Having to overcome obstacles, PSU/WB student bounces back

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November 8, 2004 is a day Shawnee Acker will never forget.

Acker was lying on the backcollege at Penn State Schuylkill when the driver fell asleep at the wheel. Each time the car rolled state 80 junction, Acker's body was thrown up against it. Having been ejected from the vehicle, the 21-year-old was flown to Lehigh Valley Hospital where she was placed in the Intensive Care Unit.

Now three-and-a-half years latcipient of the 2008 Outstanding spent another month. Adult Learner Award at Penn among the colleges.

Acker received a plaque honor-

"I was really surprised because a lot of people who get it (the State I had to cancel when I got

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their school," Acker said. "It's a big honor. The people who got it taking courses.' have been through a lot and done a lot.

"When I was hurt, I decided to seat of a car on her way back to finish school," Acker said. "I didn't want to just lie around and do nothing every day."

But Acker is lucky to even be on Interstate 81 near the Inter- alive. She was in the hospital for six weeks before being transferred to Moses Taylor Skilled Nursing Home in Scranton. Upon her release from the hospital, she lived with her parents for several months to heal. She later underwent orthopedic surgery at Herer, Acker, 25, of Moscow, is the re-shey Medical Center where she

"It definitely made me appre-State Wilkes-Barre. The award is ciate my family and my friends given to one adult from each of more because everybody was the five institutions of higher there for me when I needed learning in the county and is an them," Acker said of the experiannual collaborative sponsorship ence. "I just appreciate everything more."

Acker used a wheelchair for ing her as Penn State Wilkes- two years and had to learn to Barre's 2008 Outstanding Adult walk all over again. While reha-Learning at a dinner ceremony bilitating, she decided to enroll in hosted by Misericordia Universi- online courses from Penn State University.

"A lot of my courses at Penn

fall too far behind, so I started

Hershey Medical Center, Acker enrolled at Penn State Wilkes-Barre because the Penn State Worthington campus, which is closer to her hometown, does not the United States Probation Ofoffer her major. While at the university, she has maintained a 3.0 cumulative grade point average and, through the school, has performed volunteer work at St. Francis of Assisi Soup Kitchen in Administration of Justice from Scranton and St. Mary's Villa Nursing Home in Moscow. She is a member of the honor society club at Penn State.

Last fall, Acker and her room-

award) are very accomplished in hurt," she said. "I didn't want to mate, Maggie Norton, started the Local Environmental Revolution Club. Acker serves as president After being discharged from of the club which is aimed at performing environmental projects and cleanups in the community. Also in the fall semester of 2007, she completed an internship with fice for the Middle States of Pennsylvania, where she worked in Wilkes-Barre and Scranton.

This Saturday, Acker will graduate with a bachelor's degree in Penn State Wilkes-Barre. She plans to seek employment in probation or parole and hopes to return to school for her master's de-

Shawnee Acker, 25, of Moscow, is the recipient of the 2008 Adult Learner Award at **Penn State** Wilkes-Barre. The award is given to one adult from each, of the five institutions of higher learning in the county and is an annual collaborative sponsorship among the colleges. Acker survived an automobile accident that forced her to use a wheelchair and learn to walk again.



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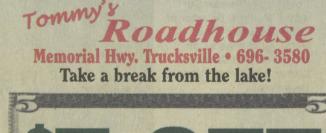
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