

# G.I.s to benefit from bill

## Veteran students could see changes

By Brendan McNally  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Penn State officials and students said a bill moving through Congress that would expand scholarship money for student veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan would give veteran students at Penn State the benefits they deserve.

The bill, Senate Bill 3447, was passed by the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Thursday and is on its way to the full Senate for a vote.

That vote has not yet been scheduled. The law would expand the number of veterans eligible for scholarship money under the post-9/11 "G.I. Bill" — a program meant to provide educational benefits for returning veterans — and would broaden the number of career paths they could take under the program.

"I think it's a positive," said Brian Clark, director of the Penn State Office of Veterans Programs. "It's going to allow for students to be able to pursue a greater range of academic opportunities."

The bill would allow veterans to

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Brian Clark  
Penn State Office of Veterans Programs

take classes at institutions other than accredited universities, which Clark said would open up new educational opportunities for veterans, like vocational or professional schools.

Clark said about 2,500 Penn State students are veterans. But only students who have served in the military post-9/11 would be eligible for the benefits included in the bill, he said.

About 80 percent of the Pennsylvania National Guard has been activated for duty in Iraq or Afghanistan, Clark said, and the majority of those guardsmen will be eligible for some benefits under the post-9/11 G.I. Bill.

Clark said veterans must serve three years of active duty to receive the full benefits under the law. John Hench, Class of 2010, is an Iraq War veteran and said any expansion of veterans' benefits is a step in the right direction.

"If someone's willing to give that much for the country, it's definitely nice when the country turns around and gives you that favor back," Hench said.

Hench said it would be an extra benefit under the bill if veterans could get training outside of universities in careers as electricians or pilots.

"There are career paths that you can take that aren't necessarily through college," he said.

The bill would also allow veterans to transfer their benefits to other family members and allow the veterans to spend tuition money on distance learning, according to the bill's text. Sen. Daniel Akaka, D-Hawaii, sponsored the bill.

His office did not return calls for comment by press time Tuesday.

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Collegian file photo

A student applies pressure to his arm after donating blood.

# Blood drive will take place in BJC

By Matt Cali  
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

For people used to seeing sporting events at the Bryce Jordan Center, today might be a change of pace.

Today's Leap for Life blood drive is the result of a team up between the American Red Cross and the Forever Broadcasting Company, the operators of the Froggy 98 and Froggy 101 radio stations, according to the event's press release.

Blood inventories reach an annual low during the summer and need replenishing to keep up with demands, said Wendi Keeler, the donor resources field representative for Penn State.

"It's really difficult to keep our blood inventories up in the summer," Keeler said.

About 30 percent of donated blood comes from high school and college donors, but during the summer those two groups are typically not in session, Keeler said.

Blood is being taken for the Greater Alleghenies Region, which extends from Kentucky and Virginia up to Pennsylvania, according to the Leap for Life press release.

Everyone who donates will be entered into a donor appreciation drawing to win prizes, Keeler said. Prizes include tickets to upcoming shows at the BJC and magazines, photographs and CDs signed by various country music artists. Gift cards will also be given away as prizes.

Although all types of blood are needed, there is a critical need for

blood types A negative, B negative and O negative, Keeler said.

Donors must be at least 17 years old, in good health and weigh more than 110 pounds to be eligible.

"About 50 percent of our nation is eligible to donate," said Keeler. "But only 5 percent do."

Those with questions about eligibility should visit [redcross-blood.org](http://redcross-blood.org), Keeler said.

Keeler recommends all prospective donors eat well and drink plenty of fluids before donating. "If you're well hydrated and have eaten well, it makes the donation go much better," Keeler said.

The goal for the drive is about 45 productive units of blood, said Marianne Spampinato, regional communications manager for the Red Cross.

"We normally have to get at least 10 or 20 percent above the goal," Spampinato said. About 13 to 14 percent of people will be unable to donate due to various, mostly temporary, reasons. Flu and cold symptoms are a common reason for being unable to donate, said Spampinato.

The drive is set to begin today at the BJC from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Gate B.

### If you go

**What:** Leap for Life blood drive  
**When:** today, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
**Where:** Gate B BJC  
**Details:** walk-ins welcome

# Diversity plan stays the same

## Council opts not to expand HR commission

By Casey McDermott  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

The State College Borough Council's Human Relations Commission has gone three years without receiving any complaints of discrimination, and council members at Monday night's meeting opted not to expand the commission's role to address issues of diversity in other ways.



Dumas

The borough council established the Human Relations Commission in 2007 as part of its Anti-Discrimination Ordinance. Borough Manager Tom Fountaine said. The commission's director, Penn State professor Charles Dumas, told council he would like to expand the commission to include opportunities for discussions on diversity and meetings with the public.

Council member Don Hahn said the borough was reluctant to expand the commission's role because it might detract from its original purpose.

"We were concerned about the perceived objectivity of a commis-

"... that does not mean that discrimination has not occurred — it just means the cases have not been filed either way."

Tom Fountaine  
State College Borough Manager

sion that is charged with adjudicating a violation of the ordinance also taking a more proactive role in terms of trying to find cases of discrimination," Hahn said.

According to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) Annual Report for 2007-2008, Centre County had 25 filed cases of discrimination during that year — 23 employment-related claims, 1 education-related claim and 1 housing-related claim. That report was the most recent one on file on the PHRC website, and the report did not specify whether any of the claims were filed within the State College Borough.

Though the State College Anti-Discrimination Ordinance includes provisions for discrimination based on a range of factors, the legislation specifically aimed to include sexual orientation and gender expression among protected classes, Fountaine said, as neither are covered in state laws.

"Generally, there have not been a large number of cases," Fountaine said. "But that does not mean that discrimination has not occurred — it just means that the cases have not been filed either way." Hahn also said some instances of discrimination probably go unreported, and if they are reported it's usually with a higher level of government. "Certainly the state commission probably has broader jurisdiction, as well as broader enforcement powers than our local board," he said.

A meeting will be organized to discuss some of the concerns Dumas voiced regarding the commission, Hahn said.

Fountaine said the borough will also try to better coordinate its efforts with other groups in the area like the Centre County Advisory Committee to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission and the Community Diversity Group.

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# Penn Stater sees presentations at National Autism Conference

By Mike Hricik  
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

The Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel held its annual National Autism Conference last week, a showcase for autism professionals to learn about current research and earn continuing education credits.

During the week, more than 2,000 conference participants attended more than 100 presentations, Penn State Outreach Conference Planner Katie Friedman said.

"The aim is to get the latest evidence-based information to educators, providers and families so that those people can effectively

educate their students and children," Friedman said.

Presentations on the spectrum of autism disorders were introduced from 9 a.m. until 4:15 p.m. with exhibits on display throughout the day. Presenters were selected by the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN). Topics ranged from girls growing up with autism to sex education for autistic children, Friedman said.

Dr. Janet Graetz, assistant professor of human development and child studies at Oakland University in Michigan, presented a session on her study that followed 19 college students with Asperger's syndrome.

Graetz found that students living with Asperger's exercised less, had high anxiety levels and failed to take advantage of campus disability resources as the school year went on. She stressed the importance of teaching independence in high school to students with disorders like Asperger's syndrome.

"Students in high school must be taught self-advocacy," Graetz said.

"The best thing you can do for your student who is younger is to teach them about self-advocacy."

Graetz said she enjoyed learning about what Pennsylvania schools are doing to improve the

educational experiences of students with autism.

This year's keynote speakers were both autistic, Friedman said.

The opening speaker, Brian Adams, discovered he was autistic when his son was diagnosed with the same disease.

The closing speaker, Deborah Lipsky, delivered a humorous speech intended to motivate with her stories from her life, Friedman said.

Sessions offered could be used for four types of continuing education credit. Participants paid a fee to earn these credits from the Penn State College of Education, Friedman said, and people interested in gaining credit from a dis-

tribution were able to do so online.

The Penn Stater offered Children's Institute daycare services to about 100 children attending the conference, both autistic and not. A play was performed by the older children for the younger ones on Thursday, Friedman said.

Some speakers were taped for live webcasts from the Penn Stater. Viewers had to pay a fee to receive credit for watching, but the webcasts are free for others. Some school districts played the videos for staff members for continuing education credit, Friedman said.

"If people can watch [the webcasts] at home in their pajamas, then great," Friedman said.

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