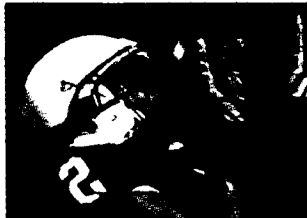




**Ready,**  
Thon dodgeball  
gets huge start  
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**Little Ten**  
The conference may not be  
as strong as in past years  
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# Collegian

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## Students back Jena 6

By Arianna Davis  
and Jason Parham  
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Today, thousands of students nationwide plan to wear black and more than 10,000 have pledged to rally in Jena, La., to support the Jena Six, six young black men involved in a racially spurred incident in the town.

One year ago, nooses were hung from a traditionally whites-only tree at Jena High School after a black student asked the school's vice principal if he and some friends could sit under it. The Associated Press reported.

Following the incident, numerous racially motivated crimes broke out in Jena, one of which led to the arrest of the six black students after police said they beat a white student.

The Jena Six — Mychal Bell, Robert Bailey, Theodore Shaw, Carwin Jones, Bryant Purvis and Jesse Beard — were charged with attempted murder stemming from the beating of white classmate Justin Barker. Parents of the Jena Six said Barker was using racial epithets, the AP reported.

Bell, the first of the six to be tried in court, had his charges overturned last week, although Jena District Attorney Reed Wal-

See JENA 6, Page 2.



Michael Rover, Collegian

Students line up to sign a petition in support of the Jena Six at the HUB yesterday.

## College aid to increase with bill

By Katharine Lackey

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A new act sent by Congress this week to be signed by President George W. Bush will increase college financial aid by \$20 billion over the next five years, according to Committee on Education and Labor press release.

At \$12,284 per academic year for Pennsylvania residents, Penn State has one of the highest in-state tuition costs of any public school in the country.

U.S. Congressman Rep. Jason Altmire, D-Pa., said Penn State's tuition cost is of "great concern" during a media conference call yesterday with four other congressmen, including House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md.

"That's a lot of debt students are taking on," Altmire said. "We want to make sure that students and families are able to afford to get into school and be able to repay debts."

Hoyer agreed.

"This is a dramatic example of why we felt we had to act," he said. "The college costs are increasing at a dramatic rate."

The College Cost Reduction and Access Act is the largest investment in higher education since the GI Bill 60 years ago, Hoyer said. The GI Bill, signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944, was drawn up to help veterans attend college upon returning from World War II.

"Students are graduating with more debt than ever," Hoyer said. "Many would-be students are holding off on going to college ... 200,000 delay attending or skip altogether. Our country cannot afford to lose those students."

The act will provide multiple benefits to college students with no new cost to taxpayers by reducing subsidies to banks that make student loans and giving those subsidies back to students, Hoyer said.

The legislation would not only simplify the needs-

See AID, Page 2.



Daniel Collins, Collegian

Penn State student Dalton Hance floats in the REST research float tank, held in the Carpenter building, on Tuesday morning.

## Floaters relax for research in unique tank

By Tiffany Peden

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To experience an alternate state of mind, just strip down, get into some salt water and float for an hour.

It may sound crazy, but not to the Penn State researchers studying what experiences people have when they float inside a sensory deprivation tank filled with salt water, the only of its kind in North America, said study coordinator Dalton Hance.

The process is called Restricted Environmental Stimuli Therapy (REST), said Penn State English professor Richard Doyle, who is part of the team investigating the study along with lead investigator Mark Shriver, professor of anthropology.

"In our collaboration, we discussed how interesting it would be to look at research with floatation tanks," Doyle said. "I'd long been interested in trying to study human consciousness and its alternation in a way that's legal."

### On the Web

To learn more about the study, visit:

www.collegian.psu.edu

The idea of the tank came out of research done in the 1950s to understand how beliefs are formed in people, he said.

Doyle said there was a lot of research done with floatation tanks and alternate perspectives in the 1960s and 1970s, adding that the research might have stopped because it seemed to be associated with the "culture of the time."

The researchers are working on two different studies now, Hance said. One study involves a single one-hour float, after which the researchers gather written responses from the participants, Hance said.

He said they are trying to find a correlation between people's DNA and the experiences they have.

"Biological and cultural factors influence the external environment," Shriver said. He added that the researchers don't yet know what influences people when they're inside the tank.

"It's only our second year running the tank," Shriver said, adding that researchers are still analyzing data from the previous year.

People can choose to float in a bathing suit or nude and must take a shower before they go in the tank, he said.

Any sediment, hair or bacteria in the tank is cleaned out by a filtering process that Hance said is run at least twice a day and between each float.

Inside the tank, 11 inches of water is heated to skin temperature and then saturated with hundreds of pounds of Epsom salt, allowing a person to float with hardly any effort.

"You bob on top of [the water] like a hyper cork," Doyle said.

See FLOATERS, Page 2.

## Some cities sack saggy pants

By Danielle Samela

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Cities and towns across America are proposing laws prohibiting sagging pants, but don't expect similar ordinances to be passed in State College any time soon.

Places like Atlanta, Ga.; Trenton, N.J.; and Delcambre, La., have all proposed laws banning saggy pants.

Delcambre has passed an ordinance, which states that wearing pants low enough to show boxers or buttocks can result in six months jail time and a \$500 fine.

Atlanta and Trenton may soon follow and fine those with their underwear hanging out. On top of a fine in Trenton, the law would require a city worker to assess where the saggy pants wearer's life is headed.

"Are they employed? Do they have a high school diploma? It's a wonderful way to redirect at that point," Trenton councilwoman Annette Lartigue, who is drafting a law to outlaw saggy pants, told The Associated Press. "The message is clear: We don't want to see your backside."

State College does not plan on instating a

### On the Web

For past coverage, visit:

www.collegian.psu.edu

law of this nature. State College Mayor Bill Welch said.

"As long as their privates are covered, and they're not causing a public indecency, what does it matter if they're wearing them or not?" Welch said.

Colleen Considine (sophomore-psychology) agreed.

"I don't think your underwear should be hanging out, but I don't think you should be fined for it," she said.

Ashley Occhipinti (junior-elementary education) and Tamia Taylor (sophomore-communication arts and sciences) both said there are more important issues facing society than saggy pants.

Welch said the borough does not have baggy pants on their agenda, unlike the State College Cell Block, 420 E. College

See SAGGY, Page 2.

## GSA considers undergraduate collaboration

By Lauren McCormack

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The Graduate Student Association (GSA) convened for the first time last night, launching the year with a speech by and questions for Penn State President Graham Spanier.

GSA has been busy before this, though, having recently been in talks with reigning undergraduate student government University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA) to "collaborate" together on certain issues.

"I've spoken to [UPUA president] Hillary [Lewis], and we're trying to work together to have one student voice instead of a graduate [voice] and an undergraduate [voice]," GSA Vice President Rich Krauss said. "Obviously, this is our first meeting, but we have been in contact with them. It's a strong point when we speak with officials ... to have undergrads and grads that are lobbying together for the same issues."

GSA president Joe Gyekis stressed that UPUA and GSA are not in "talk[s] of a merger." UPUA and GSA would join together only "to cooperate on issues as need be."

Spanier, who had not heard of cooperation talks

See GSA, Page 2.



Sara Rinkunas, Collegian

Chris Johnson shows off baggy pants.

Weather: Today: High 76



Tonight: Low 50



Tomorrow: High 79



Extended forecast | WEATHER, Page 2  
Courtesy of Campus Weather Service  
cws.met.psu.edu

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