

ASB participants getting their just desserts

By William Syvongsa
TECHNEWS WRITER

This year, I got selected to be a part of IIT's Alternative Spring Break. Why is this exciting? IIT's Alternative Spring Break is a student organization looking to spend their Spring Break working with Habitat for Humanity to help others across the country in need. The organization has been around for 10 years. It takes students, faculty, and staff members and brings them together to provide safe and affordable housing for families in need. Along with the hard work the students and volunteers will put in during their Spring Break, they will need something else to succeed; they will need outside help and resources. We, as a student organization, host fundraisers throughout the semester, and one of our 'messier' fundraisers is just around the corner.

Last year, ASB's Pie in the Face event allowed students to pie people in the face for a good cause. Prominent figures on campus, such as the Student Government Association and Union Board presidents participated. Staff members from the Office of Campus Life and the Campus and Conference Centers also participated.

This year, the premise is the same. We will have the event from November 14 – November 16 from Noon until 2:00 p.m. on the MTCC Bridge. A pie is \$3.00, or you can get two pies for \$5.00. We have invited the Greek Life Coordinator, Emma Titus, to be pied. All of the Greek Community should come out and help support ASB's cause. Her slot is from November 15 from 1:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. How many of you reading this know Miriam Schmid? She was last year's Union Board president, has probably been

your orientation leader, might be your RA in MSV, is a Leadership Academy scholar and kicks your butt in Greek Football every once in a while, etc. She does a lot, so come pie her and help support ASB's cause. Her face is up to get pied Wednesday from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. along with the current Union Board president, William Syvongsa. Many of you reading this know Will as well. He recently got to introduce Bill Nye the Science Guy. Who doesn't want to pie Will in the face just for that?

Friday is where the real fun begins. From 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. you can pie Ryan Miller, the Director of Campus Life, Betsi Pinkus-Huizenga, the Director of Residence and Greek Life, Eddie Skidmore, the Marketing Manager for Sodexo, and William Syvongsa once more. If you are a part of a student organization, you have probably interacted with Ryan or his office. If you have ever needed to purchase tickets to an event, you have definitely interacted with his office before. If you have ever lived on campus, you have probably interacted with Betsi or her office in some capacity. Eddie takes care of all of the marketing for dining services and is very open to student feedback.

Other students to be pied include Getty Kasole, Clarissa Lugo, Katie Peters, and Matt Otten. Other staff members to be pied include Joshua Marjenka and Jessica Ward, who are Residence Hall Directors for the Office of Residence and Greek



Life. Even if you don't know any of these individuals, feel free to pay \$3.00 to still pie someone you don't know. They won't get mad. They understand what they're doing.

ASB needs your help. But if you don't want to pie someone, that's fine. You can still help us out by donating at tinyurl.com/donate-asb2013

Images by William Syvongsa

Major Blackboard software upgrade for spring semester

By Utsav Gandhi
CAMPUS EDITOR

IIT Online has been working with OTS over the course of the last year to prepare a major improvement for the Blackboard platform, both in the technology Blackboard is providing as well as the ways in which it is being employed for IIT.

Moving up from the current version of Blackboard and making it more user-friendly and accessible has been a recurring feedback

suggestion given by IIT students who use Blackboard regularly for homework and email communication. However, the biggest challenge lies with getting faculty exposed to and more comfortable with the software itself.

IIT Online has worked on this by having orientation sessions for faculty regarding best practices since September, updating the look-and-feel of Blackboard, and integrating Blackboard with major social networks. If a professor chooses not to upload any content to a particular section, the student will not see anything there, making the entire

system look a lot cleaner. Less frequently used tools such as Digital Dropbox have been removed. In addition, they are working a virtual collaboration space with the ARC and Galvin Library to more effectively integrate Blackboard across students' complete academic experience.

Students will now be able to access course information a full 21 days in advance, which gives them extra time to decide whether they want to continue with a class rather than the normal add/drop period. Obviously this is dependent on the Professors uploading their syllabi ahead of time on Blackboard.

For now, the only advice they have for students is to be patient with the new system, as it's new for everybody!

Let OTS, IIT Online and faculty know if you have any advice or suggestions regarding what you want out of your Blackboard experience. The staff interviewed for this article, Brad Katz, IIT Online – Manager, and Lauren Woods, Director of IIT Online, can be contacted anytime with feedback and suggestions at bkatz2@iit.edu or lwoods1@iit.edu.