

# Group starts 'faith' blog

By Ashley Gold  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Christian student group PSU Seed, which published a magazine of faith-based stories last semester, is now going digital with a weekly blog open to anyone's submissions.

Psuseed.com, launched Nov. 3, is not aiming to be an alternative form of media at Penn State, creators said.

Most of its contributors are not journalism or English majors — students and faculty from colleges across the country have submitted pieces to the site, said faculty adviser Joe Schafer, a professor in the statistics department.

"Our students wanted an outlet to creatively express themselves," Schafer said.

The idea for the publication came from Schafer's contacts at New York University, where the NYU Seed club puts out a magazine full of faith-based articles every semester. PSU Seed doesn't have the funding to keep publishing a magazine, but members are happy to go "completely multimedia" and update the blog two to three times a week, Schafer said.

Anyone can send in submissions, as long as the writing is "good-natured, respectful, reasonable and applies to our journalistic standards," Schafer said.

PSU Seed President Ruth Schafer (sophomore-English), Schafer's daughter,

said psuseed.com aims to "bridge a lot of barriers," and will allow discussions that wouldn't necessarily happen otherwise.

She said the group won't censor any pieces within reason and would love to publish anything opinionated and well thought-out.

The articles originally published in last semester's magazine and new articles have been added to the site. One piece Ruth Schafer found especially interesting was Caitie Hutton's (freshman-architecture) submission on women and modest dress at Penn State — a good example of a thoughtful piece not specifically related to religion, she said.

"Not all of our pieces have a faith-related slant to them," Joe Schafer said.

PSU Seed Secretary Greg Impink (senior-industrial engineering) said the blog is an open forum for anyone who wants to have enlightening discussions on faith at Penn State.

Most of the posts have been opinion pieces, he said, but the club is open to short stories and commentary, such as YouTube videos and links of interest.

"We're trying to evoke more productive conversation in a positive way, in a positive atmosphere for discussion, where nobody's going to be too aggressive and no one's going to condemn you," Impink said.

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Courtesy of Operation Christmas Child

Volunteers give boxes filled with presents to children. There is a local drop off where students can donate their own shoeboxes with gifts as a part of Operation Christmas Child.

# Christmas collection for children begins

By Heather Panetta  
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

The power of a simple gift: That's what Operation Christmas Child hoped to show as it began its national collection week Monday.

Operation Christmas Child, a part of Christian relief organization Samaritan's Purse, distributes shoeboxes filled with gifts to children worldwide each year. Monday marked the start of national collection week, during which volunteers and organizations can bring filled shoeboxes to drop-off locations in their area.

State College residents can take their shoeboxes to Grace Lutheran Church, 205 S. Garner St., through Nov. 23.

"It's a kids-helping-kids project that uses shoeboxes filled with simple gifts," said Charissa Clearman, mid-Atlantic media relations associate for Operation Christmas Child.

This year marks the seventh State College has taken part in the program. Last year, the State College collection grew from 1,350 shoeboxes from the year before to more than 5,700, collection center coordinator Marilyn Peterson said.

From the drop-off site, the shoeboxes are sent to six major collection centers across the country. From there, they are shipped overseas and hand-delivered to children who live in poverty because of war, disease and natural disasters, Peterson said.

"Many of these children have never seen a gift," she said. "The joy it brings to these children and the effect it has on them is something they will never forget."

Operation Christmas Child began in

## If you donate

**What:** Operation Christmas Child

**Where:** Drop off at Grace Lutheran Church, 205 S. Garner St.

**When:** Now through Nov. 23

**Details:** Create shoeboxes filled with gifts for children living in poverty

1993 and has since collected more than 69 million shoeboxes and distributed them to children in more than 130 countries. Each year sees an increase in donations, Clearman said.

"Last year, we collected 8 million shoeboxes worldwide," she said. "This year, we are hoping for 8.2 million."

One feature of the program includes the donor's ability to track where their shoeboxes go.

Peterson encourages students to get together with their sororities, fraternities and clubs to pack a few shoeboxes. Gifts can be toys such as yo-yos and jacks, school supplies and stuffed animals, she said.

"Once the markers run out, children still have that stuffed animal to hold onto," Peterson said.

Ariana Papa (sophomore-marketing) said programs like this can have a tremendous effect.

"This is essential, because it allows for fortunate people to help others in a time of need," Papa said.

Anyone interested in donating or finding out more information can visit [operationchristmaschild.org](http://operationchristmaschild.org) or [samaritanaspurse.org](http://samaritanaspurse.org).

# Alum vies for Pa. House seat

By Julie Lemanski  
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Richard Shermanski, former president of the Liberal Arts Undergraduate Council and a University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA) representative, graduated in May equipped with degrees in political science and history.

Now, he's decided to run as a Democratic candidate for the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in the 2011 election.

His slogan, "A New Voice For A New Pennsylvania," represents his goal of encouraging more representation from younger generations. And at 23 years old, he says he can relate to college students.

"I really want to give a voice to those who are least represented in the House, those 18 to 27 years, those just starting out or just getting out of college," Shermanski said. "I've always had a drive to be a voice for the masses to get them what they need and deserve."

Shermanski, of Mountain Top, Pa., plans to run as a representative for District 117, which includes Columbia, Luzerne and Wyoming counties. Republican Karen Boback currently holds the position.

Shermanski is focusing his goals on the needs of college students, he said — mainly issues with high tuition and interest rates. He believes it is important to disregard political parties and merge ideas of both Democrats and Republicans.

"This goes beyond party lines, and I take both perspectives," he said. "Pennsylvania is an amazing combination of red and blue. We should look at both ideals, see what works and what doesn't and remove this incredible divide. What matters is what's best for the people, not for the party."

Gavin Keirans, president of UPUA, said Shermanski is suitable for the job.

"He's someone with strong passion and dedication, and I commend him for going for his goal," Keirans (senior-business management) said.

And Sam Loewner, UPUA academic affairs committee chairman, likes the perspective Shermanski has.

"He's developing a youth-oriented campaign, which is something you don't see a lot of in the House," Loewner (senior-political science) said.

Shermanski said he is qualified for the position partially because of his experience with UPUA. He also gained experience interning for House representative David Levdansky, D-Allegheny/Washington, researching bills, managing campaign finances and handling paperwork.

Shermanski hopes his emphasis on the importance of younger generations having representation in the House will eventually become a normal part of politics, he said.

"We need to take positions not when we're 50 or 60," he said. "I want people to start running as soon as they can so there are a variety of voices in there."

# Student organizes first international engineering fair at PSU

By Somer Wiggins  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Adam Trumbour isn't your average engineering student. Although most in his major don't travel abroad, he studied in England and worked in France.

Now he's working to ensure more engineering students will have experiences like his.

Trumbour planned the first international engineering fair in the Hammond Building's Kunkle Lounge, which was held Tuesday

afternoon. Trumbour said he wants students to know how beneficial studying and working abroad is for their personal and career goals.

"I wish more engineering students would be able to share the experience we had," Trumbour (senior-architectural engineering) said.

Colby Cushing said he'd been looking for international opportunities and now he knows he's going to find what he wants.

"Now it's just a matter of what,"

Cushing (junior-aerospace engineering) said.

Posters from various international programs lined the lounge, full of information for engineering students wishing to travel abroad.

Trumbour said the engineering faculty wants engineers to have a more global education.

Thomas Carolus, a professor from Germany now on sabbatical in the U.S., said he recognizes the value of international education.

"I want to do everything I can to get other students abroad,"

Carolus said. Carolus studied abroad at Georgia Tech when he was an undergraduate student and enjoyed it. Now he's hoping Penn State students will be interested in traveling to his university — the University of Siegen in Germany.

Students attending the fair were also treated to an eco-friendly international meal hosted by the Engineers for a Sustainable World (ESW).

"It couples with the whole multi-cultural aspect of what we're try-

ing to do here," Trumbour said.

The international meal will help fund various ESW projects, including a portable solar generator and energy audits for homes in the community, ESW project manager and webmaster Alex Devaux said.

"It's important to raise awareness of sustainability, especially in engineering," Devaux (junior-agricultural and biological engineering) said. "We live on a finite planet with finite resources."

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