



Multicultural Resource Center

Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity

www.equity.psu.edu/mrc

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A Message from the Director

By Marcus Whitehurst

Inside this issue:

- Diversity at Penn State **2**
- Internships: What You Need to Know **2**
- What's Happening on Campus? **3**
- Co-curricular Activities Enrich Students' Lives **3**
- Being a Proactive Student **3**
- The Word Game **3**
- How to Become a Master Student **4**

In today's competitive society, it is crucial to establish networks and make positive connections. Those who take full advantage of available opportunities and resources will better equip themselves to be successful. Although good grades are an indicator of success at Penn State, they do not necessarily predict professional success after graduation. Even if your area of study provides enough skills and knowledge to help you find a good job, you should also consider enhancing your undergraduate education to increase your chances for success.

As a student, you have numerous opportunities to make connections that can help you distinguish yourself from the

rest. Establishing a connection with a student organization, your resident assistant, your college adviser, and your Multicultural Resource Center (MRC) counselor are the first steps in identifying the many opportunities available to you. It is important that you take time during your undergraduate education to attend information sessions and to visit the various resource offices that can assist you in making decisions regarding academic and career opportunities. Information on some of these resources is included in this edition of the MRC Newsletter.

At the Multicultural Resource Center, our goals are to help you gain the most from your educational experience and to

help enhance your skills to better prepare you for a changing society. Your MRC counselor will be happy to help you find the right resources or highlight opportunities of which you may not be aware.



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Through the Eyes of a First-Year Student

By Rythda Destime

As a first-year student, I have truly grown this academic year. I look back at high school, which built a strong foundation for me, and realize that graduation was the closing of one chapter and the beginning of a new one in the novel of my life. While at Penn State, I have been able to take full control of my life and this has led me through some powerful experiences this year.

Involvement in the school community, as well as the larger society, is a passion of mine, and I am thankful to have had the opportunity to do so in such an immeasurable capacity. I joined groups such as PSHRS (Penn State Hotel and Restaurant Society) and NSMH (National Society of Minorities in Hospitality) that complement my major, Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management, and provide the professional experiences, i.e., attending national conferences and gaining industry contacts, for which I so longed. I became a part of SMART (Student Minority Advisory & Recruitment Team) and helped in the recruitment of minority students to the Penn State community. This wonderful organization works hand-in-hand with the Undergraduate Admissions Office to help diversify the Penn State community. Other groups

like CSA (Caribbean Student Association), Black Caucus, and Project Haiti have played a great role in my new-born college life. I have always been in touch with my culture(s), but it was through these organizations that I have become a die-hard advocate of my culture as an "African American" and even more so as a Haitian. I was so moved, so happy to have found Project Haiti that I actually cried at my first meeting! This group consists of powerful young people who really want to make a difference, and in my native country nonetheless! I thank them for their vision and all their efforts. Black Caucus has helped me understand the importance of black power and social consciousness. Through CSA, I was able to celebrate with others our common Caribbean background through music, food, and special programs like The Caribbean Experience.

I am also satisfied academically. The classes challenged me to push myself to the limit. Although times got rough, especially during finals, I learned not to trouble myself with small things, but also that mediocrity is never the answer. There are many who will never get the chance that I now have.

I am here for a reason and I plan to make the most of my stay.

Penn State is a microcosm of the world, a little piece of the big picture. From the hour my parents drove away, leaving me behind, to this very day, I remain thankful for the opportunity to spread my wings and fly. I have been faced with real-world situations where I had to make real-world decisions. I have made some really good friends with whom I share a lot of my time. I have also met some other great people who have really taken me under their wing and helped me along the way. I have had the opportunity to attend a variety of programs, shows, meetings, and so much more. Next year I am looking forward to making even more connections and doing everything that I can to make my experience here a memorable and rewarding one.



Rythda Destime



Stop by and meet our friendly staff assistant Lea Ann Bloom!

Diversity at Penn State

By Denise Hinds-Zaami



Denise Hinds-Zaami, Diversity Advocate/Counselor
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"We are all part of this large community whose main focus is to learn, understand, and graduate."

I am Denise Hinds-Zaami, MRC counselor and diversity advocate for Penn State. I greet you.

Diversity at Penn State is embraced by some, but not all. So it is in the world in general. One of your missions while at Penn State as a member of an under-represented group or so-called "minority" is a dual one: you're here to learn from others and they're here to learn from you. This applies to you as well as to faculty, staff, and administrators when it comes to diversity issues. You may not have signed up for this particular course, "Diversity in Life," and the only credit you may get from it is helping to improve relationship-building and understanding between peoples; however, it's the course of life and an important one for growth, for healing the world, and for evolving. How do we as individuals approach this life course? For me, the answer is simple: support things that support life. Be around people who contribute to your health and well-being. Don't be around people who don't contribute to your health and well-being... but send them good thoughts. Hate, intolerance, and violence tear things down and don't support life. They even affect those who harbor them, in a very harmful

way. Love, tolerance, and nurturance build things up and support life. They enhance the lives of those who harbor them. They heal and help you to see your relationship to others.

There are two ways to exemplify diversity. You can maintain different and separate but "equal" groups or you can maintain groups with diverse individual members who have equal status. I believe that we're moving towards the latter. And that wouldn't be a bad thing, as long as everyone was striving towards truth, fairness, and equality. You'll see true acceptance of the latter example of diversity at work when you see people siding with a person not because she or he looks just like them. You'll see this in class when you can share an opinion with someone no matter what their cultural background is. You'll begin to get an idea of how this is when you realize that you can't always judge a book by its cover after you've taken the chance to read the contents of the book. In the meantime, the world will always have its immature, intolerant, and ignorant people who, maybe out of jealousy, maybe out of fear, will say something hateful and try to get a "rise" out of you. Will you let them or will you rise to the occasion and remember your mission, your

strengths, your tools...who you are?

In my role as diversity advocate, I receive reports of acts of intolerance and hate crimes. I'm asking that you report such incidents if they happen to you or if you witness them happening to another student on or off campus. It is so important for our University to keep a statistical record of these types of incidents and the frequency of their occurrence. It is also crucial that you speak out immediately against such offenses so that the offender(s) can be reprimanded, and that the victim receives support and counseling if need be. If you keep silent, it may happen again and again. Speaking up will let offenders know that neither you nor Penn State will tolerate that kind of behavior.

To file a report, go to the Zero Tolerance for Hate Web site at www.equity.psu.edu/REPORTHATE/ and select the link Report it!

We're all a part of this large community, whose main focus is to learn, to understand, and to graduate. Let's challenge old and worn out assumptions. Let's be the best of who we really are and shatter prejudging mindsets. Let's change and improve the climate at Penn State...for everyone!

Internships — What You Need to Know

By Diane Farnsworth

It's never too early to start thinking about internships! Employers routinely look for students who have experience related to their majors or chosen career field. In fact, most employers would agree that nearly all of their offers for permanent employment are extended to those students who have had some internship experience.

Some students are lucky enough to find an internship following their freshman year. Typically, students secure internships the summer following their sophomore or junior years, but they can also occur during the fall or spring semester. Internships can be for credit or wages; some are for credit and wages. A student would need to contact his or her department/college to be certain to receive credit.

When considering an internship, allow enough time to plan a course of action to obtain one (most internships for summer are confirmed by mid-February). Before you actually go about the task of finding an internship, it is important to ask yourself what you want from the experience. Formulate an answer by considering location as it relates to cost of living, transportation, etc. Also, think of what skills you can bring

to an employer and what skills you would like to develop on the job.

Now the work begins, finding the internship that fits closely with your needs and interests. To identify potential employers look at all of the resources available. To begin, contact the internship coordinator in your college or go to the college's Web site to access opportunities. (Yes, there's a contact in every college!)

Another resource is the *Internship and Summer Job Directories* found in the Career Information Center, MBNA Career Services Center. Other information found there are the *Employer Vacancy Announcements* and *Job Choices Annuals* (of which you can get free copies).

Plan a visit to the Reference Room of Pattee Library to discover another valuable find, *The Directory of Internships*. Another avenue for searching, right at your fingertips, is the Internet. A few of the more popular sites are: MonsterTrak
www.monstertrak.monster.com/Internships.com
www.internships.com/
New York Metro, D.C., Boston
www.bigapplehead.com/

One of the newest Web sites to look into is www.joboozle.com. Penn State recently joined sixty-five other colleges who can access Joboozle. The mission of this site is to provide students and employers with a more personalized approach to internships for the job recruiting process. Information on the history of companies and contact information of recruiters is also included, and candidates have an opportunity to view other interested candidates to see how they stand against other students from their school in the same major.

After you have identified potential employers it's important to follow up with an online résumé or hard copy of your cover letter, résumé, and additional personal contacts to complete the process of obtaining an internship. It is in your best interest to utilize the resources available through Career Services to guide you through each of these steps. Please let our staff at the MRC know if we can be of further assistance to you! Good luck!



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What's Happening on Campus?

By Beth Bailey

Welcome to Penn State! You are probably very excited that you have chosen a university with so many great resources and opportunities, but you may be wondering, "How will I navigate such a big place?" The key is to STAY INFORMED! What's the best way to stay up on campus happenings? Read the

newspaper! Penn State's student-run newspaper, the *Daily Collegian*, provides students at University Park with a fun and easy way to stay informed. Not only can you find what's new around the nation and throughout the world, but also learn about exciting events that are happening right here on campus. Listings of

student organization meetings, volunteer opportunities, cultural events, and lots of other information can be found in the *Collegian* on a daily basis! For everything from coupons to crossword puzzles, the *Daily Collegian* is your way to stay in touch at Penn State. You can pick up a free copy weekdays at numerous locations on campus. Check it out!



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Co-curricular Activities Enrich Students' Lives

By Dana Aina

At times, the large student population and environment at Penn State can overwhelm new students. So how can you make new friends, develop valuable life skills, build your résumé, and make a campus with 45,000 students seem like a small close-knit community...all at the same time? Join a club!

At University Park, students can learn skills such as problem-solving, effective communication, time management, collaborative decision-making, and team work by participating in one of more

than 600 student organizations. There are clubs for interests related to your major, sports, recreation, music, culture, arts, politics, spirituality, health, fraternities, sororities, and other interest, volunteer, and community service programs.

How do you get involved in student organizations? One of the best ways to find out what clubs have to offer is to attend the Student Involvement Fair held during the first few weeks of the fall semester in the HUB-Robeson Center. You can talk to current members, sign-up to join a club,

or find out when the club is planning their next meeting.

Spending time with others who share the same interests will enrich your college experience and help you form lifelong friendships. Want to learn more about getting involved in student organizations? Contact the Office of Student Activities in 207 HUB-Robeson Center, call 814-863-3786, or visit the student organization directory online at www.sa.psu.edu/usa/studentactivities/allrsos.asp



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Being a Proactive Student

By Hyun-Soo Hur

Many first-year and transfer students may be overwhelmed by the size of the University Park campus on their first visit. As a major university, Penn State offers a wide variety of academic and career support systems. These resources enrich individual growth, but students need to be aware that support services cannot be fully

utilized unless they actively seek them out and take advantage of them. Here is my tip for newcomers: BE PROACTIVE! In a large institution like Penn State, classes can be huge and it can be easy to have little interaction with your instructors. Unless you reach out and let your existence be known, you may not be noticed!

In addition, you may be overwhelmed with lots of e-mails and flyers informing you of upcoming events on campus. Unless you screen them and keep track of these events, you may not be able to make full use of all that Penn State has to offer! Remember, you are responsible for your life-path now. Be proactive in whatever you do. Let your voice be heard and your existence be known!



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How to Become a Master Student

By Wayne Gersie

The learning process at the collegiate level is very different than the learning process at the elementary and secondary level. In order to perform at the highest academic level, it is crucial that a student understands and recognizes the difference between the two distinctly different learning styles. Having a clear understanding of the academic expectations at the collegiate level can only lead to academic success. Most students understand that the expectations in college are higher than they were in high school. The students who struggle academically are students

who are not able to transition from the learning style in high school to the learning style in college. The learning style in high school is identified as a dependent learning style, which basically means that in high school the student is dependent on an instructor to facilitate his/her learning. In college, the opposite is true. The student takes part in an independent learning process that requires the student to be responsible for his/her own learning. This learning process requires time management and self-discipline. The students who are

successful at the collegiate level are students who have this understanding. As an independent learner you are expected to complete most of your learning outside of class. A good rule of thumb is the 2-to-1 rule. This rule suggests that for every hour you spend in lecture you should commit two hours outside of lecture to prepare and review the material. The lecture should be a learning opportunity to supplement your own independent learning. It is therefore critical that you manage your time accordingly.



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This newsletter is available in alternative media on request.

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Word! A Jumble Game From MRC

Unscramble each of the nine words below. Then, use the underlined letter in each of the words to form another scrambled word. Unscramble that word to find the answer to what is described at the bottom. If this word jumble you can do, then you belong to PSU.

- 1) TNRVUSYIIE
- 2) LRUICLMTUATLU
- 3) PUPQTRS
- 4) SVIDYTREI
- 5) RWDLO
- 6) YMUCNTMIO
- 7) CAPEE
- 8) AEQNCTREL
- 9) MCIEATL

The solution to pollution of our psychological, emotional, and spiritual climate at Penn State, by thoughts and acts of intolerance, bias and hate, can be found in this word, especially if you take the first four letters and reverse them: