

PAKISTAN

# Students fundraise for relief

By Eddie Lau  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

While millions of Pakistan's flood victims celebrated Eid al-Fitr — the end of the holy month of Ramadan — at relief camps on Saturday, Pakistani students at Penn State are doing their part to contribute.

To help the flood victims, Yasar Awan, president of the Pakistani Student Association, said a fundraising dinner will be held at 6 p.m. Saturday in the Paul Robeson Cultural Center's Heritage Hall.

Awan (senior-science) said tickets will be sold on the ground floor of the HUB-Robeson Center from Monday to Friday for \$15.

Awan said the funds raised from the dinner will be donated to UNICEF, a United Nations organization that works to help children and provide disaster relief.

Izzah Khan (freshman-English and public relations) said she witnessed how the flood damaged a large part of her country. When the flood hit the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa an area of north-west Pakistan, she was in Karachi, the southern region of the country, visiting her relatives.

Though her home in Karachi was not affected by the floods,



Aaron Favila/Associated Press

**A Pakistani girl reacts as another cuts the line while waiting for food distribution at a camp in Pakistan. The Pakistani Student Association is hosting a dinner on Saturday to raise money for flood victims.**

Khan said she saw many students traveling around Pakistan to fundraise and deliver food donations in the wake of the disaster.

Khan said because of the flood, a lot of Pakistanis were not interested in celebrating the most important festival in the Islamic calendar — Eid al-Fitr. She said the festival is near equivalent to Christmas in the United States in terms of importance.

"A lot of people lost their homes — water is everywhere," Khan said. "It is not a situation to celebrate Eid."

The Pakistani government also urged its citizens to avoid festivities at Eid and to celebrate it with simplicity, according to a press release issued Friday.

In a typical year Pakistanis would have started the morning with Eid prayer, Khan said, and then enjoyed the rest of the day with their relatives and friends.

But in the aftermath of the floods, no one is in much of a mood to celebrate, Khan said.

"This year's Eid festival is being celebrated on such a moment of history, when a large part of country is under the devastation caused by pre-Ramadan floods," Pakistan's Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani said in a speech to his country.

Khan said those who choose not to attend the dinner can still help by donating money to help the flood victims.

"You went to a football game for \$75 — you can definitely give \$10 to save a life," she said.

The worst floods in Pakistan's history began in late July after a monsoon struck and swamped one-fifth of the country. The monsoon killed more than 1,700 people and left more than two million homeless, according to the latest U.N. report.

Pakistan's disaster officials have said the death toll is likely to rise "significantly" when the missing are accounted for.

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# Alumni to host gala in NYC for THON

By Vera Greene  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Penn State quarterbacks coach Jay Paterno will travel to New York City in January to be the master of ceremonies at a THON benefit.

For the third year in a row, a group of newly graduated Penn State students will host the THON Hope Gala in New York City

at the Capitale banquet venue, with proceeds benefiting the Interfraternity Council/Panhellenic Dance Marathon.

During the past few weeks, Hope Gala organizers have given clues to Penn Staters in the NYC area at local bars and via Facebook about who the emcee is this year.

Hailey Apter, Class of 2007 and communications chairwoman for the fundraiser, said the gala started out as four people active in THON during college getting together after they graduated so they could stay involved with the organization.

"Last year the emcee was football player LaVar Arrington," Apter said. "We're really excited for Jay Paterno to come."

Since there is a large alumni network in the Big Apple, Tina Clabbers, Class of 2008, said the

Hope Gala is beneficial because it taps into a big alumni resource that was virtually untouched before the gala was created three years ago.

Apter, who was a public relations captain and danced her senior year at Penn State, said the event is a continued success, attracting between 250 and 300 attendees each year.

"Last year we made over \$25,000," Apter said. "We're hoping to top it this year."

The gala consists of a silent auction, a cocktail hour and a three-course sit down dinner during which a featured THON family speaks. Kicking off the evening, the silent auction has been known to include items such as signed Penn State athletic memorabilia, VIP tickets to the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade and tickets to fly out to Los Angeles and see comedian Chelsea Handler.

Clabbers, another communications chairwoman, said the event has had mostly young attendees in past years, but this year, organizers are trying to gear the invitations toward more prominent alumni within the city.

"We want to spread the word to the older crowd," Clabber said. "So next year, they will already know of this event and already have it budgeted and put into their schedule."

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# Commons focused on technology to be built in Pattee

By Matt Scorzafave  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

A new Knowledge Commons that will provide students with a number of technology services is currently under construction in Pattee Library — a major renovation that will be available for students by the next academic year.

"We had wanted to do it for a long time since a number of major research universities have instituted similar spaces," said Daniel Mack, the Tombros librarian for classics and ancient Mediterranean studies and head of the arts and humanities library.

The new space will definitely

come in handy to students who use technology in their work, Mack said.

The Knowledge Commons will feature a number of resources for students, including video production areas, podcasting facilities, service kiosks, study areas and integrated help desk areas.

University Libraries began construction on the project last spring, and Mack said the project will be completed by 2011.

Catherine Grigor, manager of public relations and marketing for University Libraries, said the project has been coming in stages.

Initially, the maps library was moved from Pattee Library to

Paterno Library, Grigor said. The Foster Auditorium was also moved from Pattee Library to Paterno Library, with the original auditorium becoming a new reading room, Mack said.

Grigor said a public website with the Knowledge Commons' design will launch this week.

Mack said the project was set into motion after a \$2.5 million joint donation by Anne and Peter G. Tombros and Jean and John R. McWhirter last February.

"We're able to do things like this from amazing alumni. Without them, we wouldn't even consider a project like this," he said.

Though the project had been an

idea for quite some time, Grigor said the project really got underway after the donation. "Unless you have money, you cannot move forward. The money has to be in place to get approval," she said.

Anne Tombros and Jean McWhirter have been longtime friends and members of the Libraries Development Board. As a result, they've become familiar with the libraries' aspirations, Grigor said.

For the past two or three years, library officials have continued to benchmark what other university libraries were doing and how they could mimic that success, Grigor said.

The new technology that will be incorporated into the library comes as no surprise to many students who spend most of their studying time on the computer.

"I use computers way more than I use books. I'll definitely be more willing to use the library than I do now," Wendy Kaufman (freshman-graphic design) said.

Mack said the reason behind of the project is to really focus on the students.

"People think libraries are dead. They're not," he said. "It's all about the resources that are available to students."

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# PSU receives research grant

By Brendan McNally  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Penn State recently received \$3.6 million from the U.S. Department of State to research security enhancements that will be used in U.S. embassies and other government facilities abroad.

The Penn State's Thomas D. Larson Transportation Institute will use the funds to study anti-ram barriers, specially designed gates meant to stop vehicles traveling at high speeds, which could be a security threat, said Zoltan Rado, director of the Penn State Crash Safety Research Facility.

The College of Engineering will collaborate with the College of Information Sciences and Technology to evaluate security risks for different government buildings and to determine what security measures will provide the most effective protection, said Daniel Linnell, director of the Penn State Protective Technology Center.

Part of the research will be dedicated toward designing aesthetically pleasing and unobtrusive anti-ram barriers that will still provide adequate protection for U.S. personnel and buildings, Rado said.

"The intention of the work we are doing is not only to protect our interests and people, but to do it in a way that is as palatable as possible," Linnell said.

Rado said the U.S. doesn't want the bar-

riers to the U.S. embassy in Paris, for example, to look like a fortress, whereas barriers might be designed to be appear more obtrusive and secure in places that are more hostile to the U.S.

"You might want some of these buildings to be open deterrents," Rado said. "Like, 'Hey, don't even try here.'"

Rado said Penn State's Crash Safety Research Center — a facility that allows researchers to crash cars and trucks at high speeds — will use the grant to test the effectiveness of different anti-ram barriers. The facility allows researchers to collect data about the impacts and the effectiveness of the barriers, Rado said.

Potential designs for the barriers are studied using computer simulations in conjunction with tests at the facility.

"We do a lot of computer models of the proposed crash test to get an idea of how things will perform," Linnell said.

The simulations are compared to actual results of the facility's tests, which allows researchers to create an accurate computer model of how the barriers will react in different situations.

Michael Casper, information specialist for the Larson Institute, said the U.S. Department of State could grant more money in the future depending on the success of Penn State's research.

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