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# The Lion's Eye

Penn State University - Brandywine

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## WHAT'S NEW WITH THE SGA?

By Christina Felizzi  
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Brandywine's Student Government Association (SGA) has a slew of upcoming events planned for the 2008 fall semester. The new semester also brings in a new board of SGA members, including the new President Ashley Wood along with her fellow trustees including Vice President Teron Meyers, Secretary Brittany Walker, and Treasurer Bernice Irby. Equally important, SGA consists of four chair positions consisting of Academic Affairs Chair Rahel Teklegiorgis, Governmental Affairs Chair Al Parks, Diversity Affairs Chair Paola Pedraza-Rivera, and Student Affairs Chair Santeena Brown. The four chairs oversee committees such as Public Relations, headed up by Christina Furia, and Events Coordinator Ashley Dinardo.

Our SGA is in good hands – working from a clean slate, this year's SGA members are working extremely hard in efforts to build a sense of community for the campus. "Since this is a commuter campus, I really want to see more student involvement," commented Paola Pedraza-Rivera, Diversity Affairs Chair, sophomore and Cultural Anthropology major.

The Constitution Day open-forum celebration held on Wednesday, September 17th in the Vairo Library amphitheater succeeded in attracting as many as one hundred spectators and participants alike. The event was organized by the STS (Science, Technology and Society) group, the Honors Student Organization and SGA. Dr. Laura Guertin, associate professor of Earth Sciences, wanted "to engage students in discussion on an academic and scholarly level outside of the classroom."

Penn State junior and Communications major Rahel Teklegiorgis, the Academic Affairs Chair, wants to see students become more involved with events outside of the classroom. When asked about extracurricular activities students can engage in, Rahel advised "lectures and student events

like EURECA are great ways for students to get involved academically."

The second Club Rush on Friday, September 19th in the Tomezko lounge attracted a fair turnout of club promoters and club seekers. The SGA sponsored a Rock the Vote banner to advance their new voter registration drive on campus. The drive is due to end on October 6th, the last day to register for this year's presidential election. Also, MTV's Real World/Road Rules Rock the Vote Tour is scheduled to visit our campus Monday, September 22nd in the Lion's Den during common hour to inform and encourage students to vote.

The Penn State Brandywine formal dance, cosponsored by the SGA and Black Student League (BSL) will be held at the Springfield Country Club on Friday, November 21st. The Mr. and Ms. Penn State Pageant will be held simultaneously during the formal. Tickets will be \$30 per person and \$50 per couple.

These events are only scratching the surface of the numerous events SGA has planned for the semester. Vice President Teron Meyers, junior and Communications major, not only wants to see more students involved on campus, but also encourages other clubs and organizations to work together. "We want to host a lot more student-involvement-based events where the clubs are working together – I want to see a strong sense of unity for this campus."

In addition to the events, SGA wants to hear feedback and ideas from all students. SGA members want to engage the student body to make the college experience as involved as possible. SGA holds monthly "open meetings," inviting the students to come and voice their thoughts, as well as receive an update on upcoming events for that month. The next open meeting is on Tuesday, October 14th, in the Lion's Den during common hour – don't miss it.

## A Fresh Start for Student Life

By Tiffany Ragins-Morris  
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The resignation of Chris Coia, Associate Director of Student Affairs, and Dava Murray, Assistant Director of Student Affairs, has left student life a bit overextended, but overall, student programming has been fairing quite well.

Deborah Erie, Director of Student and Enrollment Services, says that patience is key as the hiring process is ongoing. Erie is currently holding the position of Division Head of Student Life and is hoping to hire the right person to take on the title. Dale Soring, Student Affairs Staff Assistant, says Brandywine has to take the necessary time to hire the right person, looking for a highly qualified person who will have new ideas, a fun personality, and concern for the students on the campus.

Erie, along with the combined efforts of Soring, Diane Shorter, Student Affairs Specialist, Jim Gastner, Athletic Director, and many more dedicated faculty, staff, and students, has managed much success of freshmen orientation, Grill and Chill, Fresh Mesh, and Convocation events. With the loss in staff, Shorter agrees that events have been hectic, but she believes that everyone is still working toward a common goal.

"Every event will be as positive of an experience for students as possible," she says. She added that before Coia and Murray left Brandywine, all the events for the fall and some events for the spring were in place.

Students have been active in making the campus experience the best for everyone. New clubs were represented at Club Rush this year, SGA been running strong, and the Student Activities Fund (SAF) was business as usual at their meeting on September 9th.

Erie's hope for Student Life this year is upbeat. "We will always strive for a vibrant and alive campus, to feel like its college, like its Penn State." With clubs and organizations underway and the hiring process almost complete, Penn State Brandywine is off to a solid start.

## Student Leadership Conference: *Brandywine Leading the Way*

By Teron Meyers  
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This past summer Penn State Brandywine students attended the Student Leadership Conference at University Park to hone their skills as leaders of our campus.

Every year Penn State University sponsors an annual leadership conference to help train students in different clubs and organizations such as Student Government Association (SGA), THON, and so on. The conference was held at Penn State University Park from August 13th to August 15th. Those present from Brandywine were myself, Santeena Brown, Christina Felizzi, Al Parks, Paola Pedraza-Rivera, Brittney Walker, and Ashley Wood, all leaders of different clubs/organizations here on this campus.

The range of participants at this event was across the University commonwealth. The campuses that were present besides Brandywine were: Abington, Berks, Mont Alto, York, and the list goes on. Although those present were from every corner of Pennsylvania, the goal was to unite one another to gain a greater perspective of leadership.

Each day of the conference had a different agenda. The first day everyone was divided into pride groups mixed with students from different campuses - it was freshmen orientation all over again. This process allowed individuals to become comfortable with new people, which is common in the atmosphere of leadership.



Photo courtesy of Paola Pederza-Rivera

Afterwards, informative breakout sessions took place that focused on specific skills to take back to the campus such as "Owning the Pride," "THON and Your Organization," and "Diversity: The Card Party." Each day hosted different breakout sessions, all with the goal to get people to communicate, work together to solve conflicts and develop strategies.

The second day of the conference involved a

community service project done outside of University Park. The goal of the activity was that civic engagement is important for student leaders to take part in. Each pride group had a different, unknown project to participate in. My service project was entitled, "Special Olympics," so my pride group assumed direct assistance with participants. Contrast to belief, our project was not working with children, and instead we were responsible for cleaning storage space for the event. It taught us that situations are not always as they seem. The last day consisted of final breakout sessions, meeting time with our pride groups, and the Pop Culture Clash quiz game. The night before was a special Penn State Pride Dinner for all the campuses, an event that consisted of each campus representing themselves with chants and trivia – Brandywine, even though the one of the smaller and younger campuses, was the loudest table at the conference. The Penn State Leadership Conference was a memorable and educational experience.

But what did those there think? Brittney Walker said, "I didn't know what to expect as a leader, but now I am very confident." Christina Felizzi expressed similar thoughts saying, "the whole conference experience caused me to come out of my comfort zone and it taught me a great deal about myself too." Truly this conference is accomplishing its goal for student leaders but the only way for you to know if it's working is getting involved on campus.