



The Grad News

The Newsletter of the Hopkins/Homewood Graduate Community

October 2004 · Volume 6 · Issue 2

Opinions expressed in the Grad News do not necessarily represent those of its staff, the GRO, or graduate students in general.

Out in the Cold: Non-Resident Students and the Health Insurance Subsidy

Carl Robert Keyes, History

This is the first year that the University has offered a 100% health insurance subsidy to graduate students. This subsidy, however, has not been universally applied to all graduate students on the Homewood campus. Non-resident students have been excluded.

Before I comment any further on this situation, I would first like to make clear that I am expressing my personal opinion; my views do not necessarily represent the institutional outlook of the Graduate Representative Organization or its officers. I would also like to make clear that I applaud the University in its efforts to make graduate school more affordable and less stressful by providing the insurance subsidy to the majority of students on the Homewood campus. The GRO and the administration worked together for many years to make the current subsidy possible. The University deserves to be commended for recognizing the importance of health insurance and keeping it affordable for graduate students.

Despite the advances in health insurance funding made for most Ph.D. students, some graduate students have been overlooked: those who have exhausted their funding and now have non-resident status as a result. The GRO has been working with the University on non-resident issues for quite some time, most notably in regard to the unnecessarily high non-resident tuition fees, but the issue of health insurance for non-resident students has not been sufficiently addressed. As a result, non-resident students are once again treated as though they have some sort of second-class status within the University.

I first enrolled at the University in the Fall of 1999, entering with the four years of funding standard for incoming members of my department. Upon arriving at Hopkins I purchased the health insurance plan offered through the University, as I have done every year since. For the first three years I paid between 8% and 10% of my research and teaching stipend

(pre-taxes) for my health insurance. (If I were to figure out how much of my actual take-home pay, post-taxes, I spent on health insurance, the percentage would be higher.) As the subsidy has been phased in over the last two years, the percentage of my pay spent on health insurance has decreased somewhat.

Now that I have exhausted my departmental funding as well as a year of outside funding, I have become a non-resident student, and I have to pay \$1200 for health insurance

"All too often it seems as though the University wants to offer assistance to those with the least need while ignoring the students with the greatest need."

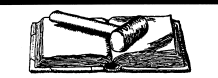
ance this year, in addition to over \$3000 in non-resident tuition fees. The health insurance costs seem especially high now that I do not have a regular source of income and also have to pay for the tuition that my department formerly covered.

During a routine meeting between
(Continued on page 8)

How can you not know that the GRO gives you free coffee and cookies every Monday, 3:00-4:00 PM, in E-Level and free food and cheap beer every Thursday, 6:00-8:00 PM, in the Levering Food Court? Are you some kind of moron? Come enjoy free food with the GRO, and bring your friends!

GRO

Graduate Representative Organization



The Johns Hopkins University

In This Issue...

Non-Resident Issues	1	Absentee Ballots	5	GRO Softball Champs	9
GRO BBQ Pics	2	Ph.D. Comics	5	Movie Review	10
Baltimore Treasures	3	Health Insurance	6	Makeover Madness	11
Meet the Pres	4	Restaurant Review	7	Calendar	12

The GRO Presents...

GEEKS GO GAMBLING

On Saturday, November 6, the GRO will sponsor buses to Atlantic City!

Holy crap! How can I sign up? Send an e-mail to gro@jhu.edu, but do it soon—the buses will fill fast!

How much does it cost? A mere \$5.00!

What does that five dollars cover? Not much! But the GRO is happy to pay for the rest. You'll get a bus ride there and back on a luxury motor coach, *plus* like \$10 or \$20 in casino vouchers!

Who can go? Any grad student who signs up quickly enough can go—and every grad student is entitled to sign up one guest as well. So bring the spouse, and split the kids among your friends!

And how long do we stay? The buses leave JHU at 10:00 AM and return at 10:00 PM, giving you about 7 hours to gamble away your stipend (it shouldn't take long anyway).

This is the best trip ever! Holy crap! Holy crap is right.

The Grill of Your Dreams: On August 27, the GRO hosted a barbecue to welcome new graduate students. ▶

Let Them Eat Cake: And we let them eat cake. Plus hamburgers, hot dogs, barbecue chicken, and some vegetarian crud. ▼



A Little TLC at the GRO BBQ: It took about ten minutes to write down all these students' names and departments, and about three hours to get drunk enough to lose that information. So, from left to right: What's-His-Name, That Girl, That Other Girl, The Guy, The Next Guy, Katherine, The Guy with the Glasses, and That Other Other Girl. Not pictured: The Dude with the Beard.

If you take East 39th Street past where it turns into Argonne, up to Northwood Plaza (at the corner of Loch Raven Boulevard), a little bit of searching into the somewhat nondescript Northwood Plaza will eventually lead you to a place with no windows called the New Haven Lounge, one of Baltimore's hidden gems. The New Haven Lounge (the sign outside says only "The Haven") is easily one of the best jazz clubs in town, as numerous awards from local newspapers attest to inside.

Walking through the front doors transports you from the relatively dingy wasteland of a suburban-type strip mall, complete with free-standing McDonald's restaurant, into the smoky world of jazz and R& B. That is, of course, if the doorman approves of your clothing. While there is never any cover (a bonus for those of us graduate students living "the life," as it were), there *is* a dress code, so come clean and dignified (i.e., no jeans or sneakers—break out those thesis-review clothes if necessary.) Also, this is not a bar to cruise for barely-legal Loyola girls, so leave your Power Plant Live-addicted friends at home.

Once inside, you notice the musicians who, of course, are given center stage, plying their trade in the middle of the hardwood floor, eagerly observed by the somewhat-older-than-you crowd. Behind them extends a dignified old oak bar, populated by almost elderly gentlemen in colored suits and matching fedora hats, drinking beer or perhaps something stronger and enjoying that evening's players, much as one would imag-

ine them doing fifty years ago in a basement speakeasy.

The lighting is subdued but adequate everywhere, supplied by a multitude of red, yellow, and blue spotlights. Walk around the bar towards the back and choose a seat in one of the many booths that line the walls of the club. If those are already occupied—usually by groups of businesspeople enjoying a night out, or perhaps by one or two music aficionados who may not know each other outside but can share an appreciation for the music inside and therefore seem like good friends—then feel free to move to the back room, with its carpeted floor, clean fabric couches, and adequate tables. Don't worry about not being able to see the band; there's a screen in the back that shows the musicians and, combined with the well-placed speakers, makes every seat in the house more than sufficient.

A few moments after you get seated, a waitress will take your order with a smile. Get a martini or a 7&7. Sit back and enjoy the atmosphere of the place. Even though it seems everyone should be smoking cigars, no one really does, a bonus for

the non-smokers among us that is found in far too few social clubs these days. Be sure to take a moment to notice the artwork on the walls, paintings and pictures of musicians from the golden era of jazz. There are also a number of television sets throughout the room, either showing the performers, or on occasion a suitable sporting event, such as boxing. Now, sit back and let the smooth tones from the bass and saxophone fill your ears.

The music is continuous and varied, always interesting, but not too loud to speak over when necessary, and there are breaks about every half hour for the musicians in which conversation is more easily undertaken. But then again, you'd rather be listening to the performers tell their stories in quarter-time anyway. Show your appreciation to the band before you leave with a few dollars—after all, there was no cover.

Most likely you've gone there on a weekend, which is of course when the best musicians will be scheduled to play. If you do go on a Monday, however, the usual jazz is replaced by comedy, which of course is a whole different story. And since you're up that way, finish the night with the best fried chicken in town by stopping at Tyrone's on the corner of York and Cold Spring (cash only, open until at least 11:00). Notice that Tyrone's, a local Baltimore business, is becoming a franchise and opening 1000 new stores on the East Coast. Yes, it really is that good.



Meet the Pres

Ali Ustun, Electrical & Computer Engineering

I would like to welcome the new graduate students to Johns Hopkins! For those of you who attended the orientation program, I might be a familiar face. My name is Ali Ustun, and I am the new Chair of the GRO for the coming year.

As a Ph.D. student in the Departments of Electrical & Computer Engineering and Radiology, I began my journey at Hopkins last year. It did not take me long to realize the importance of the GRO at Johns Hopkins.

I initially became involved as the department's representative and started attending GRO General Council meetings. These meetings are attended by the representatives of every department. Graduate students who attended were

not only occupied with their own responsibilities and concerns but interested in learning more about the issues faced by the community at large. They gathered energy to improve the quality of life in this community to benefit everyone involved. This was not done for personal reasons, but because they had a vision to raise the level of standards here at Johns Hopkins. I saw how their ideas were discussed freely and produced physical results. The members taught each other important lessons and gained many values critical to their growth as individuals as well. Due to these relationships and responsibilities that I deemed crucial and attractive, I took the Legislative Concerns Chair and then the Chair position in the GRO.

As an active member of this or-

ganization, you perform an important leading, managing, and decision making role. Above all, you have the chance to contribute to the community as a part of this well-known and respected student organization at Johns Hopkins. Your enthusiasm, efforts, and hard work will always be appreciated by both the students and the faculty.

Being a member of the GRO is an excellent choice if you want to be an active student at Johns Hopkins. This endeavor only requires a little interest and motivation. A lifetime opportunity awaits you!

On behalf of the GRO, I welcome you again to Johns Hopkins University, and I hope to see all of you at our events throughout the year!

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Response to Health Insurance Discrepancy

Kuenley Chiu, Physics & Astronomy

Dear *Grad News*,

In the spirit of open debate, I would like to offer my reaction to the second student interview [*shaded box, page 2, September 2004*] concerning the cost of family health insurance.

I have sympathy for this student's problem—the cost of health insurance is soaring, and for families the dollar amount is obviously multiplied by having a spouse and children. No one relishes the idea of burdening a family with such problems, and it's a sorry commentary on the state of health care that we are set to double the price of insurance every five years. This is clearly unsustainable.

"I find it annoying at best when people prejudge what is tolerable or reasonable for others. So I found it selfish when this student made blanket judgments about how much a single student can afford relative to a family."

Yet I wasn't sympathetic to this student's proposal to load the rest of us with his family's costs. I wasn't able to find any logic there aside from the cry, "I shouldn't have to pay so much for health insurance." And I saw no rational argument which could be used to guide our GRO's insurance policy.

To lay out the situation plain, his main point was that if this year's family insurance increase had been subsidized by distributing the cost among all graduate students, we would each pay about \$11 more. I will admit that this is not much money now. But any decision to

redistribute costs should have a good reason, and be applied consistently, or else what will prevent this from being \$110 or \$1110 in the future?

I find it annoying at best when people prejudge what is tolerable or reasonable for others. So I found it selfish when this student made blanket judgments about how much a single student can afford relative to a family. What makes his family's dollars more valuable than a single student's?

The last time I looked at the count, a family of four is quite a different number than a single person. There is a real cost of health care for his spouse and children, especially given that children generally visit doctors more often than adults of our age. I take it that this student does not ask his fellow grad students to contribute to his rent or monthly car payments. Why should they be involuntarily forced to (in effect) pay for the health care costs of other people even as their own costs rise?

Graduate students are spending longer in school than before, and some are discontent that being a student doesn't offer the same benefits of having a real job—witness the grad student unionization movements recently. It isn't surprising that health care coverage is a percolating issue. So deciding whether a large group should shoulder the disproportionate health costs of a few is a genuine debate we should have. But arguing for it from a sense of entitlement, or merely from the position that "other people should subsidize my kids" is a real turnoff. If students are to shoulder the costs of other students' dependents, I would at least hope that we arrive at that decision through a rational health care cost policy—not just because students with families claim to deserve it.

Dissertation Support Group

The Counseling Center is offering a group for advanced graduate students to help them complete their dissertations. The group has been meeting year-round since March 1998 with great success. (The specific members have changed, of course, as people finish their dissertations and leave!)

The group offers students a place and a peer group to discuss their dissertation work on a weekly basis. It provides some structure for a project that is often overwhelming in large part because of its lack of the typical university structures such as class sessions and due dates. Students who have participated in the group have reported increased focus, less sense of isolation, improved work habits, and most significantly, increased productivity on their dissertations.

We have several students who have just completed or are just about to complete their dissertations, and therefore we currently have some openings in the group.

If you are interested in learning more about the group, please contact Barbara Baum at the Counseling Center, 410-516-8278 or baum@jhu.edu.

Restaurant Review: Helmand

Urmila Padmanabhan, Physics & Astronomy

If you want to have really very tasty Afghan food reasonably close to campus, then Helmand, in Mount Vernon, is the place for you. We went there on one Saturday evening during the summer, without reservations, and had quite a long wait before we could get a table. (Tip: If you plan to go there on weekends, making reservations is a good idea.) We were seated after about an hour, which we spent at the bar. It was a very crowded night with the tables set very close to each other, making it quite noisy.

My friend chose *shorwa*, which is a tomato-based soup with vegetables and lamb pieces, as his appetizer. He found it quite tasty, though slightly over-salted. I had one of the vegetarian options, *bowlawni*, pan-fried twin pastry shells filled with delicately spiced leeks and potatoes, garnished with a yogurt and mint sauce. I enjoyed them a lot, though I found there was a little more garlic than I like.

For the main course, I chose the vegetarian *korma*, consisting of vegetables simmered in sauces, served with *challow* (which is Afghan rice). The *korma* was very flavorful and delicious. The rice was very well cooked. My friend had the *seekh kabobs*, 4 cubes of lamb, well marinated and barbecued Afghan style. He really enjoyed the *kabobs*, which were very well done and served with *pallow*, rice cooked with saffron. The *kabobs* were so tasty that he felt a few more pieces would have been great! Our waiter brought us a cilantro sauce, which had a hint of vinegar, to mix with the rice. It was like a burst of tangy sourness on my taste buds and made the rice delectable.

For dessert I had the *feerany*, Afghan egg-free pudding with fresh fruits. This is perfect for people who don't like their desserts too

sweet. My friend had the special vanilla ice cream, which was flavored with cardamom and also had pieces of dates, figs & mango. This transformed the plain old vanilla ice cream into an exotic dessert that was absolutely luscious. I almost attacked my friend trying to get at this really delicious concoction.

It was sometimes difficult to attract the waiter's attention. However, considering how packed the restaurant was that night, the service was pretty good. The restaurant has a romantic ambience with low lights and candles at the table. This would be a perfect restaurant for a date on a less busy night. However, it is definitely one of the best restaurants in the Baltimore

area to get really good food and unsurpassed as the best Afghan restaurant in the city. It is slightly on the pricey side for a grad student budget, but it's worthwhile for those special occasions when you want to get away from your own cooking or the other low-cost options around campus. And it's certainly worth more than one visit.

Helmand

Phone: 410-752-0311

Address: 806 N. Charles Street

Hours: Sun.-Thu. 5:00-10:00 PM,
Fri.-Sat. 5:00-11:00 PM

Website: www.helmand.com

IT'S HERE.

In an effort to make the world an even better place, the GRO has purchased a pinball machine for E-Level!

Pinball geeks from the Internet Pinball Database call Twilight Zone "a very fun game with lots of toys" and "one of the greatest games in pinball history!"

All proceeds go to the GRO Endowment.

Questions? Comments? Repairs? E-mail pinball@jhu.edu.



(Continued from page 1)

GRO officers and one of the deans over the summer, the dean said, "You must be excited about having free health insurance next year." "Actually," I replied, "I am a non-resident student. Having to pay for health insurance will be like paying for a third semester of non-resident tuition." I found the dean's comment quite revealing about how easily non-resident students and their concerns can be overlooked since non-residents comprise only a small minority of graduate students.

Those of us who have achieved non-resident status have paid thousands of dollars for our health insurance in past years, but the University has not recognized that financial burden in the progress of instituting the insurance subsidy. Instead, those students who have been at Hopkins for the shortest amount of time and paid the least amount for their insurance get a windfall while the rest of us are left in the cold. (I was a good sport about the insurance subsidy last spring during my department's recruiting weekend. I emphasized the insurance subsidy to prospective students because doing so was in the best interest of my department and the University. I had to bite my tongue, however, not to mention that I do not qualify for this subsidy simply because I enrolled at Hopkins five years before they did.)

I understand that providing the insurance subsidy to all non-resident graduate students may be a long-term cost that the University cannot currently afford. Still, I wonder why some sort of stopgap measure could not have been put in place. The subsidy gradually went into effect for resident students; a reverse system might have been appropriate for providing the subsidy to graduate students. Why couldn't the University at least have provided the full subsidy to non-resident students this year, reduced it to two-thirds next year and one-third the following year,

and phased it out completely the following year? Or set up a similar system for each graduate student once he or she became non-resident? That way those students who have paid thousands of dollars for health insurance in years before the subsidy existed could also benefit from the negotiations made between the GRO and the University during the period that they were resident students.

In discussing the insurance subsidy with a friend who is also a non-resident student, he remarked that our expectations seem to originate from within a completely different moral economy than that employed by the University. We believe that the University should provide assistance to all graduate students, especially those in the greatest need, but the University does not seem able or willing to look at the issue from that perspective. Non-resident students are the students least able to afford paying the high costs of health insurance. They have no stipend, they already must pay the unreasonably high non-resident tuition fee, and many of them work relatively low-wage jobs just to pay for rent and groceries.

All too often it seems as though the University wants to offer assistance to those with the least need while ignoring the students with the greatest need. (The issue of health insurance for spouses and children, covered in last month's *Grad News*, also speaks to this issue. In an attempt to save single students a few dollars each year, the University raised health insurance rates for families by hundreds of dollars, again targeting those least able to afford the increase. As a non-resident student who has to pay for my own health insurance, I sympathize with those graduate students with families. As a member of the Hopkins intellectual community, I would be willing to pay a few extra dollars for my health insurance each year to make sure that as many of my peers as possible are receiving the

care that they need.)

I realize that portions of my essay have referred specifically to my own situation, but based on my conversations with other non-resident students I believe that my experiences and my views of the health insurance subsidy are representative and shared by many other non-resident graduate students. The University may not have intentionally overlooked non-resident graduate students when designing the subsidy, but the system needs to be revisited and re-evaluated keeping in mind the specific needs of every segment of the graduate student community.

Tarang Presents "Hysterical Blindness"

Year of Release: 2002

Directed By: Mira Nair
(*Monsoon Wedding, Salaam Bombay, Vanity Fair*)

Starring: Uma Thurman,
Gena Rowlands, and Juliette
Lewis

Admission: Free!

When: October 2, 7:30 PM

Where: Shaffer 3, Home-
wood Campus

Web: www.jhu.edu/tarang

Trojka Presents Lots of Foreign Films!

When: 9:00 PM:
October 7
October 21
November 4
November 18
December 2

Where: Shaffer 3

But: There's a class in that room beforehand, so please wait upstairs until the class gets out.

Web: www.jhu.edu/trojka

Out of the Park

Kelly Hardesty, Chemical Engineering

Despite being ranked ninth out of twenty teams going into the playoffs, the Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering softball team has won the GRO Softball Championship for the second year in a row. The team managed to remain undefeated in the four playoff games despite a very unpredictable season.

The Chemical Engineers defeated HITS in the first round of the playoffs during a massive thunderstorm spanning most of the game. With all of the players soaked and bats flying out of players' hands, it made for a most unusual game. Next, the team scored a win over the Crazy Boltzmann from the Biophysics Department in the semifinal round of play. Interestingly, like last summer's semifinal and final games of the playoffs, Chemical Engineering beat the Space PandAs and the Mechanical Engineering team.

Making these wins more exciting

was the fact that the Chemical Engineering team was plagued with injuries and missing two key players during playoffs, Steve and Chris, due to research commitments. Eric Lewandowski, for example, had great performances in the playoffs despite dislocating his thumb while making a spectacular diving catch in center field two weeks prior. In addition, Zachary Healy rounded out the team in the championship game by making many crucial outs, including three outs with Brian on first base in one inning while playing shortstop with his right hand broken.

To top off a great season, Department Chair Dr. Mike Betenbaugh bought the whole team Johns Hopkins shirts. Congratulations to the Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering team for their repeat championship win, and thanks to all the players who come out week after week to make the season more enjoyable.

Like to knit? Like to sew? Want to learn?

Cast-Off, the JHU knitting/sewing circle, meets on the first and third Monday of every month at One World Cafe (on W. University Parkway, north of the Homewood campus), around 8:00 PM.

Bring a friend and spread the word—everyone is welcome, whether affiliated with JHU or not.

For more information, check out our website at <http://www.jhu.edu/knitting>
Or e-mail gradknitting@jhu.edu.



No Glove, No Love: Congratulations to the Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering Softball Team, who defeated Mechanical Engineering 11-5 at the GRO Summer Softball Championship on Thursday, August 26. Left to right: Kelly Hardesty, Jeff Kryzwon, Thomas "Dimi" Dimitroff, Tim Wetzel, Tom Kole, Eric "Frenchie" Jabart, Eric Lewandowski, Brian Daniels, Susan Napier, Ben Tang, and Samuel Lai. Not pictured: Steve Fischer, Christopher Charniak, KC Ahn, Julien Jones, Mike Gillmeister.

Hero, directed by Yimou Zhang, is a sweeping epic and artistic kung-fu drama set in pre-unified China, circa 200 B.C. The story begins as a soldier with no name (played by Jet Li) relates to the grateful but wary Emperor Qin (Daoming Chen) how he defeated Qin's three deadliest enemies, Broken Sword (Tony Leung Chiu Wai), Flying Snow (Maggie Cheung), and Sky (Donnie Yen). But Nameless (as the characters begin to call him) may not be all that he seems. As the Emperor begins to question the details of the story, we begin to see the story again and again from different perspectives (via several flashbacks, much like in Akira Kurosawa's *Rashomon*). As new truths are revealed, deeper layers of the narrative unfold, and unexpected twists and turns keep you guessing as to the true nature of each character.

Like in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, the laws of physics are on vacation here: Fighters float impossibly through the air, catch arrows with their bare hands, and dismantle entire sets with the merest flick of their swords. It's enough to make any fight choreographer drool. And even if fantasy-style wire fighting isn't your thing, the dynamic and vibrant cinematography is breathtaking. Each flashback has a different signature color, which is reflected in the sets

and costumes. If you look carefully, you'll notice that they match up with the five Chinese elements—fire, water, earth, wood, and metal. In one scene, Flying Snow duels with Broken Sword's servant girl, Moon (ably played by Ziyi Zhang, who you may remember as the girl from *Crouching Tiger*). Both are clothed in flowing red, while they duel on a field of fallen yellow leaves, which swirl around them as their swords kick up gusts of wind. It's freaking gorgeous.

Most of the cast are kung-fu movie veterans, and they pull off the fighting and the drama with grace and power. Jet Li exudes a quiet and powerful presence that gives the story a wonderful dramatic tension. This is beautifully balanced by the gruff forwardness displayed by Chen, as the Emperor. But the standouts here are Tony Leung and Maggie Cheung; rising to the challenge of depicting their characters in a different way for each flashback, they are versatile

and marvelous as Broken Sword and Flying Snow in all their incarnations.

There's a lot of really thoughtful philosophizing on love and war here, and it really adds to the beauty and depth of the movie. The romance and conflict of ideals that the characters struggle with infuse the story with passion and deeper meaning. The symbolism is everywhere—sometimes you may feel as though you're being hit over the head with it. Although the non-linear narrative may seem to some a little hard to follow, the movie strikes me as the kind of film you're not supposed to watch only once. I have a feeling that the more times you watch it, the more you'll get out of it.

So what are you waiting for? This movie rocks. And don't wait until it comes out on DVD. This movie is all sweeping panoramas and epic legends—it was made for the big screen.

Hero

Runtime: 96 min.
Rating: PG-13
Starring: Jet Li, Tony Liung Chiu Wai, Maggie Cheung, Donnie Yen, Daoming Chen
Reviewer's Rating:



(out of five swords)

Do you like free stuff?

Good, because the GRO just received a kick-ass shipment of promotional items. We now have tee-shirts, pads, pens, 12-ounce pilsner glasses, coffee mugs, and—yes, it's true—bullet-line Thermoses.

Want to buy some of this stuff? Too bad, you can't—it's **free!**



We'll give it away from time to time for no good reason at various GRO events...so come hang out with the GRO, and get free stuff!

From Frumpy to Fabulous!

Lyana Castaldo, Amanda Fond, and Sandra Sinishtaj, Chemistry

When we first looked at Mike Freeman, we thought to ourselves P-R-O-J-E-C-T. At first glance, you would think, "Here's a guy who loves the outdoors and defines *low maintenance*." Honestly, it looks like he's been camping for the past four or five days. For those of us who see him on a regular basis, we

Subject: Michael Francis Freeman
Age: 25
Sex: Male
Dept.: Biology
Last Date (not with himself): 3 Years Ago

have grown to appreciate his signature Hopkins sweatshirt, cargo jeans, and a hat that looks like he won it back from a pit bull encounter in nearby Druid Hill Park. Beneath this tired, yet comfortable look is a guy who is so money he doesn't even know it. He needs our help—he'll learn to love our

help before "Queer Eye" finds him and kidnaps him.

Mike's attributes that we plan to accentuate: killer smile, deep brown eyes, nice hair (not that anyone could have seen it under the hat), strong jaw line, and a build often hidden by baggy clothes.

In the "before" photo, you can see the hat hiding his hair, facial hair masking his jaw line and face, and clothes that just make him look slouchy. First, we started by raiding his closet: the boy has style! We noticed a few themes—cargo pants and jeans and solid, button-down shirts. We wanted to give him other options in his wardrobe—for example, shirts with patterns, more fashionable vintage jeans, and layering. We wanted to see him without the hat (see the close-up photo, not for those with weak stomachs), and we wanted to see him in colors that complement his skin tone. Light colors and gray seem to wash out Mike's complex-

ion. Bold colors like navy and burgundy work well. They can be combined with lighter colors to avoid the dullness of Mike's natural coloring.

And check out the "after" photo—ladies, watch out! We chose a light blue and yellow button-down shirt with a navy tee-shirt underneath, brown dress shoes, a brown belt, and straight-legged khaki pants. Although it appears that we also performed liposuction in just a few hours, it is truly the work of the tighter-fitting clothes on this fabulous bod! Mike's only comment was, "I never knew my ass could look this good." We decided to use a little product in his hair and went for the spiky look. We even went as far as adding some accessories such as a cell phone, which Mike has lacked since we've known him. In addition, we opted for contacts so that his eyes were more noticeable.

However, the makeover really isn't worth it unless the subject likes his new style. When we asked Mike if he had any comments, he replied, "Hopefully my new look will attract more women than before...it definitely can't be any worse. The Fab Femmes did it again! Thanks Sandra, Lyana, and Amanda—you unleashed a clean-cut sex machine." [Ed. Note: Yeah, thanks for that.]

Do you want to be made over by the Fab Femmes?
E-mail gradnews@jhu.edu.

