

A Dream Fulfilled: Creating *The Forum*

Annie Hewitt, former staff writer

[August 25, 2003] The dream of a small group of students to create a student newspaper at PVCC has become a reality with today's issue of *The Forum*. What began as only a wishful thought has blossomed into something more that we could ever imagine.

This past spring Meghan Shaw, Haines Eason and I began work on creating a student newspaper. Our vision was to provide a place of connections for students, faculty, and staff. As PVCC President Frank Friedman said in a recent interview, "Students need to feel connected with their college."

With our goals set, the three of us tackled the daunting and at times overwhelming task. We decided the best course of action was to get together a staff and produce sample issues to determine whether or not our vision was even possible. So we made announcements in our classes, had our professors recruit students, and grabbed anyone we could think of to work with us towards our goal.

Truly it was these people that kept us going. We decided to run things as if we were an established newspaper, publishing every other week. Meghan, Haines, and I served as managing editors, giving out assignments, holding staff and editors meetings, and consistently looking ahead to the next step. We determined that if we were able to present ourselves to the college as a functioning organization we were more than likely to be accepted and supported.

Near the end of the spring semester we were informed that the college would support the student paper. In addition, the college would provide a class so that students would be able to serve on the staff while getting instruction and guidance.

As editors, the three of us were able to take the class this summer.

Our instructor, Mary Jane King, is a former newspaper reporter and journalism teacher. Already she has taught us a great deal and we are incredibly excited about what is to come. The road hasn't been easy, but it's been more than worth it.

Now, in coordination with Piedmont Virginia Community College, we present you with *The Forum*, a newspaper that is dedicated to you—the student, faculty, and staff.

Our purpose is to create a sense of community within the college by providing up-to-date and relevant information and a forum for the exchange of views. Our goals are [to] provide you with tools in your education career, acquaint you with multiple information sources, and of course give students the opportunity to explore a journalism career path.



The first issue of *The Forum*. Photography by Tamara Whyte