

Students Make Difference In Corps

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — A student in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences is participating in a Pennsylvania program designed to be a model for President Clinton's National Service Program.

Howard Pope, a junior from Philadelphia majoring in agricultural and biological engineering, is a participant in the inaugural year of the Pennsylvania Service Corps, one of eight pilot programs across the country.

"The Pennsylvania Service Corps works like a domestic version of the Peace Corps," Pope said. "In return for a year of service, participants receive a living wage and, at the end of the year, \$5,000 to apply to educational expenses. At the same time, worthy organizations receive professional assistance they otherwise might not be able to afford."

Under the auspices of the corps, Pope works full time for Volun-

teer programs and Services, part of Penn State's Office of Student Activities. He began his assignment on July 17, after a week-long Corps training session at Susquehanna University.

His year with Volunteer Programs and Services will be busy. His projects include working with agencies to ease student volunteers' transportation problems and compiling a directory of student volunteer opportunities at both the University Park and Commonwealth campuses.

He will also help develop workshops for agencies that make use of student volunteers. To top it off, he will help plan and stage a statewide conference on student service leadership in February.

Pope first became interested in community service two years ago, when he served as philanthropy chairman for his fraternity, Pi

Kappa Phi. The national fraternity sent him information about "Into the Streets," a national volunteer awareness program developed by the Campus Outreach Opportunity League and sponsored at Penn State by the Office of Student Activities.

"The program introduces community service to college students with no prior volunteering experience," said Pope. As codirector of "Into the Streets" for two years,

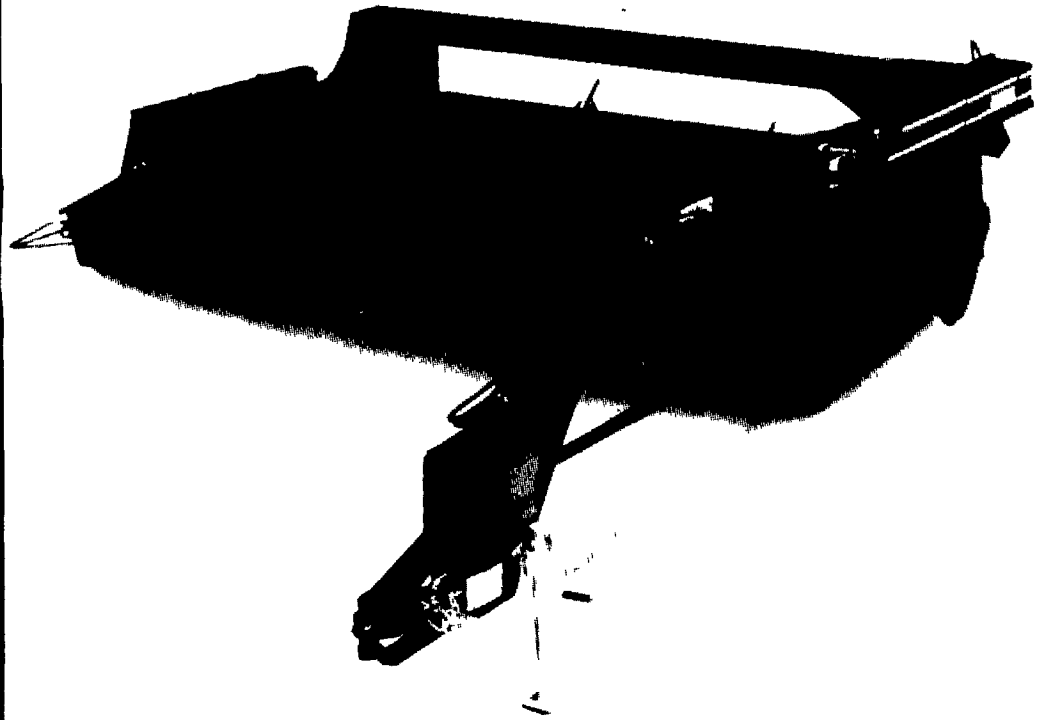
Pope coordinated volunteer activities such as cleaning Shaver's Creek, painting the Women's Resource Center, visiting nursing homes and youth centers, and helping with the Pitt/Penn State Blood Drive.

These experiences were so positive that he was eager to put more effort into community service. He has postponed his graduation date in order to put most of his time into the corps.

"I'm very passionate about community service," he said. "The Pennsylvania Service Corps gave me the opportunity to put all my efforts into doing things that will make some difference in peoples' lives. Nothing grand or dramatic, just a small difference."

Students and others interested in volunteering can contact Volunteer Programs and Services at (814) 863-4624.

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