

GOVERNMENT GRADS



Christina Reckner, Collegian

On Dec. 18, eight associate degrees, 2,386 baccalaureate degrees and 691 graduate degrees were awarded to University Park students. Penn State President Graham Spanier presided over the three commencement ceremonies. More than 4,000 students graduated from Penn State campuses in December.

New networking site to launch

By Chris Bickel
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Site features

Facebook's replacement may be on the horizon, and the site's creator is using Penn State as its testing ground.

INeedCollege.com takes features of popular Web sites such as Facebook, FMyLife and Yahoo! Answers and combines them, said site owner Dave Landskroner, who began working on the site last summer.

The site's premise revolves around social networking, communal blogging and interaction between students and alumni. Each profile page is geared toward a specific college or area and the information the user wants to see.

"It's like a one-stop shop," said Landskroner, a graduate of the University of Delaware. "That's something a lot of sites don't offer."

Penn State was one of the first places where Landskroner and his team thought to spread word of the site's features. Facebook started the same way — targeting bigger universities at first — and Landskroner thinks Penn State could become the flagship college.

"I figure that with Penn State — every time I go there I have a good time," he said. "Everything is done so big and bold. We didn't have any of the crap like the Homecoming parade and such at Delaware."

The site's graphical layout was created by 2008 White Out T-shirt designer David Weissman.

Weissman (senior-landscape architecture) said he thinks the site's wealth of information will set it apart from others.

- Blogging
- "Hot Spots" in user's area
- Stories and videos
- Q&A section similar to Yahoo! Answers
- Forum to "let it all out"
- Hottest students at colleges

Source: Mike Payne, Penn State's representative for INeedCollege.com

"It's useful social networking without all the junk attached to it," he said. "I know the site will be a success because of all the various networking tools it encompasses."

Alumni can also use the site as a tool to find other alumni hotspots in neighboring cities, Weissman said.

Student Mike Payne, who is helping to launch the site, said he expects the greek community will help word-of-mouth for the site to "spread like wildfire." As the Penn State representative for INeedCollege, Payne (senior-crime, law and justice) has been coordinating letter campaigns to advertise the site, as well as speaking with local businesses about possible sponsorships. He did not comment on which businesses he's speaking with.

Even if the Web site doesn't become the next big thing, Landskroner said he will be satisfied as long as users find it useful.

"If I don't make money off of it, I don't make money off of it," he said. "I just want a place people can laugh and enjoy."

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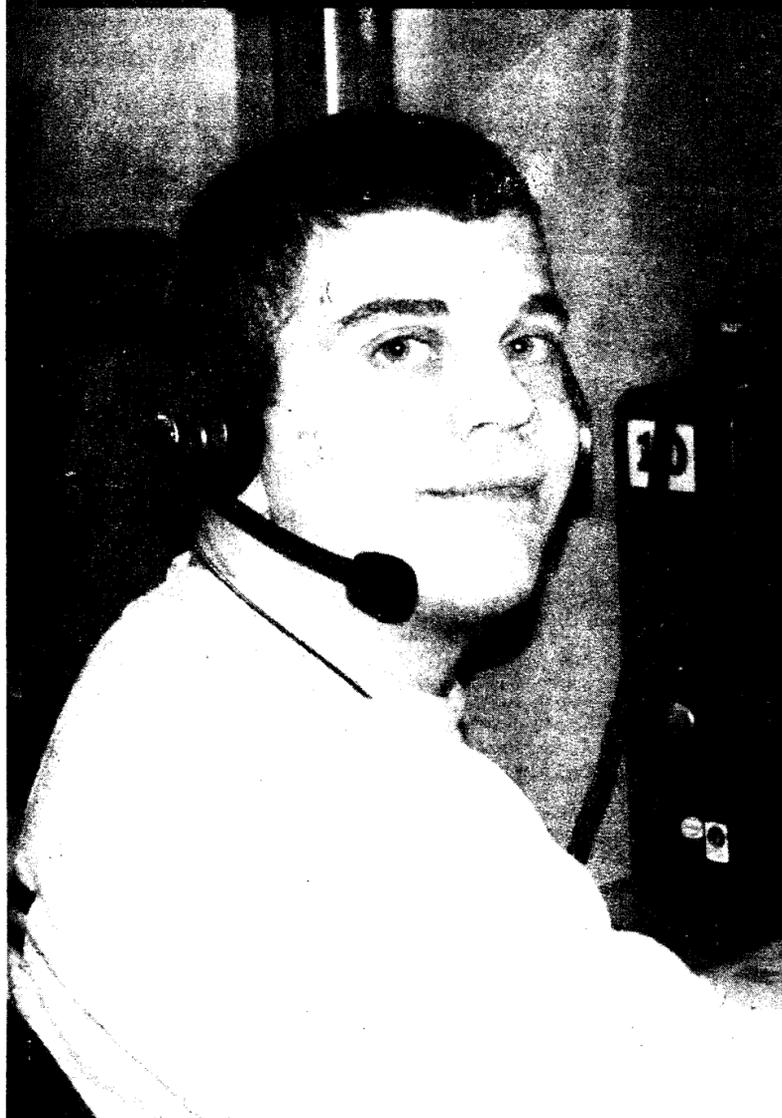
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