

UPUA passes loop budget, discusses safety plans

By Casey McDermott
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Student government leaders wasted no time at the first University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA) meeting of the semester, passing four resolutions and discussing a handful of additional initiatives for the coming weeks.

In his opening remarks, UPUA President Gavin Keirans (senior-business management) noted that the organization "has a laundry list of things to get accomplished ... and not much time."

Members voted unanimously to approve the use of \$11,040 of the organization's budget for the trial White Loop extension, the step

necessary to finalize the implementation of the late-night bus service and ensure that it would have the finances necessary to begin operation. The trial extension will allow the White Loop to run until 4:30 a.m. on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Additionally, members discussed plans for the use of Student Ambassadors on the bus service, with Keirans assuring members that the role of these positions — initially filled by UPUA members, but eventually intended to incorporate leaders from other campus organizations — is not to police behavior but to field questions and offer more information about the late-night route.

The other pieces of legislation

brought to the floor were also passed with a unanimous vote.

One of these, a safety initiative fueled by Student Life and Diversity Chair Christian Ragland (junior-political science) aimed to complement the efforts to improve student safety seen in the White Loop extension.

Ragland and his committee, in conjunction with the Association of Residence Hall Students (ARSH), developed plans to distribute business cards to students containing useful transportation information — including bus times, taxi numbers and other important resources.

Also from the Student Life and Diversity Committee, the resolution to allocate funds for UPUA's

initiatives surrounding the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday was passed. The initiatives will include passing out wristbands and enacting a large commemorative banner for students to sign.

Another resolution included plans to establish an Academic Leadership Award, an idea borne from Academic Affairs Chairman Samuel Loewner (senior-political science) and his committee.

According to the resolution, this award is aimed towards "students that have embodied the cause of improving student life and enhancing the academic experience of their fellow University Park undergraduates." Upcoming events discussed included the Association of Big Ten Students

conference this Friday, an open house for UPUA's downtown office next week and a UPUA Town Hall meeting set for later this month.

This semester also marks Keirans' last as president of the organization. He expressed his hopes that with only about three months remaining before elections, the organization could end this term on a high note.

"At the end of last semester I talked about the need to reach goals and accomplish things this semester," Keirans said. "Hopefully at the end we'll be able to look back with a large series of accomplishments and be proud of how this assembly worked."

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Arts group discusses upcoming semester

By Nick Weingartner
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

As new and old members began to gather in the lobby of the Thomas Building for this semester's first Students Organizing the Multiple Arts (SOMA) meeting a slight, awkward tension arose.

The new members began that wait talking only to their friends, crossing their arms and texting — but before long, the wall started to melt and the shaking of hands started as a strong buzz of conversation rose from the silence.

In the mist of the dull roar, SOMA President Danny Michelson announced the meeting's start and members followed him into 120 Thomas.

"Our name is SOMA — Students Organizing the Multiple Arts," Michelson said. "What we do is we organize, multiple arts."

Upcoming events for the semester, which included mix CD exchanging, monthly open mic nights — the first of which will include a date auction to benefit the group — and the groups annual Arts Crawl, were among the items discussed at the meeting.

"I think it's going to be leaps and bounds of what it's been the last few years," SOMA member Devan Kochersperger (sophomore-history) said. "It's gotten bigger every year."

The group plans to incorporate more than just visual arts and music this year, and branch into fashion design as well, Kochersperger said.

But, as a senior, one of the most exciting things is to see new members, Michelson said.

The group also touched on its upcoming We Are Scientists show, which will be held at 7 p.m. Jan. 22 in the HUB-Robeson Center. The group asked members to volunteer to help staff the show, Michelson said, adding that volunteers might even get to meet the band. SOMA's Five Guys fundraiser, which will be held from 5 to 8 tonight, was also discussed. The group will get a percentage of the profits made at the event.

"The point of these fundraisers is to keep these events free," Michelson said. "These are really helpful."

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WORKIN' ON MY FITNESS



Marissa Guthrie, Collegian

A student runs at Rec Hall on Monday. There has been a high volume of students running inside due to the cold weather and New Year's resolutions. Director of Penn State Strength and Fitness Chip Harrison said gym attendance increases about 10 to 15 percent from the fall to the spring semester.

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Approval for conducting this study in human subjects has been granted by the Penn State University Institutional Review Board. This study, under the direction of Dr. Mary Jane De Souza and Nancy I. Williams, Noll Laboratory and the Department of Kinesiology, will take place in The Women's Health and Exercise Laboratory and General Clinical Research Center on the campus of Penn State University, University Park, PA.

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