

Pell looks to future position in D.C.

The dean of the Graduate School will leave Penn State on Jan. 1 after 36 years in Happy Valley.

By Lexi Belcuffine
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Though Eva Pell couldn't pinpoint a favorite memory from her 36-year tenure at Penn State, she looked to a framed photograph under a window in her Old Main office Wednesday.

The photo was of her last lab group, with Pell sitting in the middle, smiling.

"This is why we're here," said Pell, vice president for research and dean of the Graduate School. "I always told people, 'If I forget, send me back to Buckhout, where I belong.'"

She'll take the photo to Washington, D.C., with her in January, when she becomes the Smithsonian Institution's undersecretary for science.

When Pell came to Penn State in 1973, there were very few women in the College of Agricultural Sciences and none in her department, she said. But Pell said she

fares well as a woman. "If I've made it easier for the next, I'm very pleased," she said. Preparing to leave, Pell said she recognizes many projects she is leaving unfinished — including the Millennium Science Complex. But she wouldn't be leaving if she didn't feel the university wasn't in a good place.

Henry C. "Hank" Foley — who will assume Pell's position Jan. 1 — said he feels more confident following in Pell's footsteps having worked with her before.

"She's left an enormous legacy," Foley said.

Penn State President Graham Spanier also said he recognizes how lucky the Smithsonian is to have Pell.

"Dr. Pell will be considered one of the great leaders and administrators in the history of Penn State," he wrote in an e-mail.

But, he said, there is more to Pell. "She is also one of the most brilliant and decent human beings I know," he wrote.

Pell said she has been offered a tremendous opportunity — and she's more excited than worried. As undersecretary for science, Pell will oversee the National Zoo, as well as

numerous museums and research centers, including the National Air and Space Museum.

Though a federal institution, the Smithsonian shares many similarities with Penn State, Pell said.

When she discusses Penn State, Pell said she draws an equilateral triangle representing research, outreach and education.

"I don't know that it will have the same shape, but these make up the Smithsonian too," she said.

Smithsonian representatives also said they recognize the parallels between the institute and Penn State.

"On the surface they may seem very dissimilar, but their missions are very similar," said John Gibbons, Smithsonian press secretary for science.

Pell said she doesn't know where she'll be in another ten years — and doesn't care to think about it. For now, she's just excited to explore the nation's capital with her grandchildren.

"I never think about next steps," she said. "I want to love what I'm doing, and the future will take care of itself."



Courtesy of Fredric Weber

Eva Pell, vice president for research and dean of the Graduate School, will become the Smithsonian Institution's undersecretary for science on Jan. 1.

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Students plan to throw rave in HUB for finals

By Alaina Gallagher
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

A group of Penn State students planning to throw a rave in the HUB-Robeson Center on Saturday night as a way to relieve stress before finals next week might meet some resistance from university officials.

Organized entirely through Facebook, the rave is planned to begin sometime between 10 p.m. and midnight Saturday but currently has no official affiliation with the university or HUB personnel.

The Facebook group has more than 2,000 members.

Organizers were inspired by similar events at other universities to hold the alcohol-free event.

"We're modeling it after the [James Madison University] rave in their library," event organizer Blaize Linette said.

But university officials say this planned event is in conflict with a current finals week policy.

"I am not sure if it can happen," said John Harlow, assistant director of student activities.

Students have to reserve space through the university to hold events at the HUB, he said.

The university does not allow student organizations to hold activities during finals, not only at the HUB but also in residence halls, he said.

The policy states that "student organizations may not schedule any activities from 5 p.m. on the last day of class until the end of finals week," event planner staff assistant Becky Miller said.

As long as nothing of a criminal nature occurs, the University Police would not be involved, Sgt. Fran McClellan said.

"I am thinking no cost or anything like that ... the whole point of it is to blow off steam."

Wesley Paul Evens
junior-chemistry

If the students violate university policy, however, the Office of Judicial Affairs would be involved.

The rave will take place in a flash-mob style, in which a group of people get together and do something for a short amount of time, Wesley Paul Evens (junior-chemistry) said.

Organizers plan on playing electronic music like Girl Talk and Justice, he said.

"I am thinking no cost or anything like that," Evens said. "The whole point of it is to blow off steam before finals."

With the large amount of people currently in the Facebook group, organizers are planning on utilizing all of the HUB's central areas to accommodate everyone.

"We want to encompass the entire HUB," Linette (sophomore-political science and crime, law and justice) said.

Despite the popular response among students, several HUB officials said they had no knowledge of the rave set for Saturday.

"While the main goal of the rave is for people to have a stress-free and fun night, safety is paramount and no one wants things to get out of hand," Linette said.

"We're trying to create a spontaneous rave party, not a finals-hating mob."

Careers

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counseling and planning services decreased by about 800 students between the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years, from 9,765 students to 8,961. Of the three career fairs held in the spring 2008 and spring 2009 semesters, nearly 400 fewer resume-toting students made an appearance.

Getting a Clue

But the most significant figure can't be blamed on student lethargy: The number of organizations that participated in campus recruiting between the '06-'07 and '08-'09 school years plummeted from 1,108 to a meager 412.

"We don't turn any employer away," Rayman said of those organizations that want to recruit on campus. It is the students, he said, who have turned their backs on Career Services when they should be using it most.

"We don't really know what's going on," Rayman said. "It's down and that seems counterintuitive."

Rayman believes a few factors may be discouraging students from taking advantage of Career Services. The media, he said, promotes an atmosphere of hopelessness and despair. And many in the current generation of college students have never known financial hardship until recently, he said — as many Penn State students come from a higher socioeconomic background.

A Trivial Pursuit?

But even those students who do utilize Career Services are not guaranteed an obstacle-free path to employment. Linda Eilola, who will graduate this month, said while Career Services was helpful when she wanted résumé advice, what followed was beyond her control.

Eilola, who is applying to law school, had a job lined up with a human resources company

where she had previously interned. She was planning on working there until starting law school, but the company recently downsized, forcing her to look for other employment.

"It's very disappointing and it does make me nervous about finding another job," Eilola (senior-crime, law and justice and psychology) said. "It's nice to know they would have held on to me, though."

The amount of instability in the job market has led many students to consider other opportunities aside from employment after graduation. With 30 percent of 2009 Penn State graduates continuing their education and many others taking less traditional avenues — such as the Peace Corps or AmeriCorps — it has become difficult for students to concentrate their interests into one goal.

After graduating from University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill with a degree in international studies, Kristal Jones joined the Peace Corps and went to Senegal for two years after being disappointed with entry-level jobs. She said the time away gave her an opportunity to reevaluate what she wanted and led to her decision to attend graduate school at Penn State.

"Dealing with the financial realities is maybe the hardest part," Jones (graduate-world sociology) said. "There wasn't the luxury to wait for the perfect thing to come along. It's like you're either unemployed or you've got to find three [entry-level jobs]."

Chutes and Ladders

As if the human psyche isn't fragile enough with the regular stresses and pressures of daily life, experts say the job hunt and climbing the corporate ladder can take a toll on even the most optimistic young people.

"There's always the potential for burnout when you're starting out," said Sam Hunter, an associ-

ate professor of industrial organizational psychology at Penn State. "When you first start out, you want to impress everybody that you can. It's a tough thing to sustain over the long haul."

Fortunately, Penn State graduates get some help. All university graduates receive a free one-year membership to Penn State's Alumni Association, allowing them to use tools such as LionLink, a web-based system that connects students and alumni to other Penn State graduates who are looking to exchange stories, contact information and advice with job seekers.

Other services include Webinars, résumé assistance and various networking programs, staff said. With an alumni base as large as Penn State's, it's a powerful tool.

"Alumni come back for different reasons," said Cheryl Bonner, Penn State's director of Alumni Career Services. "We want to help them market themselves for the current climate."

Though many students hope to leave college with that seemingly unattainable dream job, some just want to leave — and maybe never return.

Eric Reese will graduate this month and said he has no intention of job searching. After saving money, Reese plans on touring South America, working as he needs to and moving on.

"The way schools are set up, they exude a lot of pressure," Reese (senior-business) said. "You need to brush that off and do what you want."

While the senior class may one day be spread throughout the state of Pennsylvania, South America or anywhere else in the world, Career Services has no immediate travel plans.

"Our alumni are not going to be able to play fairy godmother, but they will provide them with some of the inside information to help set them apart," Bonner said.

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