

Factory workers detail abuses

By Alaina Gallagher
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Gina Cano and Maritza Vargas, who say their rights were violated while working in Latin America for apparel companies, put a face to the plight of workers laboring in sweatshops Thursday night. Speaking through a translator, the women gave accounts in their native Spanish of their experiences of working in factories producing apparel for American companies to a crowded classroom in Willard at an event hosted by Penn State's United Students Against Sweatshops. Cano spoke of the poor working conditions in Honduras, which included being watched by security guards during bathroom and water breaks and receiving no health benefits — despite work-



Maritza Vargas (center) and Gina Cano (right) talk about their experiences working in apparel factories at a USAS discussion Thursday.

ers' paychecks being deducted weekly for them.

Cano said the factory was eventually shut down to the workers' surprise. Although the factory owners claimed it was because of the recession in America, Cano said it was actually because of workers' efforts to organize a union.

As a member of the Central General de Trabajadores union, Cano recently won a historic settlement, which forced Nike to give severance pay for people like Cano who had lost their jobs in Nike's subcontracted factory.

Vargas also spoke of her experiences working for a compa-

ny in the Dominican Republic, which employed 3,500 workers and provided apparel for companies such as the Gap, Nike and Adidas.

After trying to organize a union, Vargas said workers were kicked out of the factory and union leaders were fired.

"I really wanted to come and see what the workers' actual opinions were about how the sweatshops affected their countries and [...] directly affected them," attendee Dave Stevens (sophomore-hotel restaurant and institutional management) said.

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Council to discuss future of building

By Zach Geiger
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

The State College Borough Council will review the fate of the former Verizon building, 224 S. Allen St., on Nov. 15.

The building was acquired by the council in October 2007 after a unanimous vote to approve the \$750,000 purchase.

Plans to redevelop the 10,000 square-foot building space for community use have been in the works for months, State College Planning Director Carl Hess said.

"Their suggestion would be some type of mixed-use project," Hess said. "The community bought that property for some kind of community use."

Discovery Space of Central Pennsylvania Inc. originally planned to house a children's science center and museum in the building, but plans for the location fell through.

Other groups, like the student-created Innoblue, recently expressed interest in renting space in the building. State

College Mayor Elizabeth Goreham said. The council requested the Planning Commission evaluate possible uses for the former Verizon building, Hess said. Though the Planning Commission did not recommend selling the property, there are still multiple possibilities for the site included in the recommendation report that will be presented to borough council, Hess said. The building could be reused for multiple purposes, Hess said. But the building's design, which is long and narrow, may need to be completely redeveloped to accommodate future tenants, Hess said.

The redeveloped space — combined with the possibility of a partnership between the borough council and the neighboring building, First National Bank — would be suitable for a mix of commercial, office and residential space, Hess said.

Collegian staff writer Colleen Boyle contributed to this report.

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Sorority holds date auction for Lupus Foundation

By Kathleen Loughran and Jessica Tully
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Damian Gates said he didn't care if he was only auctioned off for a penny because it all was for a good cause — the Lupus Foundation of America.

Gates (senior-economics) was one of the men auctioned off at Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.'s The Blue Revue — the 19th annual male date auction — held Thursday night in 124 Findlay Commons.

All of the money raised through

the auction will go to the foundation, which is the sorority's national philanthropy, Event Chair Shinique Wright said.

"This is not going into our pockets," said Wright (senior-psychology). "It's going to raise awareness and to find a cure for lupus."

Last year, the sorority raised about \$800 through the 100 people who attended the event, she said. This year they hope to beat the previous year's total money raised.

"Last year was the middle of the economic recession, so I think this year people have more money,"

Wright said. "Hopefully they'll be willing to give to a good cause."

About 175 people attended the free admission event and were given auction paddles upon entering the room, which was decorated with star balloons and a refreshment table. A DJ was set off to the side so that music could accompany each male as they strutted down the runway with a rose in hand.

The sorority ladies recruited the men to be auctioned off from the Interfraternity Council, the University Park Undergraduate Association and other various

organizations. UPUA President Christian Ragland said the reason he went for a high-ticket price of \$47 is because of his ability to enhance the classic push-up.

"I think what won them over was my one-armed push-up and my ability to push-up people sitting on my back," said Ragland (senior-political science).

Ragland added that he decided to be a part of the event because he feels it is his duty as president to give back and it is something about which he is passionate.

Edwin Rossi, vice president of Sigma Lambda Beta Fraternity,

Inc. said he heard about the event because the "Zetas are our sorority cousins."

Rossi (senior-business administration) said he knew the girl, Debbie Blair, who bid \$27 on him because she is in his fraternity's sister sorority.

Before the event was over, Gates said he already had made plans for the date.

"I'm going to take her to Rotelli's," he said.

"The ladies like it. It's all about pleasing women."

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Artist speaks on experience, creative process at Palmer

By Allegra O'Neill
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

If all roads lead to heaven, then artist Craig McPherson will show you the artwork he created along the way.

The realist and working artist presented his lecture "Road Work" during the Anderson Lecture Series last night in the Palmer Museum of Art.

McPherson's lecture to a group of approximately 50 people focused on the development of his style of work over the 40 years since he graduated college.

"I went to ten schools in 12

years," McPherson said. "It was good practice as an artist."

He spoke about his project "Harbors of the World," which was a mural project for the American Express Tower in Manhattan.

The project involved visiting six harbor cities: New York, Venice, Rio de Janeiro, Sydney, Istanbul and Hong Kong and painting their landscape for the lobby.

McPherson said the project took five years and he placed his paintings in a geographical manner.

"On the northern walls of the building I placed the northern-facing cities," McPherson said.

The project, which features the World Trade Center towers in the New York City skyline, miraculously survived the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, he said.

McPherson said to create the large murals, some over 11 feet tall, he used a perspective device also used by Leonardo da Vinci to create schematic drawings.

In addition to his world travels, McPherson talked about his earlier days as a starving artist.

"I moved to New York with \$1,500 in my pocket and that lasted my first year," McPherson said. "By the second year I had run out of money."

He talked about trading art for meals and felt sorry for himself until he saw a man who was living out of a crate in the middle of winter who ultimately inspired McPherson to keep going.

"He became my iconic symbol of endurance and survival," he said. As a realist, McPherson has had the opportunity to paint people who are as interesting as his art, he said.

His painting "The Pennsylvania Kid" represents a man who had been elected the "King of the Hobos" in Iowa for four years running. This story interested audience member Lauren Down (jun-

ior-printmaking) who said the story of the "King of the Hobos" was something she was unaware existed.

"When I met him he was quoting Voltaire," McPherson said. "He was an intellect."

Jane Hargrave (junior-printmaking) said she was intrigued by McPherson's approach to his work.

"It was interesting that he focused on personal development rather than following the trends of New York," Hargrave said. "As a 21-year-old, that is not something I ever thought of. I am obsessed with trends."

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