

TEXT Jessica Dailey  
PHOTO Mark Rawlings



# LIZZIE TO THE RESCUE

From tofu to trash, activist Lizzie Anderson makes a big difference by thinking small.

**I**f you're looking to make a difference, talk to Lizzie Anderson – she could give you a few pointers and some enthusiasm to get you moving. As Western Pennsylvania's student coordinator for Amnesty International, Anderson keeps a clear focus on bettering humanity and works as a contact point for thirteen different college groups.

We sat down at a small table in Schenley Plaza, and Anderson quickly made me feel like I should run out and volunteer. The music from the carousel drifted over us as she listed her affiliations and the simple things she does to make life better.

"When I came to Pitt three years ago, I found myself in this bubble of collegeness," said Anderson, adjusting her orange skirt and setting her bag at the foot of her chair. "I relied too much on Pittsburgh and I wanted to look outward, so I started going to Amnesty meetings."

As a whole organization, Amnesty works to increase human rights in every part of the world. At Pitt, the local chapter chooses seven or eight core issues on which to focus each year. "We deal mainly with what are known as 'urgent actions,'" said Anderson. "Certain issues can become more pressing than others and we try to focus our attention on those."

Recently, efforts to stop torture, violence against women, and the death penalty have become paramount topics, about all of which Anderson cares deeply: "It's overwhelming a lot of the time and I feel like I can't do enough," she said, leaning back in her chair. "But then I think of the many amazing people I know who are doing things in Pittsburgh and around the world, and it calms me down."

Anderson loves the sense of community within the city of Pittsburgh and is impressed by how well its residents come together to combat issues. Recently, there has been a lot of action taken to fight the excessive violence in Pittsburgh's neighborhoods. While the people of the city inspire Anderson with their ideas and productivity, she sees a lot of apathy among students. "Apathy is a very bad thing and it just makes me sad that I see so much of it at Pitt."

How do you combat that indifference? "Pay attention," said Anderson. Read the news and you can see how much there is to fix. Start attending school clubs – they can be a great gateway into other things. Read the *City Paper* and the *Pitt Chronicle* for lists of events throughout the year. Look for flyers and announcements on telephone poles, the internet, and in libraries, and sign up for online newsletters from groups like Amnesty, Student Volunteer Outreach,



## Lizzie's Vegan Favorites

Socially-conscious eating tastes a little bit better with the help of these vegan-friendly restaurants:

### **The Quiet Storm, Garfield**

5430 Penn Ave, quietstormcoffee.com  
"Great food, very well-priced."

### **Zenith, South Side**

86 S 26th St, zenithpgh.com  
"Amazing, almost totally vegan brunch every Sunday."

### **Orchids, North Oakland**

4519 Center Ave  
"Super tasty, mostly Indian, all vegetarian restaurant."

### **Sushi Boat, South Oakland**

128 Oakland Ave. [More info on p. 94]  
"It holds a special place in my heart."

### **Your place**

"Experiment! If you're scared of tofu, read about it. Tofu is your friend. It will take on almost any flavor you choose! Have a dinner party where all your guests bring something they've never worked with before and make it together. If it's bad, you can laugh about it with people you know and love."

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- [1] American Civil Liberties Union [aclu.org](http://aclu.org)
- [2] Amnesty International [amnesty.org](http://amnesty.org)
- [3] Community Human Services Corp. [chscorp.org](http://chscorp.org)
- [4] East End Food Co-op [eastendfoodcoop.com](http://eastendfoodcoop.com)
- [5] Pgh Farmers' Market Directory [justharvest.org](http://justharvest.org)
- [6] Pitt Chronicle [chronicle.pitt.edu](http://chronicle.pitt.edu)
- [7] Pittsburgh City Paper [pittsburghcitypaper.ws](http://pittsburghcitypaper.ws)
- [8] Planned Parenthood [plannedparenthood.org](http://plannedparenthood.org)
- [9] Rustbelt Radio [radio.indypgh.org](http://radio.indypgh.org)
- [10] Student Volunteer Outreach [svo.pitt.edu](http://svo.pitt.edu)
- [11] The Thomas Merton Center [thomasmertoncenter.org](http://thomasmertoncenter.org)
- [12] WWOOF [wwooof.org](http://wwooof.org)

American Civil Liberties Union, and Planned Parenthood. Talk to friends and professors, people on the street who are involved with these things and ask them to point you in the right direction. Anderson also suggests checking out the Thomas Merton Center, a resource and organizing center for social justice projects, on Penn Avenue and listening to Rustbelt Radio, an independent weekly radio program that covers news that is often overlooked by corporate media. "If all previous methods have failed, find out what you want to do and start your own thing!" said Anderson. "Everything came from something – why can't you be that something? And hey, talk to me, because I might be interested, too."

Aside from tackling social issues through Amnesty, Anderson turns everyday decisions into "individual acts of activism." As a vegan, Anderson avoids purchasing all animal products, including cheese, milk, and eggs, because she does not support how produce companies treat, kill, and process animals and their by-products. "It may seem really small, but not buying the product takes away that funding from the company."

Anderson wasn't always a vegan. She started acting on her feelings about food politics and the earth when she came to college, though she had previously been exploring the idea of alternative cuisine. Her vegan lifestyle led her to work for a local farmers' market, and also to the World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms, or WWOOF, a group that teaches volunteers about organic growing and its benefits for the environment.

"Markets like the one I work at are great for cities," Anderson said as she smoothed a wrinkle in her tank top. "They connect us urban dwellers back to the reality of our food supply and show us how choices we make really are important locally and internationally."

Nearly every neighborhood in Pittsburgh holds a market from the summer through early fall. Sennott Square is home to Oakland's market every Friday. After the markets shut down for the winter, Anderson suggests going to the co-op in Point Breeze, or Whole Foods or Giant Eagle on Centre Avenue, both of which sell local produce.

Along with her choice of food, Anderson's choice of furniture is also a form of activism. It's been said that one man's trash is another man's treasure, and for a "dumpster diver" like Anderson, this is completely true. "I [found] almost all my furniture from dumpstering. It's great – it's getting something free and it's not creating waste."

Dumpster diving propagates the same ideals that led Anderson to veganism: It's a choice of where she wants to place her contributions. By using old furniture, not only does she make a choice that benefits the environment, she also shows that she does not support the excess created by the mass industry.

Currently, Anderson works as an intern with the Community Human Service Corporation in Oakland, but she remains active with Amnesty.

"There are so many ways that people can be active. Find something that you care about and just do it." ●

# Katz: The Pitt MBA That Opens Doors

Jason Pickerill chose to pursue a part-time MBA at the University of Pittsburgh when he realized a management position wasn't going to be handed to him.

"Actually the Katz program chose me," he says. "Because it is nationally recognized, it stood out wherever I looked. I also liked that courses combined group work, individual work and field study and that much of the program simulated business situations."

"Obtaining my MBA part time, at my own speed, has opened so many doors to so many jobs by allowing me to choose exactly where I wanted to work."

Visit [www.myPittMBA.com](http://www.myPittMBA.com) for more information or call 412-648-1700.

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