

Alumna shares life story

By Micah Wintner
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Joanne Finegan told a crowd of nearly 70 students that at the age of six, she fell — but wasn't able to get up.

Finegan, Class of 1983, said she was diagnosed with Legg-Calve-Perthe syndrome, causing the ball of her hip to disintegrate.

But Finegan's bone grew back and she was able to walk without a brace again.

It was this experience that led Finegan to a life dedicated to helping physically and mentally disabled people, she said.

Finegan spoke as part of an event presented by the College of Health and Human Development Alumni Society's Distinguished Alumni Speaker Series.

"I hope it will push each of you to capture what makes you unique and different," Finegan told the audience.

Finegan is currently the chief



Joanne Finegan, Class of 1983 and CEO of ReMed Recovery Care Centers, speaks to a group of students Thursday night about recreational therapy.

executive officer and managing partner of ReMed Recovery Care Centers. Finegan told the audience a story about a man she called her "hardest" patient: Rob.

Rob was an introverted amputee with little hobbies or interests. Finegan tried and failed at conversing with Rob, but finally got through to him by inviting him along on a car ride, which he quickly accepted.

Rob was happy to leave the rehabilitation center, Finegan said.

After slowly forming a friendship with Rob, Finegan said that one day she brought out a special sports chair that he started to race in.

After refusing to interact with

others, Finegan said Rob had found a new passion and friends who shared that passion with him.

Finegan said Rob taught her never to give up on a patient.

Deven Spitzer, a ROTC student, said Finegan's work in 2008 with disabled soldiers resonated with him.

"It was pretty cool," Spitzer (junior-recreation, park and tourism management) said. "That could be me one day."

Finegan said she loves her career and hopes students find something they are passionate about.

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Diversity discussion explores race issues

By Vera Greene
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Steve Roberts went through his entire high school career without working on a group project with a black person.

Out of a school of 4,000 students, there were nine black people enrolled throughout his four years there, he said. So when Roberts (junior-economics and finance) came to Penn State, he was shocked at its diversity.

On Thursday night, 19 students discussed issues of race on the Penn State campus with student leaders.

From 7 to 9 p.m. in the Cultural Lounge at Waring Commons, University Park Undergraduate Association President Christian Ragland, Penn State NAACP President Travis Salters, and Johnnie Geathers, diversity chair for the Association of Residence Hall Students, hosted a "What's Race Got To Do With It?" forum to talk about race, culture and experiences at Penn State specifically.

Salters said when he first came to Penn State he was a nervous wreck.

After his family and friends told him that the school was fairly racist and "full of hatred," Salters wasn't sure what to expect.

But, when he got here and experienced it himself, his perception changed.

"I realized people weren't walking around with white hoods," Salters (junior-broadcast journalism and African and African-American studies) said.

Although, he said, going by numbers and statistics, Penn State isn't diverse.

Ragland said he went to Penn State knowing he was going to be a minority.

Even when he came for a campus tour, he was the only black person in his group — but he didn't care.

Instead, he said, he cares about people, communication and being race-free.

Ragland said he wasn't attending the meeting as the student body president but instead as a student who wants to think critically about issues that many college campuses may face, like race and diversity.

Race relations — and sometimes self-imposed segregation — at Penn State is apparent all over campus, Geathers (senior-human development and family studies) said.

"Just look at the HUB," he said. "From 11 to 2 you can walk in and see all the African Americans together in a group and the white people all together."

But, Ragland said, ultimately, at the end of the day, he sees himself as a human being, and people should be defined by what they do, not by what color or culture they are.

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Simmons officials talk safety concerns

By Casey McDermott
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

After another trespassing incident in the second-floor Simmons Hall women's restrooms was reported to Penn State Police early Thursday morning, Residence Life officials held an "urgent" meeting with the building's residents to address safety concerns.

Officer Ryan French told students that a female student said she saw a man "slink" into the shower area of a women's restroom at about 3 a.m. while she and her friend were in the bathroom.

The two said they noticed he was holding a recording device and trying to take pictures or videotape the area and confronted him, police said. At that point, the students said the man left "hurriedly" down the hall, police said.

Police arrived on the scene within several minutes and began searching both inside and outside of the building, but they weren't able to find the man, French said.

French said the students described the man as pale with dark hair, college-aged, slender, and about 5-foot-8 to 5-foot-10.

Yesterday's incident is the newest of four reported cases of trespassing

on the all-girls floor of Simmons Hall since Monday morning. But after knocking on doors in the building,

French said students told police about several other similar incidents that happened over the past month. French said he was not able to provide any details about the incidents outside of the past week's. The first case this week occurred between midnight and 1 a.m. Monday, police said, when a female student said she saw a man in the shower area after she was exiting the shower. About an hour later, police said another female student reported she saw an unidentifiable individual peering through the slats of a bathroom door.

On Tuesday, another female student said she saw a man in a women's restroom between midnight and 1 a.m., police said.

Also at Thursday's meeting with Simmons residents was Residence Life Coordinator Jared Hammond, who said he would be following up with another e-mail telling students what was discussed at the meeting.

On Monday, Hammond sent an e-mail to all residents of Simmons Hall telling them about one incident of trespassing. But additional e-mails were not sent when the other incidents were reported this week.

And Carolyn Harpster — a resi-

dent of Simmons — said she didn't hear about any incidents in her building until Thursday morning.

"I woke up and had a text from my friend who lives in East Halls who read an article about it asking me, 'Are you okay?'" Harpster (freshman-public relations) said. "And I kind of freaked out because the stories were scary, and all week I had been in the bathroom late at night."

When asked why students weren't notified of the multiple incidents in the building or given more details, Hammond and other residence life staff said the staff was not sure what was okay to share with the students and did not want to alarm more people than necessary. Hammond also said that residence staff is in "constant communication" with both police and Simmons residents.

But to Harpster and her roommate, Liz Novack, the students should have been better informed from the beginning.

"It's different in high school when they don't want to tell you why you're in lockdown or whatever," Novack (freshman-nursing) said. "But if this is your home where you want to be comfortable, you should know what's going on when it happens."

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