



Peter Tesoriero/Collegian

Kevin Mackie (junior-health policy and administration) and Edwin Ruiz (junior-information sciences and technology) sign a petition in support of sweatshop workers.

USAS searches for Spanier's support against sweatshops

By Laura Nichols
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

More than 150 signatures were collected outside of the HUB-Robeson Center on Thursday in an effort to end the violation of workers' rights in sweatshops that produce Penn State apparel.

Members of United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS) encouraged other students to sign a petition urging Penn State President Graham Spanier to sign onto the Designated Suppliers Program (DSP). USAS wants Spanier to endorse the DSP so Penn State can become a part of the movement to ensure the organizational efforts of workers in sweatshops, Paige Heimark (freshman-political science and studio art) said.

"It's all about the workers and their rights — their human rights are being violated," she said. "Penn State is a part of the problem."

Four Big Ten schools have shown their support for the DSP she said — the University of Iowa, the University of Indiana, the Ohio State University and the University of Wisconsin. John Fitzgerald, a member of USAS, said the organization has not seen any support from Penn State.

Heimark said while USAS met with Spanier last year, he did not sign on because of some of the problems he found with the DSP that violate anti-trust laws. USAS will meet with Spanier again in the next week, she said.

Penn State spokeswoman Annemarie Mountz said the university has not changed its stance on the DSP since Spanier's last meeting with USAS. The major reason Spanier has opted not to endorse the DSP is because "it does not exist," Mountz said.

Fitzgerald (sophomore-Jewish studies and classics) said there was little opposition to USAS's cause outside of the HUB on Thursday. But many passers-by were curious about the issue, he said.

To e-mail reporter: lcn5019@psu.edu

Saturday Night Sober group to support alcoholic students

By Caitlin Sellers
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Stephen F. doesn't like to use the word "disease" to describe his condition — he prefers the word "allergy."

The compulsion that Stephen (graduate-media studies) experiences when he drinks alcohol is physical, he said. When he drinks, he only wants more.

It's a situation that a small percentage of the student population finds themselves in and one he has extracted himself from in the effort to combat his alcoholism.

Sober since his sophomore year of college, Stephen said Alcoholics Anonymous meetings downtown were the only method of recovery that kept him on track. Now, he wants to help other students fight their alcohol addictions by holding on-campus Alcoholics Anonymous meetings.

Saturday Night Sober will be held every Saturday at 11 p.m. in 106 HUB-Robeson Center.

The meetings are not exclusive to Penn State students, but the time and location is designed specifically to draw students, said Stephen Shetler, an addiction specialist at the Center for Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS).

"The only requirement for membership [in Alcoholics Anonymous] is the desire to stop drinking," Shetler said. "And there are students looking for that support, especially on a Saturday night."

Stephen F., who asked that his last name not be released in accordance with Alcoholics Anonymous policy, said he wanted an effective and comforting resource for students to use.

Shetler said the university has not had an on-campus Alcoholics Anonymous meeting in several years.

Up to 14 percent of the United States population has or will develop a problem with alcohol, Shetler said, a statistic reported by the American Psychological Association's Clinician's Research Digest in 1995.

For Stephen F., sobriety was a years-long struggle compounded by an "I'm in college" mentality. He suspects there are other students going through a similar experience.

"It's obviously no mystery that it's a big drinking school," he said. "My interpretation is that there's a vast majority of kids that are not going to develop a problem even if they're in a frat, doing a case race or getting drunk occasionally. But for this sub-population, they're going to get out [of college] and not be able to moderate their drinking."

And the message that some students may have a problem with alcohol may be falling on deaf ears, he said. It's not a moral issue, and it's not a character issue, he said. And it's never too soon to change your life.

"The sooner, the better," he said. "I didn't want it to come to the point where I was passing out drunk at my kid's fifth birthday party."

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