



Kelley King/Collegian

Homecoming Court nominees Dan Florencio (senior-philosophy) and Danielle DaSilva (senior-mechanical engineering) pose for a picture outside of East Halls Monday night.

Homecoming pair looks back on PSU experience

Series note: This is the fourth in a five-part series about the Homecoming Court nominees.

By Sarah Peters
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Dan Florencio has been watching Penn State Homecoming from the sidelines since 1991. He never dreamed of being on Homecoming Court — until now.

Since he grew up in State College, Florencio (senior-philosophy) said he always looked at Penn State as the university where he'd put in his four years and earn a degree. But that's not what happened once he arrived.

"Getting involved here, I realized it's so much more than I thought," Florencio said. "It's been a rollercoaster ride."

Danielle DaSilva (senior-bioengineering and mechanical engineering) knew she wanted to be involved at Penn State as a tour guide and in the Interfraternity Council/Panhellenic Dance Marathon on her visit to Penn State. Reluctant to enter the College of Engineering, DaSilva knew she wanted to get involved in some way, but she wasn't sure how.

Fast forward four years and DaSilva's president of the Society of Women Engineers (SWE), treasurer of the Biomedical Engineering Society, an engineering ambassador and spirit leader for the Women in Engineering Program Orientation. She is also the internship envoy for the College of Engineering's Career Resources and Employer Relations Office.

Add to all that, she's a member of the 2010 Homecoming Court.

"If you'd told me I would have been here, I probably would have chuckled," DaSilva said. "Freshman year, I never would have believed it all."

One of DaSilva's mentors at Penn State — Melissa Marshall, communications arts and sciences instructor and faculty adviser for engineering ambassadors — is a member of the Faculty Court. Marshall said it's an honor to be nominated alongside a student like Danielle.

"I hope that she takes the crown," Marshall said. "I'm excited to have a seat on Faculty Court, which gives me a front



row seat to hopefully see her be crowned." Both DaSilva and Florencio's parents say they're happy to see their children give back to the Penn State community.

Florencio is currently the executive vice president of the Interfraternity Council and competition captain for Penn State Homecoming. He has participated in LeaderShape and the Lion Walk and helped get the word out about the Census with borough officials. In 2009, he was the president of his fraternity, Zeta Psi.

Florencio's high school American history teacher Deb Povoromo praised him for his leadership in a group presentation to eighth graders that taught them about the transatlantic slave trade by telling a story about items in a trunk. The summer after Povoromo had Florencio as a student, she asked him and five or six other students to present the project to a group of 40 teachers from around the country for a program in conjunction with Penn State.

"The teachers raved about what they did," Povoromo said. "His group was so sensitive and so knowledgeable about the items in the trunk. He was one of the leaders in that group, and he was just fabulous."

Both Florencio and DaSilva are heavily involved in THON.

Last year, DaSilva danced as a representative of SWE.

DaSilva's parents also graduated from Penn State and couldn't be prouder of their daughter's involvement.

"I think Danielle did as much in one year as my husband and I did in eight years, four for each of us," said Monica DaSilva, Danielle's mother.

As for Florencio, he hopes to inspire others to give back to the university.

"The line 'Thou didst mold us, dear old State' is really true," Florencio said. "You have to give Penn State 100 percent to really appreciate that meaning."

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Students set to march for renewable energy

By Kathleen Loughran
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Penn State environmentalists will march to advocate for renewable energy on Oct. 11.

Eco-Action members decided to organize a march at noon from the West Campus Steam Plant to Old Main after hearing Bill McKibben — co-founder of an organization, 350.org, which is focused on climate crisis — speak at Penn State.

Oct. 10 is 10-10-10 — a day of action organized by 350.org, so Eco-Action decided to hold a highway cleanup that day. But once they saw how much support was behind the motion, members began to organize the march, Eco-Action Public Relations Officer Chris Tutolo said.

The march will culminate with Eco-Action officers delivering a letter to Penn State President Graham Spanier asking for transparency and inclusion of students on sustainability processes on campus, Eco-Action President Kelley Cressman said. Cressman (senior-international politics) said members eventually want Penn State to run on 100 percent renewable energy. She hopes that once the letter is presented, members will be able to further communicate with administrators to continue the dialogue about renewable energy.

"We understand that it may not be immediate but we think there needs to be a plan devised for it," she said.

Tutolo (sophomore-journalism) said the march falls in line with what Eco-Action members believe.

Cressman said what Eco-Action's letter proposes is important because "climate change is real," and the march will show how many people consider it a problem.

"[Climate change] is an extremely important cause because the environment and the species on the earth are at risk and what Penn State can do to change, that is use renewable energy," she said. "Not only is [the march] extremely visual, so it draws attention and awareness to the situation, but it gets the message across that there's a group behind it."

But Penn State isn't the only school in the Big 10 with students organizing marches in support of 10-10-10. Students from both Michigan State University and Iowa State University will walk from their respective coal plants to the administrative offices, as well.

Zulsiramar Huyke — a member of the environmental student group at Michigan State University — said she is glad to hear other schools are holding marches.

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OCTOBER SHOWERS



Christine Reckner/Collegian

Nicole Eckhardt, (senior-neuropsychology) of the Lion Ambassadors heading out papers Monday urging students to help guard the Lion Shrine during Homecoming.

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