

# Eye on Campus

## She works to build tolerance toward gays

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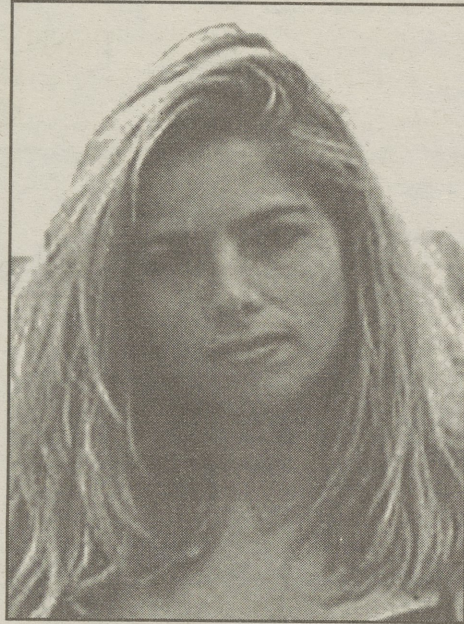
Nancy Whalen openly admitted to her family that she was a lesbian about five years ago.

She says her mother and father were less than thrilled, but accepting. Ever since her early teenage years, her mother pushed her toward wearing makeup and dating boys, for she thought Nancy was too much of a tomboy. In turn, she held a longterm relationship with Mikey, who was more of a best friend, rather than a boyfriend. Shortly thereafter, she came out to her friends.

Since she started school, she has been ambitious to reach out to other gay and bisexual people and answer questions and give advice. In 2001, she became an active member in the Gay Straight Alliance, which she is now the president of.

A senior at Penn State Delco, Whalen began her education career in the fall of 2000 as a business major. Her goal is to begin a career in Philadelphia working with pharmaceuticals or marketing. As for her long term goals, she hopes to open up her own business.

As president of the GSA, Whalen holds meetings each week for people to



NANCY WHALEN

get together and educate one another on the subject. After a while, the turnout was diminishing.

"I was disappointed in the fact that I couldn't do more with the GSA on campus due to the lack of interest," she said.

Meetings were then closed, and private office meetings were offered.

Whalen dedicated one day a week to

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office hours in the Commons Building, where she would spend her time answering any questions students may have about homosexuality. Mostly straight people would ask her questions about homosexuality and tell her about the experiences they have had with gay or bisexual people.

At one point, she had created a Web site. The Web site was a tool to enable people to converse with one another. After being unsuccessful, the Web site was canceled.

Homosexuality in the classroom has not been a negative issue. Most of the faculty is very accepting, and would ask questions to better their knowledge.

"Bringing the issue of homosexuality up within the class has been a mix of responses," she said. "Some students laugh, and some share their experiences. It's important for people to accept or at least tolerate homosexuals and bisexuals, because you will be working with them someday."

The GLBT workshop this week is a large support network that trains people to help others learn about the issues that occur.

Whalen has been working with the

Senator of Diversity, Andrew Walter, to set up the GLBT workshop. Among her many contributions, she has been posting advertisements and making ribbons for the event.

She has been in the process of creating a forum which allows the students in our community to come together and discuss the controversial issues of gay marriages. This will be open to all and run in a professional manner.

"Marriage is a word no longer owned by the religious groups," she said. "They released the 'ownership' of this when they allowed judges to legally marry people. They should have fought this issue earlier and defined marriage as a union instead. If they had done this, then they would have had grounds to consider marriage a religious-only term."

Within the next academic year, she plans on dedicating more time to the GSA and educating more people about GLB issues.

She does need a vice president, and a few more officers. If anyone is interested, she can be reached at angelandgypsy@hotmail.com or (610) 331-5460.

## A course that's not that hard to defend

By CHRISSY GREENAN  
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Imagine going to class in your sweats, and spending your time throwing and choking your fellow classmates, while earning college credit for it. You will also learn grabs, kicks, punches and releases, to name a few.

Kinesiology 56, Introduction to Martial Arts is the "Class of the Month." Although it is listed as a martial arts class, it is actually geared more toward self-defense.

Taught by Daniel Doran, the course offers an arrangement of self-defense techniques and information about protecting yourself during an altercation.

"I want to teach students how to be aware of their surroundings" said Doran, "with everything going on in the world today, you can't be too sure."

The course covers information from safety issues to judo throws. There is also discussion on women's safety, date rape, and travel tips. With the

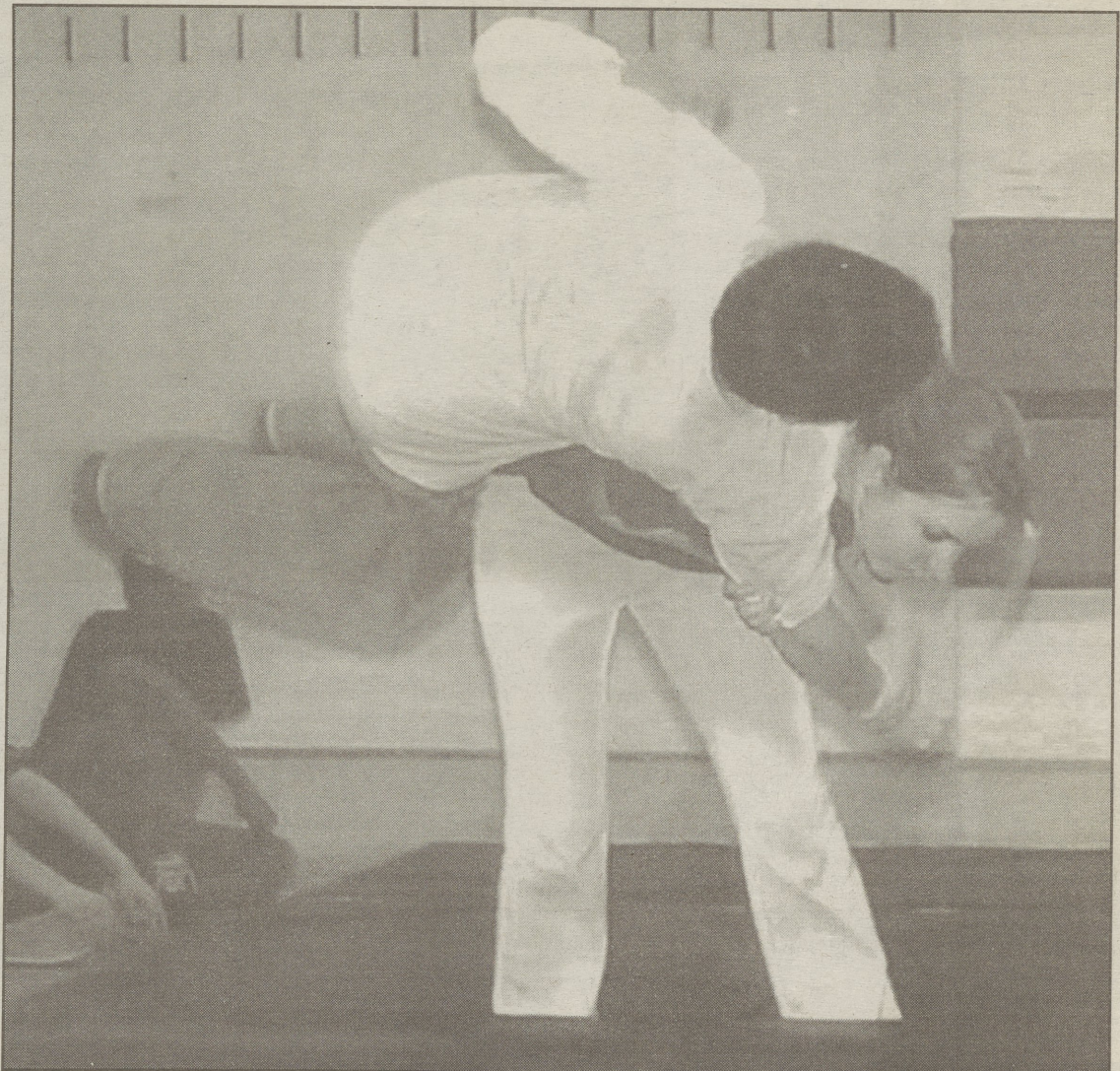
### CLASS OF THE MONTH

variety that the course has to offer, it is suitable for any student to take, male or female. And unlike most courses, it is an introduction course, so no prior knowledge is required.

"It was a good class," said student Christine Seiple. "It taught me different techniques to use if I am ever in a dangerous situation."

Although this class sounds like it is all in fun, the information taught and learned is very serious. Students will learn how to properly defend themselves, both physically and mentally.

There is also a textbook required, which is helpful for the written test. Students are also tested on the techniques learned and a paper about home security. So although this is a unique and enjoyable course, do not assume that it will be a cakewalk.



Sarah Gallatig, the Lion's Eye associate editor, works on a defense move during a meeting of Kinesiology 56, Introduction to Martial Arts, March's Class of the Month.