

Campus Life

Penn State Middletown Campus Gospel Choir to Host Haiti Benefit Concert

By VINCENT DANGOLOVICH

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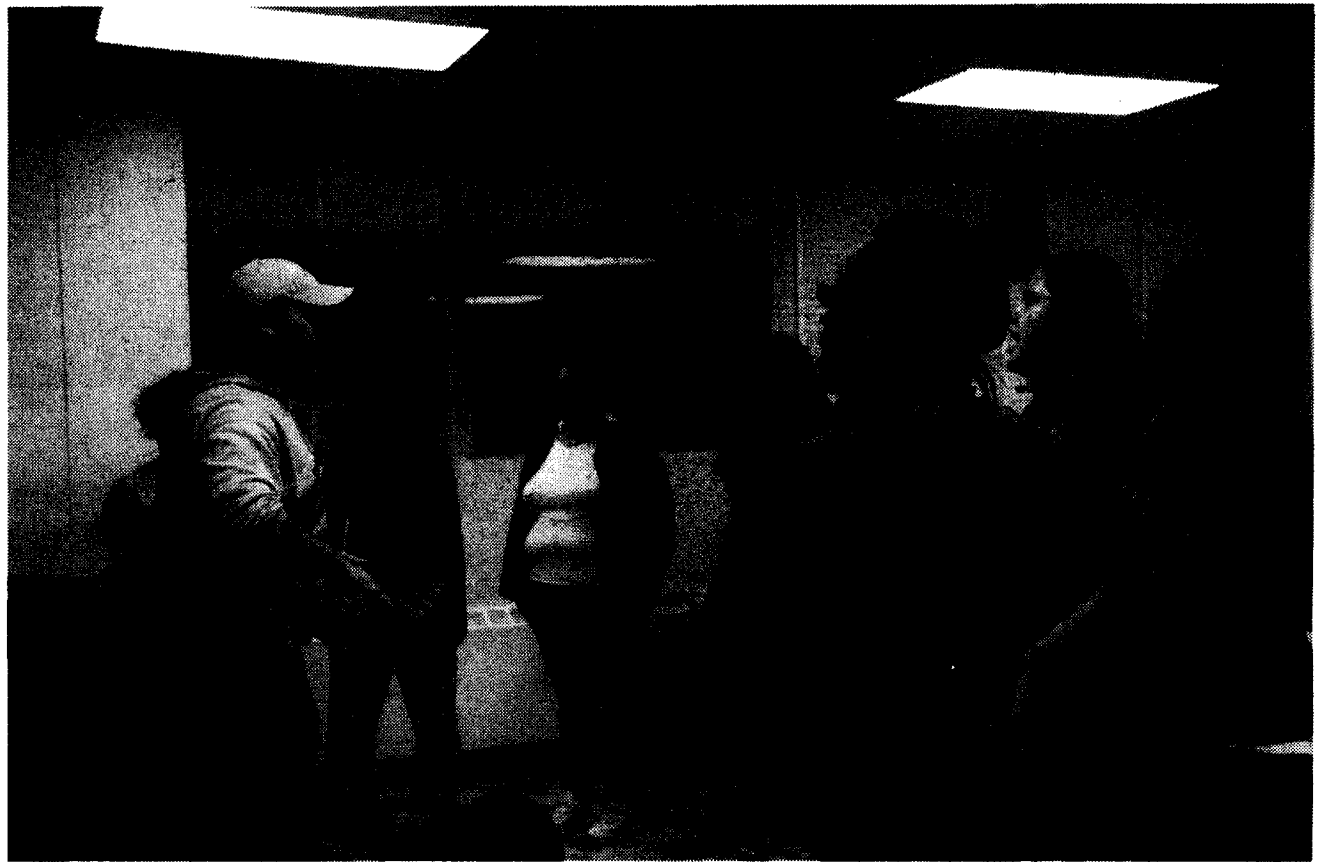
The Penn State Harrisburg Gospel Choir, Sounds of Praise, will hold a "Night for Haiti" benefit concert on Feb 24 at 9:15 pm at the Stacks Stage in the lower level of the Olmsted building.

The twelve-member choir will accept donations of cash and clothing to help the island nation following the devastation of the earthquake on Jan. 12. The evening will include spirituals including "Draw Me Lord," "How Great Though Art" and "How Excellent" as well as spoken word poetry.

While the group always intended to perform, the focus of the concert changed when inspiration struck Behavioral Science major and club treasurer Kayma Freeman, 20.

"I was watching 'Hope for Haiti,'" said Freeman, "and I thought this is really breaking my heart... I thought about our concert and thought we should make it bigger."

Admission is free although donations are strongly encouraged. Light refreshments will be available.



Pictured above the PSH Gospel Choir practices for their upcoming concert.

Photo by Jenna DeNoyelles/ The Capital Times

Williams creates awareness for eating disorders at Penn State Harrisburg

By BRIAN ROBERT ERICKSON

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Elaine Williams, a comedienne, life coach and eating disorder

survivor, initiated eating disorder awareness week at Penn State Harrisburg with an inspiring and incredibly funny presentation focusing on her own difficult experience with body image and bulimia.

Eating disorders are a growing problem and manifest themselves primarily in middle school, high school and college. According to a poll of freshmen college students, 5 to 18 percent of females and 1 to 3 percent of males admit to struggling with an eating disorder during their first year at college. What starts as culture and social pressure to look attractive can escalate into a serious illness.

Williams overcame a severe case of bulimia she became afflicted with in elementary school. Difficult family life, alcoholic parents and unrealistic Texan standards of beauty brought about this eating disorder so early in her life. Her disorder was largely unrecognized and untreated until she reached college when her roommate questioned her about her use of laxatives to lose weight, a practice she borrowed from Karen Carpenter, a popular singer. With a new awareness and with encouragement from her close friends, Williams began to understand her eating problem and build the courage to seek help from both professionals and from herself. Today, she spreads awareness and uses her story to motivate others.

In her presentation, Williams shared some techniques she found helpful in her struggle. She became familiar with emotional and unconscious eating and became able to recognize the motives behind why she eats. She developed mindfulness and understanding of her disorder, so she was

able to both fight against and work with it to recovery.

Eating disorders are difficult to identify because of their secretive nature, but they are characterized by three main factors. First of all, a person afflicted with an eating disorder may engage in out of control binge eating. Secondly, that person may purge or undertake similar methods to compensate for the binge eating. Thirdly, the person will be burdened with obsessive thoughts and intense emotions regarding their body shape or appearance.

Williams and Penn State Harrisburg Counseling Service encourage all students to seek assistance if they or someone they know are troubled by an emerging or active eating disorder. On February 25, there will be an anonymous eating disorders screening and information table in the Olmsted Gallery Lounge W-107 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., sponsored by the Penn State Harrisburg Counseling Services. The Counseling Services are located in 109 Swatara and provide free, confidential and professional assistance to all students.

For more information about eating disorders or to see some funny stand up comedy, visit Williams at her website at www.elaine-williams.com.

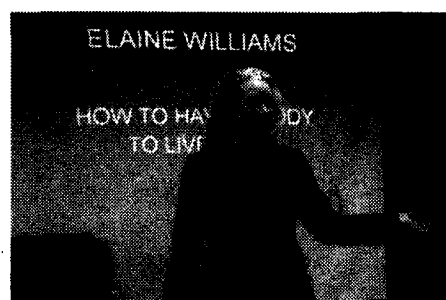


Photo by Jenna DeNoyelles/ The Capital Times
Pictured left is Elaine Williams during her lecture. Above is Williams' poster for her lecture.