

RAMADAN: Balancing culture and college life

Continued from page 1

that it is the holiday season in the United States," said Bataineh. "With the Ramadan decorations, the mosques that are full and the speakers that are always playing verses from the Qur'an, it is a time that is unlike any other."

At school, Bataineh, like many Muslims on campus, has had to adapt to the scholastic lifestyle in order to still participate in Ramadan.

With classes five days a week and extracurricular activities, he said fasting can be difficult or impossible at times.

"School is a difficult time to be fasting. I want to do well in classes, I am generally very busy during the week, and I play on the tennis team, which has practice every weekday," said Bataineh. "I have been taught ever since I was young, not to fast if it would affect my health."

While he can't fast everyday, he still does so whenever possible and maintains the mindset that comes with Ramadan. Though it is difficult to fast in school, he

cited Ramadan as a time when it is much easier to connect to other Muslims.

"For both years that I have been here, I can say that Ramadan has allowed me to really connect with others and build strong friendships" said Bataineh. "I met some of my closest friends in school through Ramadan last year."

Mohammed Hussein, also a sophomore at Penn State Harrisburg, agreed that Ramadan provides opportunities to build connections with other Muslims.

"When you're fasting and you see another Muslim fasting, it is easy to start a conversation and have an instant common bond" said Hussein. "Sometimes it can get hard to go the whole day without a cigarette or a glass of water, but when you see somebody else doing it with you, it's like an automatic connection."

As the end of Ramadan draws closer, Muslims around campus continue to enjoy the good feeling and connectedness that is associated with it.

"It only comes around for one month of the year," said Bataineh, "For us, this really is a special time."

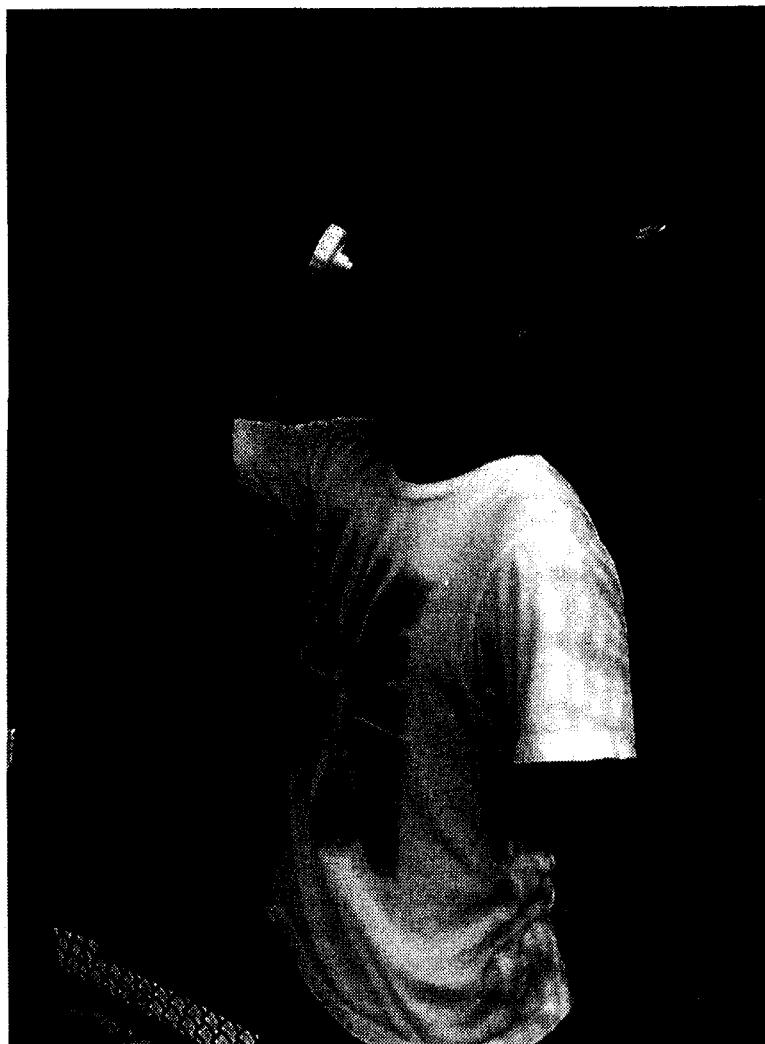


Photo by WILLS KING/ The Capital Times

Karim Bataineh, taught to not fast if it would affect his health, is unable to participate because of commitments to class and tennis

SGA Update

By JADE HERBST
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Another successful Student Government meeting was held. On Thursday, Sept. 4, SGA held the third meeting of the semester.

Lasting over an hour and a half, the meeting was detailed in prosperous movements and actions.

This meeting held a very important and rewarding vote for senate leader. After a long and difficult open forum of discussion, the vote was cast.

The two candidates selected were Micha Victoria and Joe Matvia.

After an extremely close vote, Joe Matvia was chosen and selected by SGA Senate as the new leader. Matvia had a very promising acceptance speech, assuring his role of confidence in student involvement.

The student government's Inner-Club Council's funds were addressed and opened the discussion floor for the two proposals of the meeting. The two proposals were the TKE proposal and the Banner proposal.

After an event at University Park, the Penn State Harrisburg SGA banner was lost in transition via FedEx. Therefore, the council proposed a \$350 request for a new banner for SGA representation at Friends and Family Day.

The proposal was passed. Be on the lookout for the new banner at Friends and Family Day in October.

The other proposal, TKE, is a new Greek Fraternity hoping to receive assistance for their one-time bill of \$1,750 for the start of the fraternity. After an open discussion, the bill was passed.

Other meeting topics consisted of THON discussion and fundraising ideas.

Student Court Bylaws were passed and read by all senators in order to establish a common law between the Officials and the Court.

Another idea that was presented was the idea of a portfolio workshop for students in the education programs. The idea brings a lot of benefits to students and encourages connections between students, Penn State professors and the community.

Be on the lookout for information on how you too can be involved in your major.

Transition to college harder on men than women

By KATHLEEN MEGAN
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When Aman Kidwai arrived at the University of Connecticut, he was scared, nervous and anxious like most young men. And, like most young men, he didn't talk about it.

He had played football and run track in high school, and while he might have played sports at a Division 3 school, he wasn't going to play at UConn. He was used to the highly structured life of high school, with every moment spoken for, ever-vigilant parents and teachers and a team full of friends.

The university felt cold and impersonal and he had a hard time connecting with people, much less discussing his uncomfortable feelings.

"Those are tough feelings to emote," said Kidwai, now a senior, "tough feelings to tell anyone about." He found himself skipping classes just because he

could.

While most kids -- young men and young women -- have a mix of anxiety and excitement when they head off for college, experts on men and masculinity say that young men handle those feelings differently from young women and therefore often experience different problems and sometimes greater difficulties in the transition.

James M. O'Neil, a University of Connecticut professor who has been studying gender issues and masculinity for the past 30 years, said the college transition issues are a reflection of the crisis in the development of boys and young men in America. O'Neil said that he now addresses these issues in his classes on gender and masculinity, but that he wants, eventually, to explore whether students would find it helpful to have a men's center or discussion programs in residence halls.

While girls are raised to feel relatively comfortable expressing

emotions, to seek help by talking to friends, family or professionals, O'Neil said, young men learn early on that it isn't considered strong or masculine to express fear, anxiety or other vulnerable feelings. "If you haven't been taught to label your feelings, to express them and use them constructively, if you don't have that skill," O'Neil said, those feelings may be expressed in "negative ways." Troubled young men are more likely than women to drink, to act out aggressively, to fight or vandalize, O'Neil said, while troubled young women are more likely to talk out their issues with a friend or to seek help at a counseling center.

Professionals at other universities and colleges say they see the same patterns. Susan Birge, director of counseling and psychological services at Fairfield University, said young men "just don't have societal permission to speak up and ask for help," Birge said, and college is a place where asking for

help can be crucial for success.

Jason Zelesky, wellness outreach coordinator at Clark University in Worcester, Mass., said that "the whole formation or the social construction of masculinity sends young men these lofty and unfair messages about what it means to be a young man," and that it's "a narrative of violence, confrontation, fierce independence, of a sort of emotional apathy or non-communication of emotion with the exception of anger."

"Our dashboard indicators are pretty convincing that for the most part it is men who are the predominant judicial load (at the university); men acting out in residence halls, men transported to the hospital for drinking too much," Zelesky said. "The numbers bear that out."

Zelesky said he does a plenty of outreach with students and is

Please see **TRANSITION**
on page 6