

Campus News



Photo Credit: www.pennstatebrandywinefairtrade.wordpress.com

Brandywine Fair Trade

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October wrapped up Fair Trade month.

And while many people have no idea what fair trade entails, the work of some Brandywine students and faculty members is hoping to change that.

Penn State Brandywine became a Fair Trade Campus on May 12, 2012.

Fair Trade is an organized social movement that intends to help producers in developing countries to make better trading conditions and promote sustainability. According to those who promote Fair Trade, goods are exactly what it says--fair. Proponents want farmers and workers justly compensated.

According to www.fairtradeusa.org, "Fair Trade USA Fair Trade is a nonprofit organization that certifies transactions between U.S. companies and their international suppliers to guarantee that the farmers and workers producing Fair Trade Certified goods are paid fair prices and wages."

On campus, this Trailblazer group started from the independent study of one student, Abbey Dufoe and Associate Professor of Earth Science, Dr. Laura Guertin. It was then decided to get more students, faculty and administrators involved so that the Brandywine campus could gain Fair Trade Status as a University.

Head of Fair Trade at Penn State Brandywine Christina Olear describes the work she's most proud of

when it comes to educating other students.

"The event that we are most proud of on campus was when the Trailblazers hosted an event with a speaker from Divine Chocolate (A Fair Trade Organization) with chocolate samples for the audience," Olear said. "Also, last year our two day t-shirt swap of gently worn t-shirt for brand new Fair Trade Penn State T-shirts (Alta Gracia). We received over 237 t-shirts which were donated to those in need. We helped spread the word of Fair Trade while also helping those in our own country who are less fortunate."

Olear says there are a number of different reasons why students, not just from Brandywine campus, but all over the nation, should get involved with this service club. She

says club positively impacts the lives of others by simply choosing one product over another. Fair Trade awareness helps students to comprehend important issues happening all over the world.

"While learning more about the world, we hope to facilitate a passion to help others and to promote gratitude for the blessings in our own lives," Olear said.

The on-campus group hopes with Fair Trade, the money people spend on day-to-day goods can improve an entire community's day-to-day economy. To help Penn State Brandywine with this cause, go to: www.facebook.com/psubwfairtrade. The Penn State Trailblazers group also has a blog: pennstatebrandywinefairtrade.wordpress.com

Brandywine THON Shatters Record Continued...

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The reason this is such a big deal for Brandywine is because the group has not had a family for years. However, because of the group's tireless work, Brandywine THON was deemed successful and passionate enough to handle being there for a family in need during this stressful time. This effort to regain a family can be attributed to one member in particular, Liz Gramlich.

After meeting the Chapman family, another Four Diamonds family who is partnered with Abington's THON organization, Liz had an extreme desire to get Brandywine THON a family of its very own. Between multiple trips back and forth to University Park for meetings and writing a 15 page paper telling why Brandywine can handle a family because of the success in the past couple years, Gramlich was determined to get Brandywine a THON family.

And when the good news came in, she was ecstatic.

"I found out in front of the Brandywine THON organization and just started jumping up and down and was almost in tears, while screaming that we had got a family," Gramlich said. "I was supposed to surprise our THON organization later on, but I could not contain myself. It was just so emotional and exciting. In my opinion, there is no bigger honor and privilege in THON then receiving a THON family!"

It is this kind of dedication and passion that has contributed to Brandywine THON's success. On October 26, about 15 members went to University Park to run in THON's annual 5K walk/run. To stand out in the crowd, Brandywine students dressed up as the "101 Dalmatians." With all this success and the dedicated members they have assembled, Brandywine THON shows no signs of stopping.

"I hope to build a larger organization, build better relationships with the campus community, and raise a great amount of money," Maginnis said.

When THON members are asked why they do what they do, the response is always the same: FTK, THON's motto meaning--For the Kids.

Need CLUB Help?

Talk to our SGA Club Coordinator

Lauren at LRL5120@psu.edu

Get help with:

- Registering a new club
- Writing a constitution
- Club goals
- Event planning
- Publicizing

Club Money:

\$75 a semester for each Clubs!
More money is available through SAF