

## State of the Student Body Address

### **Good Evening Boilermakers**

I would first like to thank you for attending this evenings' program. It means a great deal to all of us that you are in attendance, and it shows your loyalty to Purdue for you to take your time to help improve this great university. As the spring semester of 2009 is off and rolling, I wanted to use the opportunity this evening to update you on where Purdue Student Government and the Purdue Student Body stand - both what we have accomplished and where we are planning to go.

The past fall saw a major change for students on Purdue's campus. The banning of ground fliering created a culture shift with students and challenges for us to overcome. The installation of the new Student Activities Office's GetInvolved system and Student Services' 'E-Sidewalk' have helped ease the transition, but they were not created or intended to be a complete solution. PSG has been working with administrators around campus to brainstorm and implement innovative ideas. The process has been complex and time-consuming, but we are finally seeing success. We are working on plans for electronic screens where many of your organizations' electronic fliers can be seen. PSG is working to update student resources for the communication and marketing channels that are available for use around our campus and community. We have also seen many organizations take a more strategic approach to the use of Facebook, email, and generally adapting to the many other digital methods that were not utilized in the ground fliering era.

PSG has been working to create a student newsletter that updates students on programming events and campus opportunities. Many of you may have had a 'Boiler Bulletin' hit your email inbox. This is a new project for us, but it has been met with a great deal of positive support. It has also opened up a new channel for marketing major campus events in the effort to keep students informed on what goes on outside of the academic classroom. We are continuing to work to make this a sustainable feature for the Student Body.

One aspect that I would like to take a moment to reflect on from the past semester was the amazing opportunities that Purdue students experienced regarding our Presidential Election. Not only did Indiana play a huge part in the electoral scene this past spring and fall, but the Purdue community was able to experience several high-profile candidates' visits to the area.

Purdue hosted campaign supporters like former Secretary of State Madeline Albright, Actor Jeremy Piven, and others. Regardless of your political affiliation, or your attraction to politics, this was a historic year for Indiana and Tippecanoe county; one that most students will never get a similar opportunity to enjoy again.

Last Spring Mallory Schaus and I ran on what we considered to be a very realistic platform of improvements and changes for the student experience. Over the past nine months much has been accomplished on those items, and we are continuing to work to ensure that list is accomplished before April.

The Boiler Advancement Program failed last spring in a decision separated by close to 150 votes out of almost ten thousand students' input. We realize that even if the vote had been reversed, this would not have been an overwhelming display of students' support for the program. We did realize through the process, though, that funding for students' programs and initiatives is important. Purdue Student Government is currently pursuing opportunities to advance that cause. We do not want to bring about anything that would be fee-based, and we are trying to assess what other universities are doing in progress to a best-practices understanding. We hope to create an opportunity for student organizations to gain funding for their programs by the end of this semester. If that means solely using PSG funds, then that is an option we are willing to explore.

PSG and Indiana University's Student Association have developed and garnered legislative sponsorship for a bill that would create a tax holiday for students' school supplies in August and January. The bill is designed to lighten the burden of textbook costs and other school-related costs. However, given the current economic situation in the U.S. it will be a difficult battle for a bill of this type as it does make a hard financial impact on the state. PSG has also been working to bring complete textbook information to students prior to going to class. A full list of textbook information for the next semester's classes can be found at [purdue.edu/textbooks](http://purdue.edu/textbooks). The ability to purchase textbooks early has the potential to save students quite a bit of money.

Last week PSG members completed a successful day of lobbying at the statehouse for the approval of the renovation to Recreational Sports Center. PSG representatives met with State Senators and Representatives to build support for the bonding approval for the renovation. The project looks to be a win-win situation for the state government as Purdue is not asking

them for funding, and it could create jobs for Tippecanoe County. Thus far the project has been moving along nicely, and we hope to see approved architectural drawings for the renovation this spring.

Other platform issues have also been addressed and are moving forward nicely. PSG has conducted Safe-Walks around campus to identify low-lit, potentially dangerous areas that need to be remedied. Working with the University's Campus Safety Task Force, we have been able to develop sites for sidewalk repairs. Those areas are being considered by the respective engineering offices at this time. PSG has been meeting with the University and CityBus officials to ensure that the bus service is best fitting for all students at all times. One goal is to make sure all students are aware of the bus system, how it works, and what it offers.

Purdue Student Government has also looked internally to better the operations of the organization. We have updated the Student Body Election rules in order to streamline this year's election process, and we are in the process of completing a major update to the PSG Constitution.

The Purdue Student Supreme Court has been diligently working this entire year to serve students' legal needs. The Court provides an easy pathway to obtain legal services, should they ever need to do so and have produced materials to make sure students are aware of their rights during their time on campus. Currently they are planning a 'Know Your Rights' week for April in order to display all the services and programs the Purdue Student Supreme Court offers. Last semester alone the Purdue Student Supreme Court helped over eighty students obtain free legal consultations with local attorneys.

In an effort to truly unite the Student Body, one of the exciting programming efforts that PSG develops throughout the year is the Student Body Concert. Bids have been drafted, budgets have been developed, and marketing plans are expanding as we speak for this major event. PSG puts together the concert to give back in the form of a free event open to all Purdue Students. Past acts have included Switchfoot and The Roots, and this year's event does not look to disappoint. We hope that you are looking forward to the experience as we will be announcing the artist in the upcoming month.

Last but not least, one of Purdue Student Government's major initiatives this year was to create an opportunity for student leaders from around campus to network and collaborate on

programs. The overarching goal was to foster the building of a better and stronger campus community. The culmination of our efforts materialized in the launch of the Purdue Leaders Forum (PLF) last November. The program has been successful thus far, and it continues to take shape as PSG leaders adapt it to fit the needs of Purdue's campus. The Leaders Forum also serves as an educational experience for younger leaders at Purdue. As this program strengthens and grows, you will see the critical role it will play in taking the student experience at Purdue to another level.

Tonight, I have brushed over the significant accomplishments and goals of my term/platform. If you have any questions about the details of one of our projects, I would be glad to address them. Thank you to the many individuals, groups and advisors who have made the first nine months of my term so enriching. I believe the final three will be just as educational, and I assure you that Purdue Student Government will not stop working for Purdue's Student Body.

**Hail Purdue**