

Eye on Campus

She was 'an amazing friend'

Campus mourns loss of Barbara Jackson-Williams

By STACIE MANN
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Special to the Lion's Eye

Her smile could turn the night into day. Barbara Jackson-Williams was a genuinely nice person. Whether she had a million things to do, or on her way out of the Student Life Office to go home for the night, she was always there...for anyone.

"Barbara was not only a diligent worker, but also an amazing friend," said Dale Soring, student programmer of Student Life.

Jackson-Williams always took the time to listen to anyone, ranting or crying, on any given day. She was always filled with radiant smiles and offered a comforting presence in Student Life.

"Barbara was a wonderful person," said Sharon Manco from the Learning Center. "She was always smiling."

Jackson-Williams, coordinator of student activities, died Oct. 2 after battling cancer. Jackson-Williams continued to work on campus throughout her illness, persevering through unthinkable hardships without complaint.

Jackson-Williams contributed so much to the campus - much more than anyone could ever put into words. She was responsible for bringing co-curricular programs to campus and coordinated events in which numerous authors, speakers and musicians appeared on campus.

She worked to increase the campus life and the cultural awareness of Penn State Delaware County.



Photo by Luanne Sims

Barbara Jackson-Williams, left, who died earlier this month after battling cancer, posed in front of the Nittany Lion in the Classroom building with Kathleen Yanoshak, a friend and member of the campus staff.

One of her biggest accomplishments was last year's Multicultural Day celebration. The event earned her the 2003 university-wide Vice President's Award for Outstanding Program.

Although she worked here for only two years, she left a lasting impression. The somber state of the Student Life office over the past week is vivid evidence.

"When I think of Barbara, I think of family," said Michael Madden, health and human development instructor.

"Even though we were different

colors, she was my sister. We could've been sisters - we were so much alike," said Diane Shorter with a tear of remembrance. Shorter and Jackson-Williams worked in offices next to each other.

Like Shorter, anyone fortunate enough to work with her noticed her smile. She didn't smile simply because she liked to (although she did); she smiled because she knew who people were. People were more than just a number to her. They were her friends; and she was theirs. She fought for the students until she couldn't fight anymore.

Jackson-Williams put many hours into her job yet she still found time to give back to her community. She helped with a number of organizations such as the Chester branch of the NAACP, the YWCA, and the Chester Historic Preservation Society.

Sharmon Bryant, assistant director of student affairs, said Jackson-Williams is still with us, in a way.

"Barbara's gift to our campus is the wonderful programs she planned for the year," she said. "She is here every day in spirit."

Getting the real scoop on what it takes to be a reporter

By SADE MITCHELL
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Nobody ever stops to think how their obituary would read if they were to die tomorrow.

That's a statement a professor would not typically make to his students. Nor is writing your obituary a typical homework assignment, unless of course you are in Joe Biscontini's Communications 260W: News Writing and Reporting class.

"This class has made me pay more attention when I read the paper and it has made me more interested in a career in journalism. It's a good opportunity to learn how the media constructs stories," said Julia Hagan.

Biscontini, who has his B.A. in journalism from Penn State and a M.A. in public relations from Syracuse University, says a teacher should be entertaining.

CLASS OF THE MONTH

"I work hard to keep it that way," he said. This is Biscontini's first time teaching Communications 260W, though it is not his first time teaching. He has been teaching marketing for about eight years.

"Teaching this course is tough," he said. "It's tough because I teach Marketing 310 one day a week with juniors and seniors. Now this class I have twice a week with freshmen and sophomores. I like it though."

The two most important things Biscontini would like students to get from his class are "learning to write news stories like a journalist and understanding the context in which news is written."

Krissie Laudadil said, "When I first got in this class I was really nervous. I'm learning a lot about writing. Now

I don't mind coming here, it's actually one of my better classes."

Biscontini takes the time out to thoroughly go through every paper his students hand in to him. "Students are not going to learn if you don't take the time and give them individual attention," he said. "I am learning things from very good teachers here."

"I like him; he's cool. We move slowly so you get a better understanding of the work," said Jasmine McDowell.

Biscontini feels this course, which is not offered in the spring, is beneficial to students not only pursuing journalism, but also if you want a corporate job.

"If you know how to write and speak well," he said, "you have an edge."

At the end of the semester, Biscontini will be retiring from the public relations field, but hopes to continue teaching marketing and journalism.