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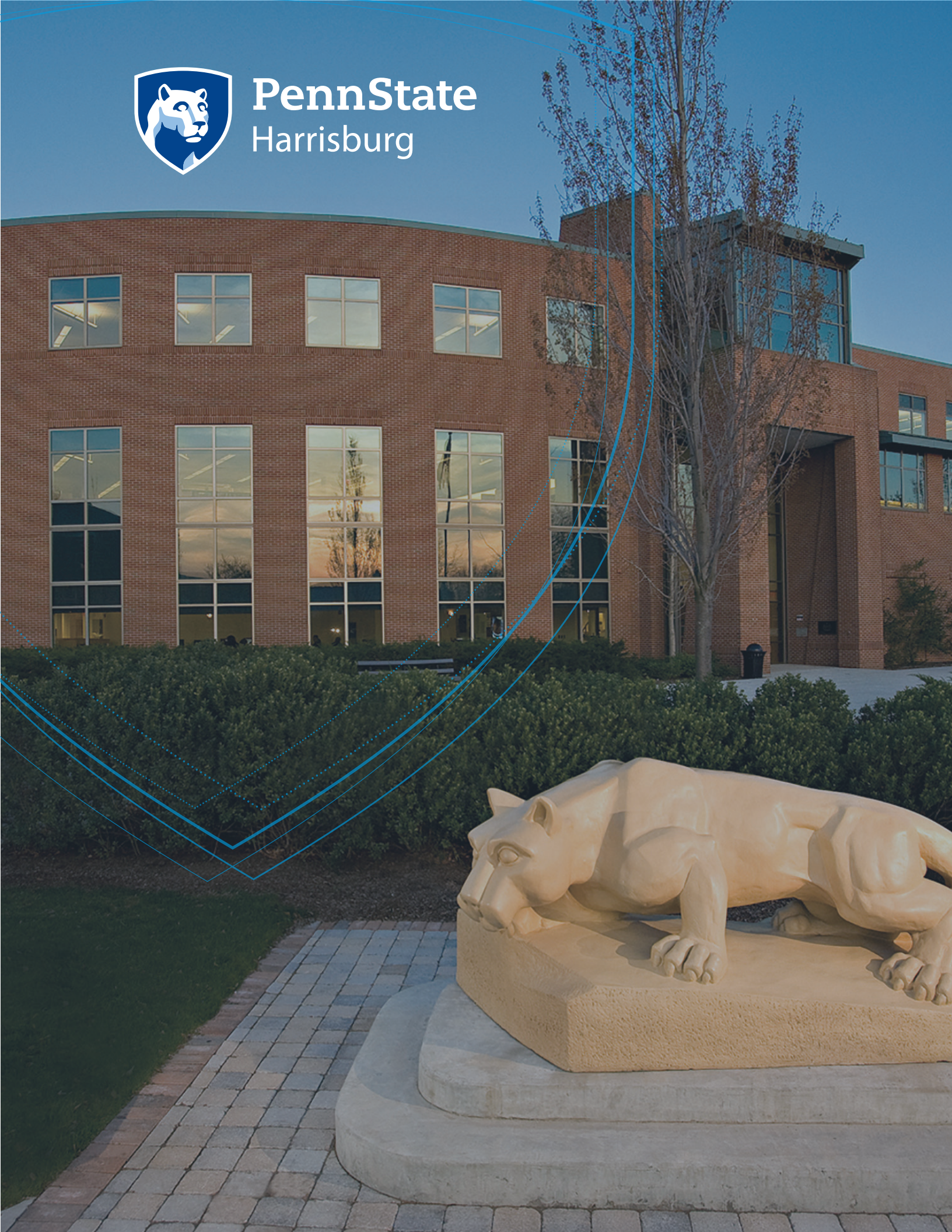


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Vol. 30 No. 2

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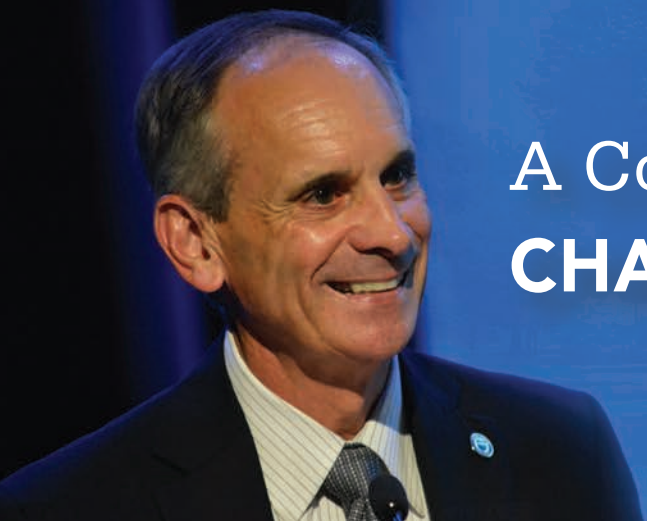


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Correction: The recent Currents article "College dedicates the Courtney Pollock Memorial Field and Softball Complex," (Vol. 30, Number 1) misidentified Courtney Pollock as a graduate of Penn State Harrisburg. Ms. Pollock was a graduate of Penn State University Park. We apologize for the error.



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A Conversation with **CHANCELLOR JOHN MASON**

On why he returned to Penn State Harrisburg

Penn State changed the trajectory of my life, and although I took a circuitous route to getting my first degrees, I truly benefitted from the vast network of resources that Penn State provides to students.

You hear people talk about being first generation college graduates, well I was a first generation high school graduate. Many in my family, including both of my parents, took jobs in local factories near my hometown in the Allentown area – my father worked in a cement factory and my mother in a dress factory. I assumed that after high school, I would follow a somewhat similar path. I enrolled in what was then Penn State Allentown with a plan to earn an associate’s degree and then get a job.

What I learned, though, was that my faculty members in Allentown had good connections with faculty at Penn State Harrisburg – known then as the Capitol Campus. The Harrisburg campus was fairly new at the time, and was unique in that you could go there to complete a bachelor’s degree after starting your first two years elsewhere. Thanks to the inspiration of faculty at both Penn State locations, I went on to earn my bachelor’s degree, and began a long journey in higher education.

I worked as a civil engineer for several years and then decided to return to school for a master’s and then a Ph.D. I eventually landed back at Penn State as a professor at University Park. I later became a dean in the College of Engineering and headed up several research institutes. So, I really have had a very well-rounded experience with many aspects of the University.

Following that, I spent ten years at Auburn University as vice president for research and economic development. But, I never lost my passion and affinity for Penn State, and I followed along closely as Penn State Harrisburg evolved so dramatically and successfully. Being invited back to be considered as the new chancellor was an honor. I believe that my experience and understanding of Penn State are well suited to lead Penn State Harrisburg into its next phase, yet I remain humbled by the opportunity.

On changes at the college

There have been many! The first, of course, is the physical appearance. When I was here in the early 70s, there wasn’t much of a campus feel. The area was plain-looking – not much landscaping – with a few buildings, all of which were repurposed Air Force base structures. Today, Penn State Harrisburg looks like a college campus, with a beautiful quad, new buildings and enhanced spaces expressly designed to serve their particular purposes. All of this enhances our students’ experience here.

Another major change is the breadth of academic offerings. This campus has become one of the most comprehensive of the University’s campuses outside of University Park. When I was a student, the campus was a graduate program center and also offered the last two years of study – junior and senior year – at the undergraduate level. Today, a student can come to Penn State Harrisburg for a two or four-year degree, a master’s, or a doctorate in one of the college’s more than 65 academic programs.

All of this has led to another major change for the campus – the makeup of the student body. Over time, Penn State Harrisburg has become not only a destination for Pennsylvania students, but for students from the mid-Atlantic states, across the U.S. and around the world. Ours is one of Penn State’s most diverse campuses, with students from more than 40 states and 50 countries.

One of my earliest experiences since returning as chancellor, was when my wife and I, and our daughter, began meeting students and their families on move-in day. During those conversations, and in many since, I have been struck by

the number of students who come here, not only because we offer access to a valuable Penn State degree, but because they are seeking our programs uniquely and because they are most comfortable in the type of campus community that has been established here.

I believe that my experience and understanding of Penn State are well suited to lead Penn State Harrisburg into its next phase, yet I remain humbled by the opportunity.

Dr. John M. Mason Jr., a 1972 graduate of Penn State Harrisburg, returned to lead the campus in August 2018 after having served as vice president for research and economic development at Auburn University in Alabama. Prior to that, Mason served as an associate dean of the Penn State College of Engineering. During his time at Penn State, Mason was also a professor of civil engineering and director of the Pennsylvania Transportation Institute and the Institute for Advanced Studies in Transportation Engineering and Management.

Now eight months into his new role at his old home, Dr. Mason shares some experiences and answers the most frequently asked questions since his tenure as chancellor began.

On what is ahead for Penn State Harrisburg

This college has built a reputation for academic excellence. I expect that to continue to be enhanced. We will continue to focus on ways to make our students' educational experiences superior, whether that is by affording them more internships and real-world learning opportunities, improving learning spaces on campus, supporting service-learning initiatives, or expanding leadership training, to name just a few. We have already taken steps to ensure that students have "a seat at the table" on college leadership bodies; this is another important type of real-life experience for interested students.

Research and scholarship inform teaching and are another way that our institution brings value to the region. There are numerous examples of current research projects that are improving our communities. Penn State Harrisburg faculty and students are working to create sustainable building materials, enhance local water quality, improve police and community relations, and provide resources to stem opioid addiction – and these are just some of the examples. Going forward, I expect that we will position the college to expand research opportunities in all areas.

An important factor in enhancing research will be our ability to expand partnerships with public and private organizations, another college priority.

By joining together with others, we can simultaneously advance the college mission

and serve the needs of the region. Several efforts that have begun already meet these goals and utilize expertise from across the college.

One example is a smart home initiative. In its earliest stages, the vision is to create a premier institutional research and testing center for technologies, policies, and practices that enhance the quality of life in the home, especially for those with declining abilities or disabilities. This type of initiative can benefit industry partners – by providing data for informed decision-making and innovations for product development, for example. It can become a resource center for citizens and provide students with many hands-on learning opportunities.

Another example is the establishment of a Launchbox within our Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, part of the University's Invent Penn State initiative. Through this initiative, the University is working to empower entrepreneurs from within and outside of Penn State and provide tools to bring great ideas to the marketplace. The goal is to have meaningful impact on student career success and to drive local economic development. Penn State Harrisburg, through its new Launchbox, is expanding its presence in Harrisburg and providing resources and services to new and expanding businesses in the region.

The opportunities for Penn State Harrisburg to continue to grow in all areas – whether enhancing students' academic experiences or extending the college's impact within the region – are limitless. We know that there will be challenges, of course. But, I am excited about the potential and I look forward to shaping the future of this campus, just as the campus helped shape my future.

The opportunities for Penn State Harrisburg to continue to grow in all areas – whether enhancing students' academic experiences or extending the college's impact within the region – are limitless.



Common reading program explores an “immortal life”

Penn State Harrisburg Reads, the college’s common reading program for the campus community, kicked off its inaugural year in fall 2018 with the New York Times bestselling novel “The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks” by Rebecca Skloot.

The book tells the story of Henrietta Lacks, an African American woman who in 1951 became the source of the scientific discovery of HeLa cells – the world’s first “immortal cells.” These cancerous cells, which were taken from her body without her permission, became the source of numerous medical breakthroughs, including the development of the polio vaccine and cloning. Approximately 20 tons of HeLa cells have been grown in laboratories around the world and are involved in nearly 11,000 patents.

Penn State Harrisburg Reads “is designed to provide a shared experience among students who read the same book while also creating a campaign that fosters dialogue and engagement about the concepts introduced in the book for the campus at large,” explains Perdeta

Bush, the program’s coordinator.

Skloot’s book discusses Lacks’ story and ties together many themes: morality and ethics; racism, classism, sexism; technology and globalization; human suffering; scientific progress versus personal privacy; and immortality. The book explores the process of ethical scientific discovery, and what happens when human subjects aren’t protected.

“It is a book about ... how that one person – even unbeknownst to her – made this huge contribution to the world,” Bush said. “Rebecca [Skloot] was in her freshman biology class when she heard about Henrietta Lacks and the HeLa cells. She said, ‘there’s got to be more to this story,’ and for ten years, she researched and was on the journey to write this book...you never know what you are going to hear in class or at an event that will spark an interest and define your career and who you are for the rest of your life.”

Dr. Felicia Brown-Haywood, director of the Division of Student Affairs and Engagement, emphasized that the program is a strategic initiative to build “purposeful partnerships, facilitating community and shared experiences through a myriad of learning methods.”

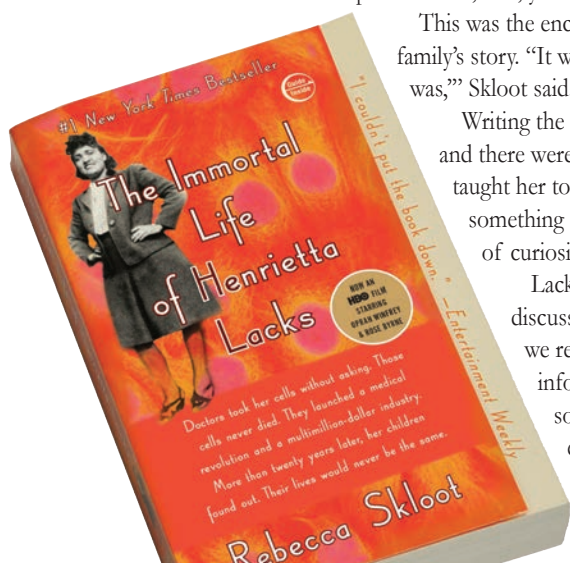
Extensive and diverse programming was built around the book, featuring events for the college community and the public. The college’s Office of Multicultural Recruitment and Community Affairs, for example, hosted a group of middle school students from the Harrisburg School District to participate in activities related to the book. The students received copies of the book, screened the HBO film about it, discussed its themes, and participated in a DNA extraction activity. Other events included movie screenings, guest speakers, book club discussions, research projects, contests, and more.

The program’s premier event featured an evening with author Rebecca Skloot and members of the Lacks family. Skloot told the story of the first time she contacted the Lacks family for information. “I was pretty clueless about journalism, about writing, and I had no idea any of this story had happened the way it did. I just knew that I needed to find out who she was, and when I called Deborah [Henrietta’s daughter] saying I want to write about your mother, she responded with, ‘No, you’re not.’”

This was the encounter that really piqued Skloot’s curiosity and motivated her to pursue researching the Lacks family’s story. “It was in that sentence that I said, ‘Something happened to this family, and I have to know what that was,’” Skloot said.

Writing the book was an enduring process. “It was 11 years from start to finish. That first call was in 1999, and there were so many hurdles on the way,” Skloot said. She attributes her perseverance to Deborah Lacks, who taught her to follow the trail of questions she would have. “I can now trace every moment in my career to something that made me stop and go, ‘Wait, what? Why? How?’” Skloot said, “Learning to recognize moments of curiosity is one of the lessons I hope students learn from this book.”

Lacks family members at the event included Veronica Robinson, Lacks’ great granddaughter, who discussed the huge difference the book made to the Lacks family. “After the book came out, that’s when we really got to find out about our grandmother’s contributions to science, as well as finding out more information about our grandmother as a woman, as a person, as a mother... We learned that sometimes, bad things happen to good people so that great things can happen to the world, and that’s exactly what happened when Rebecca came out with the book. It allowed us to release some of that hurt and allowed the elders to heal properly and face some of the things they didn’t want to face.”





'Ethicsville' town meeting tackles school gun violence

High school students from central Pennsylvania recently took part in a mock town meeting at Penn State Harrisburg for the fictional town of "Ethicsville." The discussion centered on the ethics of how to meet the threat of mass shootings in school settings.

Glen Mazis, distinguished professor of humanities and philosophy, and J. Craig Haas, lecturer in humanities, from the college's School of Humanities, served as town council president and mayor respectively.

"The fictional town meeting dealt with a very real issue: how to ethically consider our response to the fact that 219,000 children and young adults have been caught in the chaos of school shootings since the Columbine shooting in 1999," said Mazis.

The event was designed to show students how to enter into "the kind of creative, open dialogue that our democracy needs to foster and maintain to be vibrant and just," he added.

Participants included Penn State Harrisburg students from three ethics philosophy classes, along with 140 students and teachers from several nearby high schools.

The participants considered a number of approaches to the problem – ranging from not allowing any guns in schools; to allowing anyone who attends the school and is legally able to have a gun to bring it to school – and the ethical justification for each approach.

The ethical pros and cons of the different approaches were debated by teams of students representing various groups and organizations who would be involved in such a town hall meeting – the school board, the teachers union, student groups, the NRA, the ACLU, the PTA, the local newspaper, police departments, and religious organizations.

"[The event] was an opportunity for students to learn and practice how to argue from the vantage of ethical perspectives instead of merely personal feelings, and also to understand that those who have differing opinions have ethical reasons for their positions," Mazis said.

"Hopefully, this event also helped the students to learn that ethical reasoning can help sort out various options of response to achieve a principled life and not just a practically expedient one," Mazis added. "It also offered the high school students the opportunity to see the power of higher education to refine our mind and spirits."



Researcher examines new approach for funding social issue solutions

Penn State Harrisburg researcher Sheela Pandey, assistant professor of management in the School of Business Administration, is examining a new approach for funding initiatives aimed at solving challenging social issues.

First launched in the United Kingdom in 2010 and in the U.S. in 2013, social impact bonds – or SIBs – are multi-party contracts between agencies seeking financial support and funders with money to lend them. Instead of relying on tax revenue or donations, state and local governments are signing contracts with investment houses, banks and foundations, leveraging investor capital and expertise from service providers to do everything from helping the homeless find shelter, to rehabilitating drug addicts.

This approach is timely, emerging when the federal government and states are cutting back on "safety-net" spending, Pandey says.

Pandey, with several colleagues, is taking a closer look at the contractual hazards and transaction costs in social impact bonds.

According to Pandey, social impact bonds are so new that it is too early to claim that they are effective. Some programs have been successful, while others have failed. Based on a preliminary analysis, she has found two ways in which social impact bonds can benefit recipients. One is in launching innovative social interventions and programs; the other is scaling up previously launched approaches and programs.

"We believe that social impact bonds have the potential to bring needed financing to support innovative ways of delivering social services," Pandey said. "But, funding projects this way will probably cost more due to the additional coordination and evaluation required."

Among the many social issues that SIBs have addressed are juvenile criminal justice, green infrastructure, immigration and refugee employment, and family stability.

"Worldwide, there is great interest in SIBs," says Pandey. Since the first bonds were launched, a total of 108 have raised about \$392 million, impacting more than 700,000 people in 25 countries, she said.

The U.S. debut social impact bond sought to help Rikers Island inmates stay out of trouble after prison through education and counseling. According to Pandey, the project failed to meet its benchmarks.

"The second U.S. social impact bond program targeted early childhood education in Salt Lake County, Utah. This program was declared a success because it achieved a 99 percent success rate in reducing the need for special education in elementary school," Pandey said.

SIBs have attracted supporters and skeptics. Pandey noted that some people are excited to see "a new avenue opening up for impact investing, while some disagree with the notion that profit-seeking investors should have a say regarding the delivery of services for people facing economic hardship."

Testing new uses for incinerator waste

Research shows waste ash could end up in building products instead of landfills

Trash incinerators produce massive amounts of ash, which ends up in landfills. In the United States, available land space for landfills is decreasing, and the construction industry is looking for ways to utilize more sustainable materials.

Grady Mathews, assistant professor of civil engineering in the School of Science, Engineering, and Technology, and his students are testing a process that could provide solutions to both problems.

Mathews believes that after some refinement, ash from waste can be used as a partial replacement for sand in cement-based construction materials, like concrete. Sustainability initiatives and available subsidies to offset landfill disposal costs provide a significant incentive to use the ash this way, he said.

According to Mathews, although using ash in construction materials has been studied before, no one has developed a wide-scale process to refine the ash into a product that meets environmental and structural requirements. Ash from solid waste contains large amounts of heavy metals, salts, and organics that must be filtered out before the material can be used.

Mathews is working with Pure Recovery Group, a Toronto-based company with offices in York, Pennsylvania, which had developed a state-approved recycling process to refine the ash, with the resulting product known as reclaimed sands.

Pure Recovery Group processes ash from the York County Solid Waste Authority incinerator plant. Dave Vollero, executive director of the waste authority, said he is excited about the potential.

“We’ve been working on this for a long time,” he said. **“It saves landfill space and has a compounding benefit. It will make waste-to-energy more attractive, and saves greenhouse gas emissions compared to landfills. It’s an**

environmental plus all around as well as an economic plus.”

According to Mathews, Penn State Harrisburg’s tests show that masonry block made with reclaimed sands meets required international material standards specifications. The masonry blocks have the required strength to be used in construction and are lighter than traditional blocks. Mathews and his students continue to test the product’s performance.

Vollero said it could still be a while before the masonry blocks are widely sold, but many municipalities have already shown interest.

“We need to make them on a regular basis and consistently,” he said, before they can go to market.

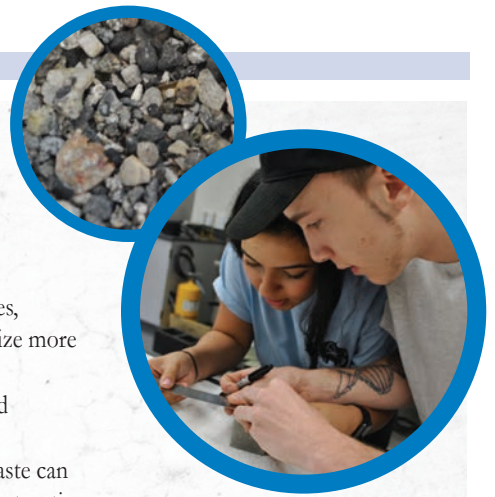
The Pure Recovery Group is working on other ways to use the ash aggregate in concrete, Chief Operating Officer Jay Berman said. **“We’re working with Penn State Harrisburg to prove that the material can do the job,” he said. “It’s all about gathering data. Penn State Harrisburg has been an invaluable asset.”**

While reclaimed sands meet standards for masonry blocks, the sands currently do not meet all of the requirements to be used in concrete. During cement processing, aluminum within the ash aggregate produces hydrogen gas that becomes trapped in the concrete and reduces its structural capacity. Masonry blocks are subjected to minimal hydrogen gas effects.

Mathews is working with a colleague in chemical engineering, Faeghen Moazeni, to test pre-treatment solutions of the reclaimed sands to be used in concrete.

Perfecting the process to meet specifications for concrete could help buildings meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for sustainability, Mathews said.

“Engineers have a responsibility to use materials that are safe and sustainable. We shouldn’t always do the same old thing. I want to do something that has real impact,” he said.



Research opportunity in Turkey provides student a firsthand look at refugee plight

Lydia Williams was a high school student when she became engrossed with the plight of Syrian refugees. The crisis was just beginning in 2012, and on a whim she picked up a book called “The Syrian Rebellion” by Fouad Ajami. It changed her life.

“I liked the book so much, I wrote the author a letter, and he responded,” she said. “He shared my letter with Syrian refugees in Lebanon, to show that some Americans actually cared. It forged that basic human connection beyond the news.”

Now a senior political science major at Penn State Harrisburg, Williams has kept her focus on Syrian refugees. This year she had an opportunity to travel to Turkey to study the plight of the refugees through the Turkish Heritage Organization Summer Research Program.

Williams was one of eight students nationwide selected for the program. Each focused on a particular issue of the refugee crisis. Williams chose to study the education of Syrian refugee children, and specifically the transition from a program organized with the belief that the children would eventually return to Syria to one acknowledging that the civil war has no end in sight.

It’s a difficult transition, Williams said. “Some Syrian children might have started school in their native land, then studied Arabic with refugee teachers in Turkey, and now go to Turkish public schools with hopes of eventual relocation to a third country. It’s quite disruptive,” she said.

The 3.5 million Syrian refugees in Turkey include 900,000 school age children. Early during the Syrian civil war, the children studied in Temporary Education Centers, either in Turkish cities or refugee camps. The teachers were also Syrian refugees, and the curriculum was taught in Arabic.

In 2016, the Ministry of National Education began moving students to public schools, with the purpose of integrating them into Turkish society. The first year, students in grades one, five and twelve moved over, with more

classes following.

“There are questions about how to teach the kids, the language barrier, how to streamline them into the system. There are confidence and identity issues,” Williams said. “Some don’t want to learn Turkish; they want to learn English, with hopes of resettlement to a third country like the U.K.”

Some Turkish parents are concerned that refugees are taking resources from their own children, she said. Some Syrian parents worry about their children’s safety while walking to school. Syrian teenagers often have to work to help their family’s finances.

Williams met with officials with the Ministry of National Education, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, and many other non-governmental organizations, government organizations, academics and refugee groups.

Williams and the other research participants started their three week stay in Istanbul, then moved to Ankara and eventually Gaziantep, where they visited the Nizip 2 Container City. About 4,000 people there live in 1,000 shipping containers, each about 200 square feet.

“This is where I really got shocked. This is where I lost it inside,” Williams wrote in her blog.

Not many outsiders are allowed to visit the refugee camp, she said. The community has a school, a mosque, a grocery store, a health center and a community center. A number of the refugees there have jobs at nearby pistachio farms.

(Continued on page 11.)



PHOTO PROVIDED BY LYDIA WILLIAMS

College plans residency program aimed at stemming school teacher shortages

Penn State Harrisburg is among eight universities that received state funding to develop and implement year-long undergraduate residency programs for teachers, part of an effort to increase and retain the number of teachers serving the state’s public schools.

“This is an innovative opportunity for Penn State Harrisburg to create a teacher residency program at the undergraduate level,” said Jane Wilburne, chair of teacher education in the School of Behavioral Sciences and Education. “Similar programs around the country are mostly offered at the master’s level. We are very excited for the unique possibility of offering this program to our students, and ultimately helping to address teacher shortages in Pennsylvania.”

Wilburne and colleagues are identifying and developing strategies for a teacher residency program that provides a hands-on full year of residency experience for teacher candidates in a local school. The program courses are aimed at providing culturally responsive training to teachers who will be in multicultural school settings.

Penn State Harrisburg is collaborating with Central Dauphin, Middletown Area and Steelton-Highspire school districts, as well as the Lincoln Intermediate Unit, the Center for Schools and Communities, and Harrisburg Area Community College, to establish the residency program to prepare teacher candidates for positions throughout Pennsylvania.

The program will target middle schools in these districts. According to Joel Geary, teacher education research project manager at Penn State Harrisburg, the districts identified the middle school level because this is a time of significant transition for students as they move from being taken care of in elementary schools to being virtually independent in high school. “That transition is key,” he said.

The project also aims to create a recruitment, application and selection process for underrepresented candidates to participate in the residency program.

“This unique project will ensure successful preparation of underrepresented teacher candidates to work in high-needs schools and be positioned to secure a position at one of the participating school districts,” said Geary. “This will help the districts be actively involved in the selection, preparation and placement of candidates throughout the program and fill their teaching shortage areas with highly qualified teachers.”

“This program also gives us the ability to be able to recruit people who may not have selected teaching as their career path, especially those from some of the underrepresented groups,” Wilburne added.

“This is an innovative opportunity for Penn State Harrisburg to create a teacher residency program at the undergraduate level.”



Cultivating innovation: Alumni create engineering firm, establish scholarship to give back



The friendship of alums Scott Kupper, Karl Miller, and Craig Rosenberger, left to right, led to them coming together to form Kupper Engineering and create a scholarship for engineering students.

When growing up in the same neighborhood in Northeast Philadelphia, Penn State Harrisburg alums Scott Kupper ('93) and Karl Miller ('94) had no idea they would one day be business partners. "We knew of each other, back in the day," Miller said, "but we were in different grades and had different classes, so we weren't really friends by any means."

Heading to Penn State Abington to study electrical engineering technology (EET), Kupper and Miller had the chance to meet and connect, while also meeting Craig Rosenberger ('93). Kupper and Rosenberger were roommates, and although the two knew Miller through association, they did not become true friends until they all transferred to Penn State Harrisburg to complete their bachelor's degrees. As their schooling ended and their new careers developed, they became closer friends. All three entered the engineering field working for various companies before coming back together to form Kupper Engineering.

The idea to start an independent engineering firm started organically. Kupper said, while working for a larger engineering company, "I realized that I was bringing in all of my own work and handling the projects myself. Some of the things that I wanted to do, the company wasn't really doing... so I decided to go out on my own and try it." Kupper explains that, at the advent of new technology to enhance forms of renewable energy, he was interested in developing skills in this area. As focus shifted to more environmentally friendly sources of energy, Kupper honed in on a field that was relatively under-explored at the time.

"The work got really busy, really fast," Kupper says. He decided to bring in Miller, and Rosenberger a year or so later, as vice presidents, chief operating officer and chief technology officer, respectively. Each with unique skill sets, they have grown the firm to work on large energy, controls and mechanical, electrical, and plumbing projects nationwide. With a focus on renewable energy, primarily solar power, and other traditional engineering consulting, the company has grown over the last 14 years. Kupper, Miller, and Rosenberger agree that their Penn State experience played a major role in their ability to run their company together, and contributed to their desire to give back to their alma mater by introducing a new scholarship.

The Kupper Engineering Scholarship is intended for EET majors who are in their third year at Penn State Harrisburg or later. "We know that a lot of engineering majors drop out or change majors in the first two years," Miller says, "so we wanted to reward those students who are close to and dedicated in getting that degree." The scholarship was awarded to its first recipient, Benjamin Westhafer of Middletown, Pennsylvania, in October.

Westhafer, 27, decided on Penn State Harrisburg only after dropping out of high school at 17, obtaining his GED a few years later, and then enrolling

– and excelling – at Harrisburg Area Community College. An electronics enthusiast with a knack for repairing gaming consoles, he transferred to Penn State Harrisburg in 2017 where he was recruited for the PPL Engineering Ambassadors program. Its goal is to encourage kids to pursue an education and career in the STEM fields, he explains.

Kupper, Miller, and Rosenberger felt a strong sense of fulfillment when they returned to campus last fall and met Westhafer and saw how Penn State Harrisburg has evolved over the years.

Not having been to the campus for almost a decade, each reflected on their college years, and how going back reminded them the rewarding experience they had. Rosenberger says he didn't realize until much later how profound an impact Penn State Harrisburg had on him. "[Faculty] really care about the students and trying to set them up for life," he said. After graduation, the three realized how much passion for learning was imparted upon them. Miller expanded on Rosenberger's praise of the faculty. "Since we have a more hands-on degree, having a curriculum that has really focused on the critical thinking process in practical ways was very necessary for getting ahead in our industry. There was a balance that I don't think is common for other engineering programs," Miller explains.

The fact that all three went to the same campus heightened their ability to run their company smoothly. In attending many of the same classes, and building on their relationships as friends, belonged to a community centered in respect. "When you take that risk to go out on your own, you want the people by your side that you trust and respect, in terms of friendship and in terms of intellect," Miller said.

Maintaining a personal relationship alongside a professional one has not been difficult, according to Miller. "We all balance each other out really well," he said. In growing the company that Kupper created, it has always been important to continue to nurture their friendship. This has allowed them to take risks and support each other in ways that have significantly and positively impacted their business.

Each of the men discussed the advice that they would give to those who might be considering a similar path. While leaning on concepts of lifelong learning, each expressed their own view. "Take all of the classes that can be taken in the field," Rosenberger says, "These new labs with a lot of the practical training that we are seeing today are great, and address real-world problems." Kupper echoed this practical sentiment. "Graduating from college, it's difficult to know what you're really going to do... But take all of the training and exams that you can that might speak to what jobs might require, especially while all of that information is fresh." Miller agrees, "The most important thing is to never be afraid to ask questions or take advantage of the things offered that will further learning. There is so much opportunity in this field."

Whiting gift jump starts track facilities

Kent Whiting, a 2007 Penn State Harrisburg graduate, has committed a gift of \$150,000 to support new track and field facilities at the college. The Whiting Family Throwing Complex will help Penn State Harrisburg take its track and field program to a new level of excellence by providing for a facility on campus. The track and field teams currently train at off-campus locations.

Whiting and his family grew up in the region. He attended Central Dauphin East High School and his three sons attended Central Dauphin High School. He first served Penn State Harrisburg as an advisory board member. This involvement eventually led to his enrollment in the information systems master's degree program.

Today, Whiting wears his love for Penn State Harrisburg on his shoulder in the form of a Nittany Lion tattoo. His love for track and field began with his son Ryan, who discovered the sport in junior high and went on to become an Olympic athlete and seven-time All American at Arizona State University competing in the shot put. The elder Whiting emphasizes his belief that track and field is really a team sport with "great students who all have the spirit of pulling for each other."

Whiting's love for Penn State and for track and field, along with the desire to honor his late wife Jill, were the catalyst behind his gift.

"We began talking about this a number of years ago and it really resonated with me," Whiting said. "Not only was there a connection with my son being in the sport, but also the opportunity, with the naming, to be able to honor our entire family, because we are all in this together. My wife Christine, my sons and I are really excited about it. I am really glad it has all worked out and happy to be able to do this. I am excited for the future of the project."

Penn State Harrisburg's track and field program was established in 2014. Since that time, the program has had much success. The program has led the Capital Athletic Conference (CAC), and has sent several track and field athletes to NCAA Division III national championships, and produced three All-American athletes.

Penn State Harrisburg Chancellor John Mason, a 1972 graduate of the college, acknowledged the Whiting's gift and its impact. "We are extremely grateful to the Whiting's for their generosity and support of Penn State Harrisburg," Mason said. "Their commitment will help us begin to fulfill the vision for a track and field facility for our deserving student athletes."

Research opportunity

(Continued from page 9.)

Also accompanying the Turkish Heritage Organization students was Juliette Toley, an assistant professor of political science at Penn State Harrisburg and Williams' adviser. Toley has years of experience studying the refugee crisis in Turkey.

"There is a lot of value in doing field research," she said. "Every time I go there is something new. Seeing an issue in context makes you feel differently, it makes your research much higher quality. You grow as a citizen of the world."

Williams is using her research to write her honors thesis. She is not sure where her career will take her, but she is currently applying to graduate schools. She graduates from Penn State Harrisburg in May.

No matter her career path, "Syria will continue to be a focus," she said. And although her first mentor, the author Ajami, passed away in 2014, "I want to make him proud," Williams said.



Athletics Roundup



General

Penn State Harrisburg intercollegiate athletics will return to the North Eastern Athletic Conference (NEAC) starting in the 2019-2020 season, after six years in the Capital Athletic Conference (CAC). The college was formerly a member of NEAC from 2007 to 2013.

Women's Volleyball

The Penn State Harrisburg Women's Volleyball team earned the American Volleyball Coaches Association Team Academic Award for the 2018 season.

Brittany Wolf (Stewartstown, Pa.) became the college's volleyball career kills leader with 633 kills.



Women's Tennis

The Penn State Harrisburg Women's Tennis team earned Intercollegiate Tennis Association All-Academic Team status for the 2018 season with five players earning Scholar-Athlete status.



Women's Soccer

The United Soccer Coaches has honored Penn State Harrisburg's women's soccer program with the organization's 2018 College Team Academic Award.

Women's soccer players Mackenzie Haladay (Elysburg, Pa.), Madison Hemler (Boiling Springs, Pa.) and Kaeleigh Smedley (Elizabethtown, Pa.) earned CAC All-Conference recognition.



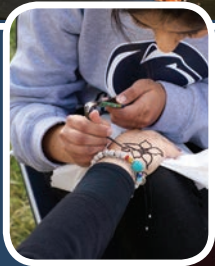
Men's Soccer

Men's soccer tied the program record for most wins in a single season with 14 (tied with the 2014 team) and had the best single-season winning percentage in program history at .727.

Penn State Harrisburg men's soccer players Joey Aman (Annapolis, Md.) and Ethan Hoover (Gap, Pa.) earned CAC All-Conference recognition.

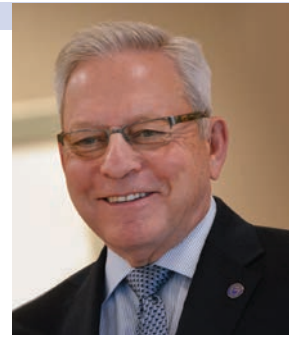


Worldfest, held in October 2018, encouraged global interaction and celebration of the vitality of the college's diverse campus community. The Tour of the World event offered an opportunity for everyone to virtually "travel" around the world. Other activities included a parade representing 50 countries and traditional international performances, as well as a panel discussion about studying abroad.



Alumnus Rick Barger receives University alumni service award

Rick Barger, a 1971 bachelor's of business administration graduate of Penn State Harrisburg, has received the Philip Philip Mitchell Alumni Service Award from the Penn State Alumni Association for his significant contributions in public service on behalf of the University.



Rick Barger

Barger, a retired financial executive, was most recently the executive vice president and treasurer at Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries, of Allentown, Pennsylvania. Diakon operates a dozen senior living and housing communities and a range of services for children, youths, families, and older adults in Pennsylvania and Maryland, directly serving more than 63,000 people annually.

A prestigious recognition endowed by Philip P. and Elizabeth Mitchell, the Alumni Service Award allows for the recipient to choose a Penn State fund, project, or initiative to support with a \$1,000 gift made in the recipient's name. Barger's award supports the Student Emergency Assistance Fund.

Barger has provided more than three decades of dedicated service to Penn State. His commitment to a Penn State Harrisburg education began from his earliest days as a student. While finishing his bachelor's degree, he would walk several miles each class day from his apartment to campus, leaving the car at home for his wife, Patty, who was expecting twins. Today, he is the chair of Penn State Harrisburg's "Campaign for a Greater Penn State" Committee and dedicates much of his time to ensuring educational excellence at Penn State Harrisburg.

He created the Barger Family Trustee Scholarship to serve Penn State Harrisburg students, and the Barger Fund for Penn State Harrisburg in memory of Jonathan P. Barger, to enrich Penn State Harrisburg by providing funds for charitable purposes used at the discretion of the chancellor.

In 1980, while employed at the accounting firm Ernst and Whinney, which later became Ernst and Young, Barger started an annual giving program for Penn State Harrisburg alumni working there. This annual effort became the college's first endowed scholarship created by alumni and has helped multiple generations of students. The first recipient of that scholarship, Ron Bittner '85, was inspired to pay it forward by creating the Ronald H. Bittner Scholastic Achievement Award in Accounting, due in large part to Barger's example.

Barger has been a member of numerous boards, committees, and councils over the years, including the Penn State Harrisburg Board of Advisers; the School of Business Administration Advisory Board, since its inception in 1999; the Penn State Harrisburg Alumni Society Senior Council, since its inception in 2008; the college's first Library Campaign in 1998; and the 25th Anniversary Committee in 1991.

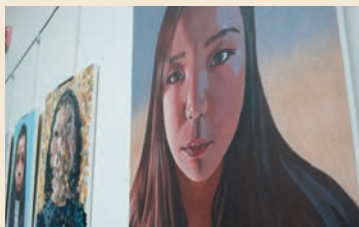
Barger received the Penn State Harrisburg Alumni Achievement Award in 1982, and, in 1989, the Penn State Alumni Fellow award. He has played an integral role in bringing alumni and others together to support Penn State Harrisburg.

In addition, Barger also enjoys interacting with students. He makes himself available to students in multiple ways, including individual mentoring and serving on panels. He has been a guest speaker to numerous clubs and classes.

around campus



The college welcomed "Namaste India," featuring classical and folk dance from India for the inaugural event of the new Kulkarni Cultural Series.



The School of Humanities hosted a student art exhibition in fall 2018. Students from all art classes were invited to participate, with awards given for exemplary paintings and drawings.



Read more online at harrisburg.psu.edu/currents



Scholarship program "opens doors" for students

Penn State Harrisburg's scholarship endowments have grown by more than \$8.7 million through ongoing efforts of the University's fundraising campaign "A Greater Penn State for 21st Century Excellence." Thanks to University matching incentives, almost \$6 million of that total has come through the Open Doors Matching Scholarship program, which encouraged scholarships to support students with financial need in completing their degree.

Through this scholarship program, Penn State Harrisburg has been able to create 41 new scholarship endowments with donors contributing \$2.4 million, and the University matching that with \$4 million. The impact of these gifts will support between 100 and 200 students annually.

"The Open Doors scholarship program is one of the many ways that Penn State remains committed to providing affordable, access to higher education for students," said Penn State Harrisburg Chancellor John Mason. "Students can face many challenges – financial, academic, and personal – on their road to earning a degree. I am grateful for the generous support of our alumni and friends who have helped meet the urgent needs of Penn State Harrisburg students through this program."

While this program has garnered tremendous success, more work remains to be done to meet the students' needs. To reach its campaign goal, Penn State Harrisburg must secure another \$2 million in scholarship support, much of which will be focused on supporting graduate students who help strengthen and increase research conducted at the college. Additional fundraising goals include: athletics facilities; smart home technology; and the college's LaunchBox and Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, part of the University's Invent Penn State initiative.

Through their letters to donors, students share a glimpse of Open Doors impact:

"I will be the first in my family to graduate from college with a bachelor's degree. I have been interning with the City of Lancaster's Stormwater Bureau. Your generous contribution allowed me fulfill this internship to its fullest potential, and I was offered a permanent position. Your kindness has enabled me to not only complete my education, but has also assisted me in the beginning of my career."

Angela M. Brackbill, '18, Civil Engineering

James and Terri Talalai Open Doors Scholarship Recipient

"Without your generous gift, I would have struggled to afford my tuition, as I am an adult student working part-time. Your gift will help me achieve my goals of becoming a wildlife biologist."

Trina J. Breon, '19, Biology

Richard E. and Stephanie A. Ziegler Open Doors Scholarship Recipient

"I work hard during the summer to help pay for my tuition, but it is not always enough to cover books and other expenses. At the beginning of the semester, I was worried that I would have to withdraw as I did not have enough to cover tuition. With your kindness I can complete my degree on time. With your help, I am able to continue my education in my final semester and pursue my dreams. I will be taking a big step into the professional world and I am grateful for your help on allowing this to be possible."

James Mazziotta, '18, Electrical Engineering

Michael Fiaschetti Open Doors Scholarship Recipient

Exercise is Medicine Day kicked off with the Dean's Walk, where the campus community joined Dr. John Mason, chancellor, and Dr. Omid Ansary, senior associate dean for academic affairs, as they led a quick loop around campus.



The archaeology dig simulator at Penn State Harrisburg gives students in the World Archaeology class hands-on experience excavating a dig site.



The Office of Veterans Affairs and Kappa Beta Gamma Sorority honored veterans this past November.

Donations recognize Mahar's legacy

Gifts from alumni, faculty, staff and friends are recognizing the legacy of longtime faculty member and campus pioneer Dr. William J. Mahar who passed away in 2018.

In November 2018, Penn State Harrisburg alumna HelenAnn Phillips and her husband Robert endowed an award honoring Dr. Mahar. The Rear Admiral Robert and HelenAnn G. Phillips Award in Memory of Dr. William J. Mahar will provide support to students who demonstrate outstanding interdisciplinary academic achievement in the field of humanities.

Phillips, who graduated in 1974 with a perfect 4.0 average and her bachelor's degree in Humanities, and earned her master's degree the following year, credits Dr. Mahar with helping her achieve her higher education goals. She began her studies at Penn State Harrisburg at the age of 35, and as a wife and mother. Phillips said Dr. Mahar was extremely helpful in guiding her through her thesis. She said Dr. Mahar "was the most outstanding teacher/professor/instructor in my life. Because of him I finished the final two years of my undergraduate work plus my two-year master's program in three years."

The Phillips' endowment is honoring the many outstanding professional and personal contributions Dr. Mahar shared with the students of Penn State Harrisburg. Those who wish to make a memorial donation in Dr. Mahar's honor may give to this fund by visiting raise.psu.edu/maharaward or by mail to the Penn State Harrisburg Development Office, 777 West Harrisburg Pike, W110 Olmsted, Middletown, PA 17057. For more information, please contact the Development Office at hbgdevelopment@psu.edu or (717) 948-6316.



E. Philip Wenger

E. Philip Wenger named Penn State Alumni Fellow

E. Philip Wenger, who received his bachelor of science degree in finance in 1979 from Penn State, and his M.B.A. from Penn State Harrisburg in 1987, has been named an Alumni Fellow by the Penn State Alumni Association.

The Alumni Fellow Award is the most prestigious award given by the Penn State Alumni Association. Since 1973, the Alumni Fellow Award has been given to select alumni who, as leaders in their professional fields, are nominated by an academic college and accept an invitation from the University President to return to campus to share their expertise with students, faculty, and administrators.

"I am extremely honored and humbled to receive this award," Wenger said.

Currently the chairman and chief executive officer of Fulton Financial Corporation, the holding company of Fulton Bank and five other community banks in the mid-Atlantic region, Wenger said that his Penn State education was instrumental in helping him advance his career at a quicker pace.

"I was working at Fulton Bank and looking to obtain my M.B.A. I took one course at a local school and was not satisfied with it," Wenger said. "Then I discovered the Penn State Harrisburg program."

Wenger attests to the challenges and rewards of attending graduate school while working. "Working full-time and getting a degree at night definitely was tough," Wenger said, "but it taught me that hard work is an important element to success."

He now has more than 30 years of experience in finance, which has provided him extensive knowledge in the many aspects of banking operations. Prior to assuming his current position as CEO of the corporation in 2013, Wenger was chairman and chief executive officer of Fulton Bank, and senior executive vice president of Fulton Financial Corporation. Since joining Fulton Bank in 1979, Wenger has held a variety of positions in commercial lending, community banking, and other leadership roles.

In addition to overseeing \$20.1 billion in assets and over 3,900 team members, Wenger's work through Fulton Financial Corporation has developed new and innovative community banking programs designed to provide economic growth in the communities they serve.

Wenger is a member of the Operation HOPE Global board of directors, a global financial dignity and economic empowerment nonprofit. He also serves on the Penn State Harrisburg Board of Advisers.

In memoriam

Dr. William J. Mahar

Longtime faculty member and administrator Dr. William John Mahar died peacefully on September 8, 2018 after a short illness.

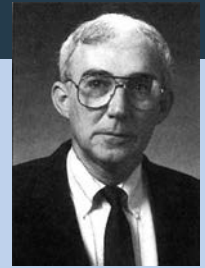
Dr. Mahar served Penn State for 35 years. He joined the faculty as assistant professor of humanities and music in 1971, when Penn State Harrisburg, known as the Capitol Campus, was just five years old. He moved up the faculty ranks, was named director of the School of Humanities in 1984 and became senior associate dean for academic affairs in January 2002. He retired from the University in 2006.

Born on November 30, 1938 in Syracuse, New York, Mahar was the son of Mary and William Mahar, who had emigrated to the United States from Ireland in the late 1920s. Passionate about the arts, history, and music, he held a master's in musicology and a doctorate in humanities from Syracuse University.

Mahar made the needs of students his highest priority. He was passionate about his role as an academic adviser and he helped countless students achieve their academic and lifelong goals. He was known for his sense of humor, generosity, and overall diplomacy.

He is survived by his daughter Jennifer Mahar and son-in-law Johann Mordhorst, his son Andrew Mahar and daughter-in-law Elizabeth Abbott, his grandsons Patrick and Lincoln Mahar, his sister Maureen Swartz, and family members in the United States and in Ireland.

He is predeceased by his wife Constance to whom he was married for 52 years.





Penn State Harrisburg recognizes alumni achievement

Penn State Harrisburg recently presented Alumni Achievement Awards to one graduate of each of the five academic schools who demonstrates outstanding professional accomplishment.

Judy Hricak, '89, Communications; William Pugh, '76, Business Administration; Jay Spector, '70, '72g, Social Science; Susan Steele, '01 Structural Design and Construction Engineering Technology, '06g Engineering Science. Not pictured: Stephen Guillard, '81g, Public Administration.

Stephen Guillard, honored by the School of Public Affairs, has had a distinguished 40-year career in senior level executive positions in the long-term care and post-acute sectors of healthcare. He is presently a consultant in these areas and sits on several boards of directors of healthcare related entities.

Previously, he served as executive vice president, chief operating officer and member of the board of directors of HCR ManorCare, an Ohio-based healthcare company until his retirement in 2012. Prior to joining HCR ManorCare, Guillard held executive positions with several organizations.

In 2013, Guillard was appointed by John Boehner, former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, to the National Long-Term Care Commission, a group of leaders who were responsible for developing recommendations to Congress on the future of long-term care services.

Currently, Guillard is a member of the board of directors of Medequities Realty Trust, a Nashville-based healthcare real estate investment trust. He is also an independent board member of Trilog Health Services, a privately-held post-acute operator based in Louisville, Kentucky.

Judy Hricak, the first person in the more than 100-year history of engineering firm Gannett Fleming to serve as chief communications officer, was recognized by the School of Humanities.

Hricak is responsible for leading the planning, development, and implementation of the Gannett Fleming global corporate communications strategy. She also serves as a senior counselor and coach to the executive team where she works in partnership with the director of organizational change management to develop and grow the change management competency and capabilities for multiple employee segments.

A champion of diversity and inclusion, Hricak co-founded and launched the award-winning employee resource group Connected Women at Gannett Fleming in 2017 with a mission to create a culture that empowers, supports, and mentors women to achieve career and personal success.

The School of Business Administration honored **William H. Pugh**, the executive vice president and chief financial officer (CFO) of UPMC Pinnacle, located in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Prior to joining UPMC Pinnacle in December 2007, Pugh was the executive vice president and chief financial officer of Frederick Memorial Healthcare System in Frederick, Maryland.

His contributions have been invaluable in many high-profile initiatives, including PinnacleHealth's affiliation with UPMC, the purchase of four hospitals in 2017, and the joint venture through which UPMC Pinnacle and Select Medical co-own the Helen M. Simpson Rehabilitation Hospital and more than 25 outpatient clinics throughout central Pennsylvania.

Pugh serves on the board of directors of nine affiliated healthcare

organizations and is a member of the UPMC Pinnacle Retirement Plan Board of Trustees and the UPMC Pinnacle System Finance Committee and Investment Committee. He also serves on the Penn State Harrisburg School of Business advisory board.

The School of Behavioral Sciences and Education honored **Jay Spector**, president and chief executive officer of JEVS Human Services. In this role, Spector works with local, state and federal public-private partners as well as the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia and the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey to bring a wide range of workforce, recovery and in-home care programs to the Greater Philadelphia region.

Prior to JEVS, Spector worked at the City of Philadelphia's Area Manpower Planning Council, first as a manpower planner and then as director of planning and evaluation, responsible for annual manpower master plans and program evaluation. He served several terms on the board of directors of Philadelphia Works, Inc. and continues to sit on its Research and Policy Committee. He is also a member of the Greater Philadelphia Leadership Exchange of the Economy League of Greater Philadelphia.

Spector is the former president of the Jewish Communal Service Association of North America, a former president of the Association of Jewish Vocational Professionals, and a former vice president of the International Association of Jewish Vocational Services (IAJVS). He is a member of the Board of Directors of JPRO, a Jewish professional association serving North America.

Susan Steele was honored by the School of Science, Engineering, and Technology. A senior bridge erection engineer with High Steel Structures, LLC, she has been with the company since 2008 and serves as the engineer-in-charge for the construction of both steel and concrete bridge superstructures. Prior to that, she worked with High Concrete Group, and as a general contractor for 11 years, focusing on commercial and residential rehabilitation.

Steele has presented case studies of long span bridge construction for the New York City Bridge Conference, American Society of Highway Engineers, World Bridge Symposium, Maryland Department of Transportation, and the PennDOT Technical Session.

Her professional experience includes the construction of the superstructure on the Jim Thorpe Memorial Bridge, Carbon County, Pennsylvania; State Route 22 Bridge in Lehigh County, Pennsylvania; and new bridges on I-95 in Pennsylvania and Delaware.

Steele serves as a member of the Penn State Harrisburg Board of Advisers and on the advisory board for the college's Structural Design and Construction Engineering Technology program.

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The Backstage Pass

Thursday, May 16, 2019

Rock Lititz Studio, 100 Rock Lititz Blvd, Lititz, PA 17543

Make plans to attend a behind-the-scenes tour of how a live production comes to life, led by Dr. Adam Gustafson, assistant teaching professor of music at Penn State Harrisburg. Gustafson's academic focus is the role that music plays in shaping social identities and the theatricality of musical performance. Rock Lititz is a one-of-a-kind production community that supports innovative creativity within the live event industry. With resources ranging from design, engineering and manufacturing through rehearsals and beyond, Rock Lititz is a one-stop-shop to build any show.



The Soldier's Experience

Thursday, November 14, 2019

United States Army History and Education Center
Carlisle, PA

Join us as we explore the premier facility for historical research on U.S. Army history. This institution is dedicated to telling the Army story one soldier at a time. Key features of the USAHEC include the interactive exhibit "The Soldier Experience," a memorial art gallery, and the Army Heritage Trail. A mile-long outdoor trail allows visitors to experience history in a new way, through interactive and full-scale military exhibits. Join us as we celebrate our veterans and explore this unique facility.

Questions about the events? Email hbgalumni@psu.edu or call 717-948-6715.

Got stories?

We want to hear them! Share them with the Penn State Harrisburg Alumni Office, hbgalumni@psu.edu • 777 West Harrisburg Pike, Middletown, PA 17057-4898 • 717-948-6715

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