

# OPINION

THE DAILY  
Collegian

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## Letters

We want to hear your comments on our coverage, editorial decisions and the Penn State community.

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Letters should be about 200 words. Student letters should include class year, major and campus. Letters from alumni should include year of graduation. All writers should provide their address and phone number for verification. Letters should be signed by no more than two people. Members of organizations must include their titles if the topic they write about is connected with the aim of their groups. The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters. The Collegian cannot guarantee publication of all letters it receives. Letters chosen also run on The Daily Collegian Online and may be selected for publication in The Weekly Collegian. All letters become property of Collegian Inc.

EDITORIAL: PSU 5 YEAR

## Long-term plan lacks details

Penn State recently announced the implementation of its long-term plan to increase the university's educational standards and fiscal policies. The five-year plan will be fully activated by 2013, and gives the university a standard for the future.

Though it's great that the university is looking ahead, the administration needs to make sure the plan has specific goals and a concise way to measure progress.

Transparency and accessibility must also be provided to students and their parents.

Spokespeople for the university said the plan will address concrete issues, reduce the cost of health care benefits and provide new technological

resources to students. Other goals like "enhancing diversity" and "serving the people of the commonwealth" must be expanded upon by the university.

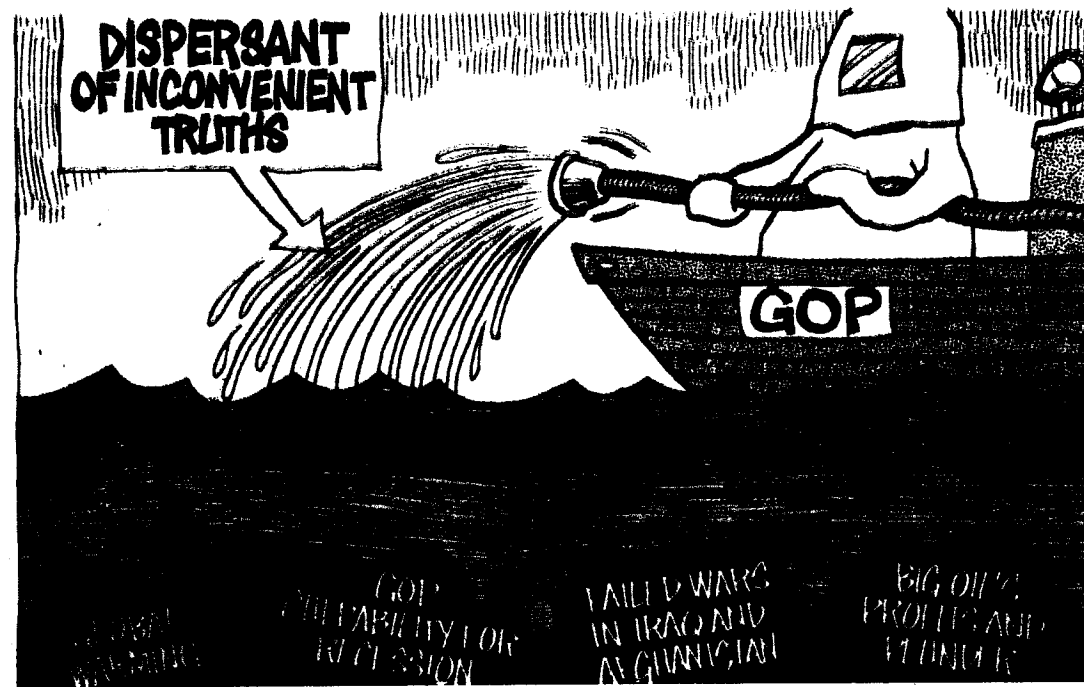
There needs to be specific goals with specific numbers and attainable milestones with tangible results.

Funding for the plan will come from Penn State, and will be aided by private donations. The university stressed that there will be no added financial pressure on students, and we expect them to live up to this through all stages of the plan's implementation. Penn State tuition is already expensive enough, and combating that with things like scholarships should be a main priority

when outside funding is concerned. When anything with funds are involved, especially when it comes to plans that involve students and their education, the administration must make the operation as transparent as possible.

Literature, updates and plans must be available to students for them to review and make sure all funds are being used properly and efficiently. Accessibility is key to keeping track of money and the progress made.

The five-year plan has the potential to make Penn State more financially stable in the long term, but only if the administration goes about it through the correct channels.



COLUMBIAN

## Mosque opponents are misguided

By Michael Oplinger

**A**MERICAN flags decorated porches across the country. Spectators at high school football games actually sung the words to the national anthem. Chants of "U-S-A! U-S-A!" normally reserved for Olympic years became popular. Lee Greenwood's "Proud to Be an American" seemed to be the most played song on the radio.

Such was America in the highly patriotic period after terrorists with a perverted reading of the Quran cowardly took the lives and freedoms of more than 3,000 Americans on Sept. 11, 2001.

In an address to Congress following the attacks on the World Trade Center, President George W. Bush urged Americans to continue on with their daily routine. He said al Qaeda was jealous of our freedoms. If we abridged our freedoms in any way as a result of the attacks, the terrorists would win the battle. "We are in a fight for our principles, and our first responsibility is to live by them," Bush said in the same speech. "No one should be singled out for unfair treatment or unkind words because of their ethnic background or religious faith."

Yet nine years later, those wise words seem to have been forgotten by the people protesting the proposed Islamic community center two blocks from the former site of the World Trade Center.

A government prohibition of the mislabeled "Ground Zero Mosque" violates rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

Ironic, considering the United States military fights in Afghanistan and Iraq for the rights of the predominantly Muslim population, yet the rights of Muslims on our own soil are being threatened.

The Islamic community center is being attacked because it is just that — Islamic. Should a YMCA be proposed at that location, no one would protest.

Since the terrorist attacks on 9/11, Muslims have been unfairly grouped together as militants or extremists.

But al Qaeda is called extremist because its message and mission varies greatly from mainstream Islam. The terrorists who attacked the World Trade Center that fateful day share the same religion as other Muslims in name only.

The Muslims who want to build the community center are not the same as al Qaeda, just like most Christians aren't the same as the radical Christians who attack abortion clinics.

Most national opinion polls show an overwhelming disapproval of the community center. However, democracy takes a back seat in issues of Constitutional rights. The Constitution exists for this very reason — to protect the rights of the minority against the tyranny of the majority.

While the community center might offend the families of victims, America's beauty rests in the rights to utter words or perform actions that some may consider distasteful.

The same rights enable anti-war activists to hold protests

even if they offend military families or allow anti-abortion activists to display pictures of aborted fetuses to the dismay of passersby.

The victims of the terrorist attacks must be viewed as martyrs for these freedoms. While tragic and unnecessary, their deaths were the result of the actions of a radical group envious of this country's liberties, including the freedom of religion and free market system.

The proposed Islamic community center's proximity to Ground Zero tops the list of reasons why it's offensive to the memories of the victims.

But government opposition based on location starts a journey down a slippery slope of institutional religious intolerance.

Many across the country lost loved ones on Sept. 11 and have an emotional attachment to this issue, but prohibiting the community center to be built in New York City based on its potential to offend could become a precedent for the prevention of Muslim structures across the country.

The Constitution and its inherent rights apply everywhere and to everyone. The right of religious groups to build places of worship or community centers cannot be determined on a locational basis.

Should the Islamic community center be forced to change locations, ignoring the very rights that make this country special, then the terrorists will have truly won.

Michael Oplinger is a senior majoring in media studies and is the Collegian's Tuesday columnist. His e-mail is mjo5071@psu.edu

LETTERS

## IFC president right in voicing his concerns with THON issue

Max Wendkos is right in bringing up the discussion about the leadership of THON. I fully support THON, the great accomplishment that is THON and how we are able to support families and children with pediatric cancer. It's becoming more apparent that THON wishes to eliminate greek influence altogether, so why not just take Interfraternity Council/Panhellenic Dance off the title of THON? Because they'll lose the hefty amount of fundraising from greeks.

Face it, greeks created THON, nurtured THON to what it is today, and support it more than any other collective organization. Hiding behind the "For the Kids" battle cry is really becoming comedic. In the interest of the children battling cancer, THON needs to embrace its greek association and build a stronger unity, that is what you do "For the Kids."

Stefan Choquette  
junior - integrative arts

## No White House home game is bad administrative choice

Those of you not here for the summer may have missed the administration's announcement that there would not be a White House game declared because the home stand games didn't warrant it. Forget for a minute that we are likely to start a freshman quarterback, the fact that the head coach appears to be inches from death and the fact that we are ranked pre-season anywhere from No. 7 (are you kidding?) to No. 19.

This is typical of the administration's conduct of the athletic program (especially where pricing is concerned). Incredibly, The Daily Collegian agreed with the administration.

White House games have become a great tradition. I hope the student body chooses to declare one of our games as a White House. Illinois, being Homecoming, would be a great choice.

Joseph C. Korsak  
Class of 1971

## Dining services must halt use of battery-cage eggs in halls

The recall of over half a billion battery-cage eggs due to salmonella contamination highlights the need for Penn State Dining Services to switch to cage-free eggs in its campus dining halls.

While not one of the eggs recalled so far had been shipped to Pennsylvania, the incident should be a reminder that battery-cage eggs — the kind served to students at Penn State — pose a dramatically higher risk of salmonella contamination than cage-free eggs.

More than 5,000 Penn State students, faculty and alumni have already signed a petition calling on the school to go cage-free, with several students noting that they have experienced food poisoning or other sickness after eating eggs in campus dining halls.

Seeing as how the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that more than 120,000 Americans get salmonella poisoning each year from battery-cage eggs, it's not only a possibility, but a statistical certainty that each year Penn State students are being needlessly sickened by Dining Services' battery cage eggs — just so Dining can save a few pennies per egg.

Nick Cooney  
Director of The Humane League, Philadelphia

## blog lines

### CAN YOU DIG IT?

#### Lions preseason favorites

There may be several new faces on the Penn State women's volleyball team, but it's starting the season as a big target for the rest of the nation.

The Nittany Lions were announced as the No. 1 team in the preseason AVCA Division I Coaches Top 25 Poll, as Russ Rose's squad received 40 of the 60 first-place votes.

Penn State finished the 2009 season as the top-ranked team en route to its third consecutive national championship. The Lions currently have a 102-match win streak...

Ryan Loy  
Women's Volleyball reporter

### FOOTBLOG

#### Team misses injured players

Senior center Doug Klopacz has a season-ending injury, a team source said Friday. The injury does not appear serious and Klopacz should return to practice soon, the source added. In Klopacz's absence, redshirt sophomore Matt Stankiewicz has been taking reps at center. All-Conference offensive lineman Stefan Wisniewski remains at right guard after he moved there from center during the offseason.

The source also said fullback Mike Zordich suffered a knee injury that could keep him out a couple of days but not an extended period of time. The source added Zordich has looked "great" so far in practices. Zordich missed April's Blue-White game after being cited for underage drinking...

Andrew J. Cassavell  
Football reporter

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