four part-time officers who work for the campus police. All are experienced. The part-time officers also work for other municipalities outside of the school.

Aside from campus safety, Middletown itself has low crime rates, especially compared to those of neighboring cities, such as Harrisburg.

Chief Keith Reismiller of the Middletown police said Middletown is not as urban or as populated as Harrisburg and has mostly rural areas on its southern borders.

Reismiller said the Middletown police try to be proactive rather than reactive in preventing crime. For example, according to Reismiller, if a person who lives in Middletown is convicted of certain offenses, such as drug-related offenses, the Middletown police notify that person's landlord and do their best to have that person evicted.

"My job is to make Middletown the safest place I can," said Reismiller.

The FBI's *Crime in the United States 2005 Report (CIUS)* shows that Middletown had only 33 violent crimes reported last year. That means only about 4 people out of every thousand were victims of violent crime in Middletown.

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## World meets over ozone

By **RITA BEAMISH**  
 Associated Press

Nations working to save the earth's protective ozone layer agreed Friday to let the United States use thousands of tons of the pest-killing chemical methyl bromide.

They modestly pared the Bush administration's requested allotment of the powerful fumigant, which is banned for all but the most critical uses.

The members of the Montreal Protocol, meeting in New Delhi, India, spared the United States steeper cuts that were recommended by the treaty's own technical panel. The decision applies to methyl bromide use for 2008 on American crops such as strawberries, peppers and tomatoes.

The United States sought approval for nearly 7,100 (6,415 metric tons) of methyl bromide. The nations settled on just over 5,900 tons (5,356 metric

tons). Despite the existence of U.S. stockpiles far exceeding that amount, the treaty members said chemical companies can meet the need by manufacturing more than 5,000 tons (4,595 metric tons) of new methyl bromide, said Michael Williams,

Protocol promising to end methyl bromide's use in wealthy countries by 2005. Developing countries have a longer timeline to phase it out.

Failing to meet the deadline, the United States since has received annual exemptions allowing methyl

bromide's continued use on specific crops in California, Florida and other heavily agricultural states. Other nations have received far smaller exemptions.

The New Delhi decision brought immediate criticism from a leading U.S. environmental advocate attending the session, who said there should be no new production, given the large stockpiles.

"This agreement is bad news for the ozone layer and bad news for our health," said David Doniger, climate policy director of the Natural Resources

spokesman for the meeting. The stockpiles would be drawn down to meet the rest of the agreed-on use.

The United States and other countries signed the 1987 Montreal

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The hole in the ozone layer is increasing due to continued usage of harmful pesticides. The United States looks to decrease their stockpile of such chemicals.

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