

# Freshmen: Who are you?

Penn State Delco is pulling more diverse students into its nexus

By Doris Ruiz  
Assistant Editor

On Aug. 22, Penn State Delco's freshly painted halls were filled with the new faces of lost students. Invariably, they were carrying tons of books and trying desperately to find their way around campus.

These new and confused faces belong to Penn State's freshman class.

As only a few of us begin our final credits here at Delco, a surprisingly large amount of freshmen are embarking on a new journey towards success.

A total of 549 students began their venture last month, and are now re-adjusting to their first year of college.

Although approximately 132 students are planning to continue their studies at other locations rather than here at Delco, the Advising Center hopes to clear up any confusion that incoming students may have about potential majors.

"I think they are a very interesting and interested group," says Linda Campitteli, head of advising.

She hopes to keep more students here at Delco by "getting rid of the confusion."

One way to quickly answer students' questions is by putting the advising center in Main. This summer, the advising center moved its offices from the second floor of the Commons to the first floor of Main. If you've been to the bookstore, you've been right across the hall.

Campitteli said the new location allows her to be more accessible and ready to answer questions from the many students who haven't yet decided their majors.

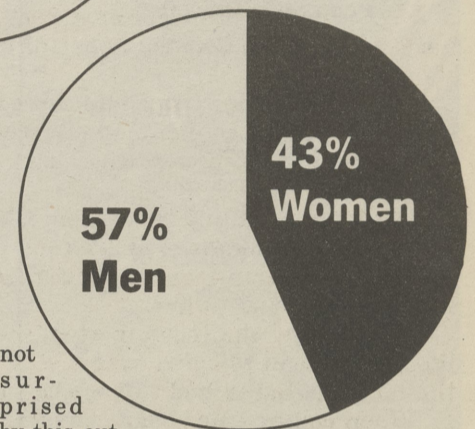
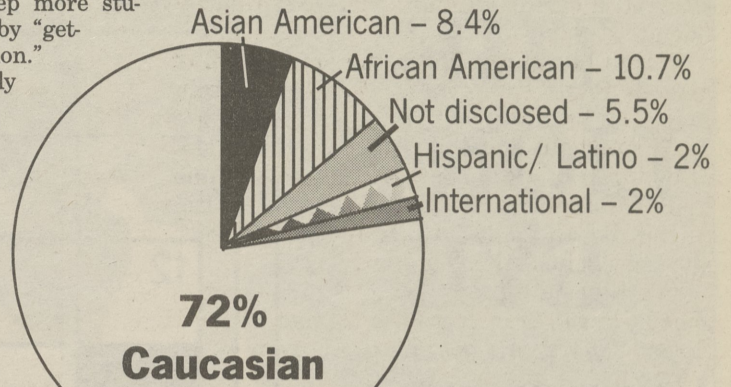
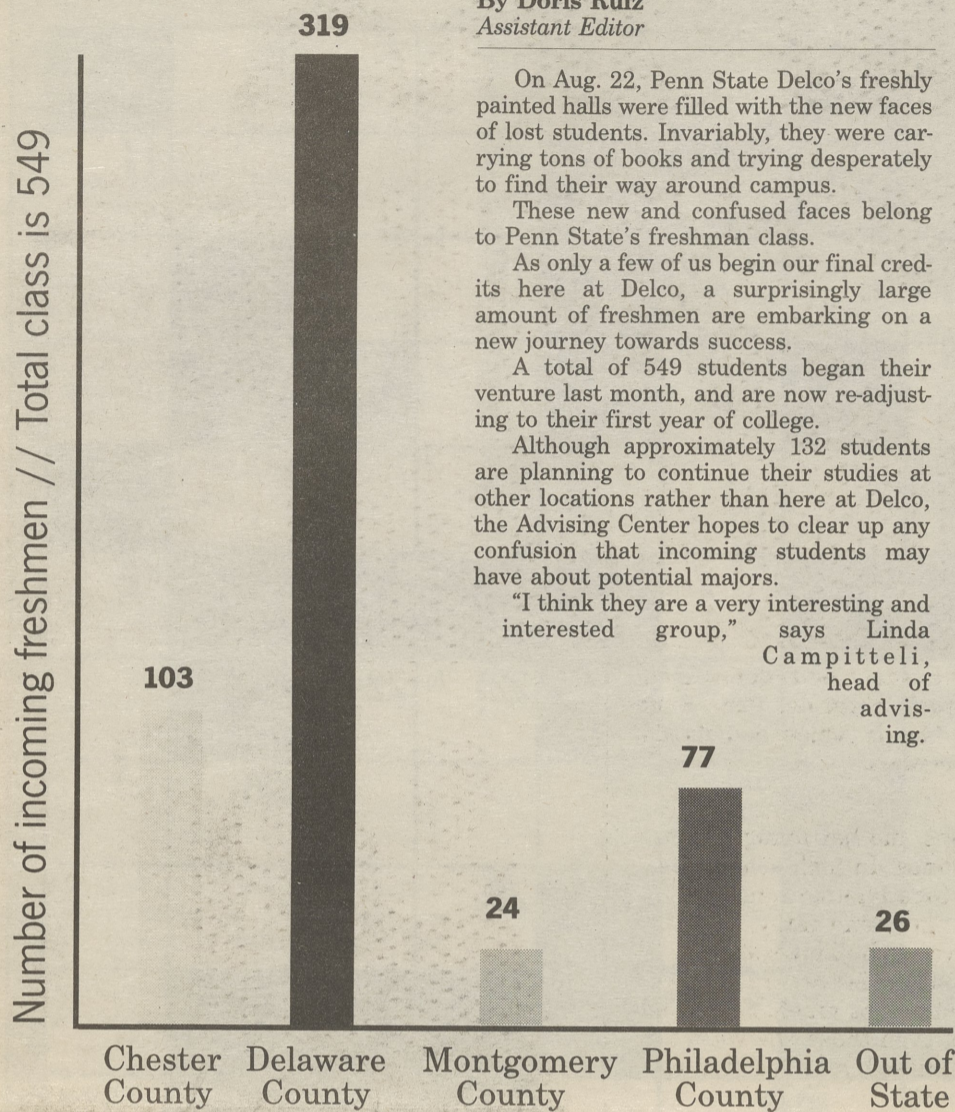
One of the many goals for this incoming class is to expand diversity.

Like in years past, this new crop of undergraduate students hail mostly from Delaware County, which surrounds the local Penn State campus.

About a fifth of the new students come from Chester County, while nearly 15 percent come from Philadelphia. And gradually through continued efforts, Penn State Delco has managed to attract 26 students from out of state. In fact, 10 of the new students are international students.

Another way the campus is striving to increase its diversity is by targeting students of more diverse ethnic backgrounds. This semester, about 20 percent of incoming students aren't Caucasian.

Many upper-class students are



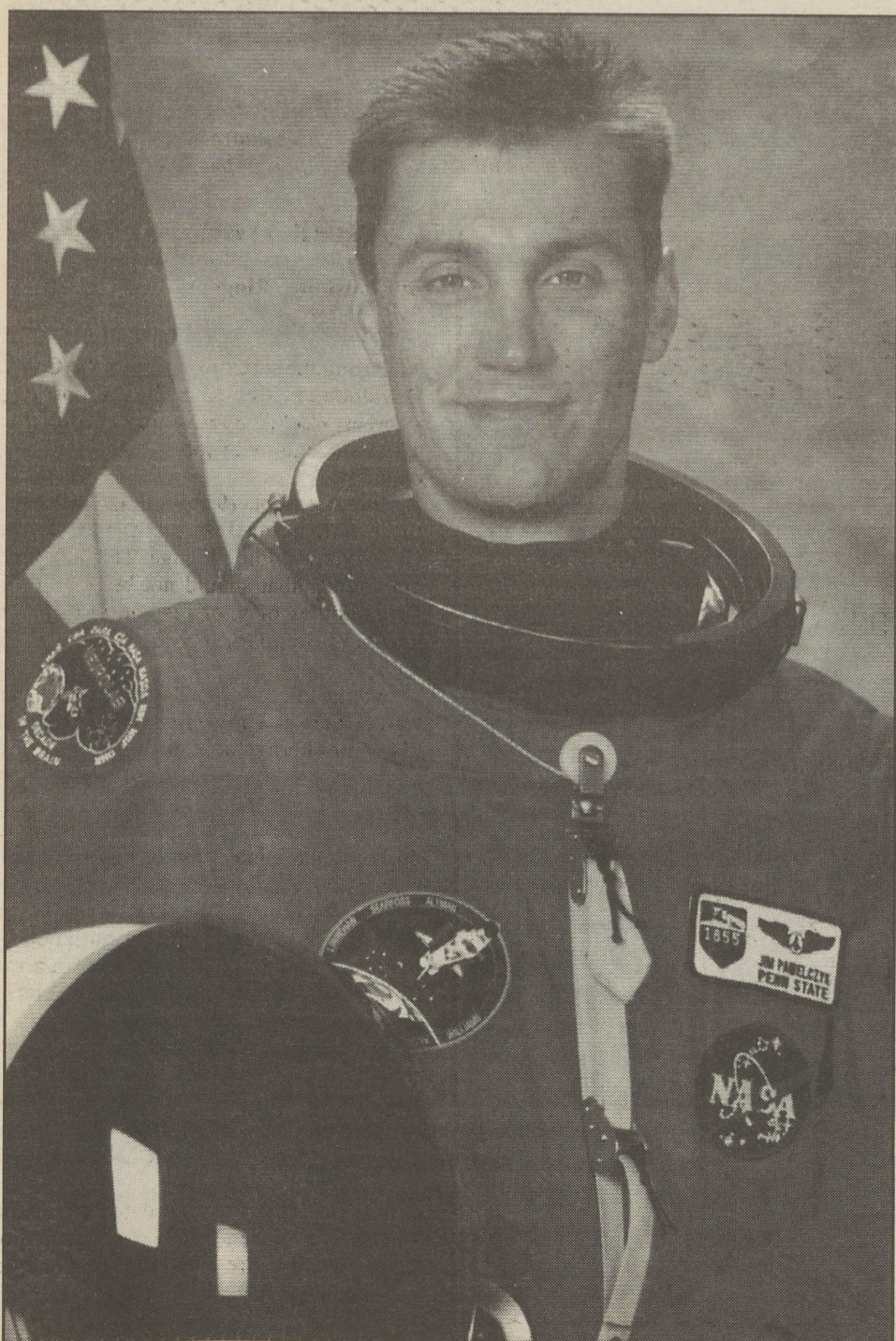
not surprised by this outcome.

"The campus has been planning many diversity programs for a while, now," says Scherrie Bailey, a Delco junior.

So, as the semester heads off to an exciting start, freshmen students like Ronshena Pemberton of West Philadelphia are beginning to feel more at ease in their new setting.

"We [freshmen] have had like 5 orientations and they have all helped us meet new people and feel comfortable here at Penn State."

Where are freshman from?



## PSU Resident Astronaut Visits the Delco Campus

By Adam Wojciechowicz  
Staff Writer

As "Spaced Out Week" dawned on our campus the week of September the 11, Delco waited in anticipation for the impending arrival of the Pennsylvania State University's own resident astronaut. Professor James Pawelczyk made a presentation on Sept. 14 beginning at 11:30 a.m. concerning his experiences as a NASA crew member, as well as prospects on the future of space exploration.

Dr. Pawelczyk, an assistant professor of physiology and kinesiology based at University Park, is a 1985 Penn State graduate. He has taught for the past 5 years in the position of resident astronaut, the first such role on the Penn State faculty.

The NASA Neurolab missions of 1998 twice carried Pawelczyk into orbit aboard the U.S. Space Shuttle Columbia as a payload specialist. As their name suggests, the missions were primarily focused in the field of neuroscience.

"We looked at the effects of a microgravity environment on a number of living specimens and the adaptation to these conditions," says

Pawelczyk. In particular, changes in blood pressure, balance, sleep, and control movement were observed.

In addition to Pawelczyk's experience specific to the Neurolab program, he spoke in general about the life of an astronaut. Having logged 16 days, 6.4 million miles, and 256 orbits of the planet Earth aboard the shuttle, Pawelczyk presented an incredible opportunity to hear from the voice of experience on all aspects of spaceflight. Of particular interest to those individuals with a passion and inquisition for space was the availability of the Penn State resident astronaut for personal inquiries. In his own words prior to his arrival, "There will be an extensive Q&A session, so please bring your questions."

Following the presentation, Pawelczyk bestowed upon the Delaware County campus a small plot of what has come to be known as "space grass." This unique specimen was a personal addition of Pawelczyk to the Neurolab mission's Flight Kit, and was actually grown by him in space. Plots of the grass are to be presented to all Penn State campuses, as each is visited in turn by the resident astronaut.