

Penn State Harrisburg

Winter 2021

Currents



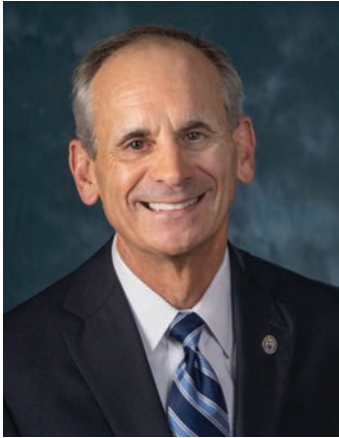
**EXCELLENCE
INNOVATION
OUTREACH**



PennState
Harrisburg

harrisburg.psu.edu/currents

Greetings FROM THE CHANCELLOR



John M. Mason Jr.



I am pleased to share with you a new issue of *Currents*, featuring a look back at college activities over the past academic year.

Like other institutions, Penn State Harrisburg faced the challenges of the worldwide pandemic throughout much of 2020, and the challenges continue today. But what you will discover is that, despite this, the college has been able to persevere, to grow, and to achieve success. This was made possible only because of the collective effort of faculty and staff, alumni, and friends and supporters of the college.

When I arrived at Penn State Harrisburg in 2018, we laid out a plan to advance the college in three distinct areas — enhancing academic offerings, expanding research, and joining with community partners to promote economic development in the region. We have made progress in all of these areas and anticipate continuation of what has been a very positive trajectory.

Our current strategic planning, aligned with the vision of the University, includes making significant enhancements to the physical campus and pursuing new public and private partnerships. In addition, planning for new academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate level is underway, as is the development of new research opportunities. We also look forward to expanding the college leadership team to add expertise in critical areas such as diversity, equity, and inclusion and research, economic development, and continuing education.

Our overarching goal is to provide the best possible educational experience for our students and to contribute to the vitality of the region. You, our alumni and friends, are key partners in this endeavor, and we are grateful for your support.

Enjoy catching up with us through *Currents*, and please consider following us online and via social media. (Details on the many ways to keep in touch are on the back cover.) I hope that you will remain engaged with the college and all that we are doing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John M. Mason Jr." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Winter 2021

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To view *Currents* online, scan the QR code with your smartphone, or visit harrisburg.psu.edu/currents.

Innovation takes center stage

Finding ways to keep teaching, learning, and supporting one another during challenging times

The Penn State Harrisburg community has embodied the **"We Are"** spirit during the coronavirus pandemic, coming together in new and innovative ways inside and outside of the classroom, on campus, and in the community.

New technologies, new tools

Faculty have had their share of challenges and triumphs recently as they adapted lesson plans and teaching processes for remote learning. In the process, they created successful solutions to keep students engaged and moving toward their educational and career goals. They also found ways to expand learning that might not have been possible in person.

Information Technology Instructor Kelsey Kirk admitted that she was anxious about first conducting class in a remote environment. The distributed computing/business programming course she teaches is a technical, hands-on computer programming course. When she began using Zoom's screen sharing function to collaborate with students, she found an added benefit.

"This not only allowed me to continue to engage with students ... but also allowed other students to observe how I approach troubleshooting," Kirk said. "Instead of just watching me troubleshoot, I was impressed to see that everyone in the class was contributing suggestions, possible solutions, and identifying errors. My students enhanced their problem-solving skills, taught me to be flexible in my expectations, and to make the most out of these new online learning environment experiences."

Kirk also found a concept used in her virtual lessons so successful that she is considering how to incorporate it into her in-person classes.

"In class I used a polling application to facilitate an exam review to gauge students' strengths and weaknesses," Kirk said. "I made the responses anonymous [to create] a judgement-free environment. I had excellent participation in the review session, over 80 percent of all attendees," a better outcome than she typically had in-person.

Catherine McCormick, assistant teaching professor of communications and humanities, found screen sharing and the use of virtual breakout rooms for individualized instruction to be key tools in teaching her hands-on photography course. McCormick also collaborated with Heidi Abbey Moyer, associate librarian and coordinator of the college's Archives and Special Collections, to test a virtual visit to the collections. Using an online photo sharing platform, library staff translated a traditional archives workshop into an online experience.

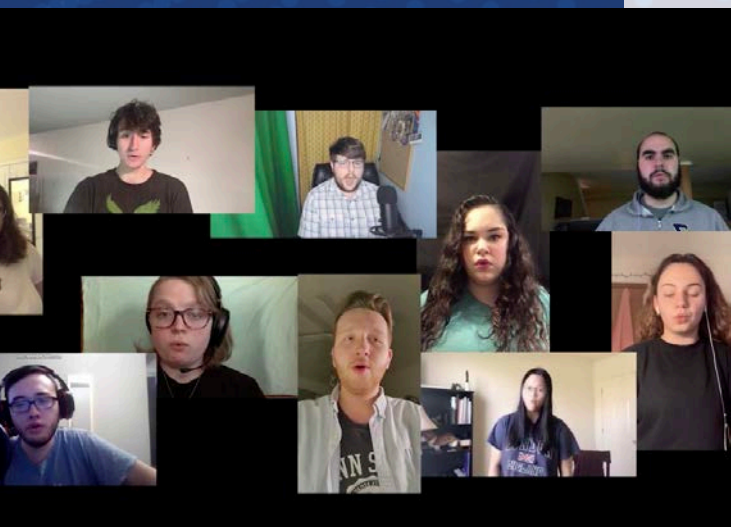
Melanie Gardner, lecturer in speech communications, took her mass media and society class on a virtual tour of a radio station cluster where they were able to see several studios, a radio newsroom, production facilities, and more.

"I showed the students how the studios function from playing music to taking and editing listener calls," Gardner said. "The students were able to interact with DJs on air at the time, as well as the chief radio engineer."

A virtual choir

The move to remote learning meant that Adam Gustafson, associate teaching professor of music, had to get creative to prepare his choir students for a culminating experience – a spring concert that had to move from live to virtual.

Gustafson had the two vocal ensembles he instructs create a "virtual choir" utilizing the repertoire they had been slated to perform. Roughly 35 singers from both ensembles used rehearsal tracks created using Finale, a digital notation program. Using headphones, they sang with



the tracks and recorded themselves. Gustafson rendered those files into one sound file using a digital audio workstation, and combined and rendered their videos into one virtual performance using video editing software.

Take a listen at bit.ly/3sNBODN

Reinventing “real world” experiences

Many students found their internship options halted when the pandemic forced employers to cease in-person operations. When possible, Penn State Harrisburg faculty and staff came together to help ensure that students met their internship requirements and received unique learning opportunities. Maria Turkson, associate professor of psychology, worked with several offices at the college to place students in virtual internship roles. For example, Perdetta Bush, equity and compliance specialist in the Division of Student Affairs, was able to place interns on two different projects. Interns helped assess impacts of the new regulations changes to Title IX, the federal civil rights law and also helped to expand the college's “Consent Matters” student education campaign. Another group worked on the college's shared reading program, Penn State Harrisburg Reads, reading the fiction novel “Everything I Never Told You,” and building an educational campaign around its messages.

Intern Kariann Sweeney discussed her personal growth during the summer experience. “It taught me a lot about myself,” she said. She noted how the remote nature of the experience provided a challenge, but it was one she overcame with the help of her peers, as well as Bush and Turkson. “This has shown me that life doesn't always go quite as planned, but if you're willing to put in the effort to adapt or change due to different circumstances, there will be people alongside you who will gladly help,” said Sweeney.

A course in career counseling allowed second-year master's students in Penn State Harrisburg's applied clinical psychology program to conceptualize how the world of work and mental health influence one another. The students researched and produced methods for helping community members obtain career guidance, creating career-counseling interventions.

The class worked with various populations and offices, including transgender young adults, Hispanic/Latinx youth, student-athletes, career and counseling services, student disability services, international students, student veterans, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.

Although outreach became more difficult during the pandemic, the class remained unwavering in providing material to help with career counseling, especially at a time where employment had become more difficult to obtain. Stephanie Winkeljohn Black, assistant professor of psychology, said the pandemic “became a learning opportunity to understand the flexibility needed to work with a community group.” Many of the organizations responded positively, eager to use the students' materials as support for those seeking career guidance.



Extracurricular adjustments

With the coronavirus pandemic shuttering many theaters across the globe, Penn State Harrisburg kept the theatrical arts alive with production of its fall play, “Machinal.” Performances were livestreamed from the Mukund S. Kulkarni Theatre on campus to audiences across the college and local communities via YouTube Live. An engaged collaboration between faculty, staff and students allowed the performance to go on amid the many challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Maria Enriquez, play director and assistant teaching professor of theater, worked with Matt Mitra, technical director at the Kulkarni Theatre, to blueprint how to produce a “live” play under virus restrictions.

The students involved in the production followed careful safety protocols, including regular handwashing, temperature checks, and social distancing. Enriquez and Mitra had the actors perform on-stage but separated and distanced by vinyl cubes. They replaced having a live audience with an eight-camera setup to stream online.

Mitra said support at the college was instrumental in executing the production and stressed the importance of such efforts during the pandemic. “Entertainment has shut down in a lot of the world right now, and we are very lucky we were able to do something like this rather than a standard production over Zoom,” he said. “There's a sense of normalcy there.”





Reducing stigma surrounding substance abuse disorder

Researchers at Penn State Harrisburg's Douglas W. Pollock Center for Addiction Outreach and Research have teamed with the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs and state and national non-profit organizations to lead a statewide campaign to reduce the stigma associated with Opioid Use Disorder. The center is spearheading the effort which aims to help raise awareness of the discrimination often experienced by those suffering from, or in recovery from, substance abuse disorder and the negative impact this can have.

"Pennsylvania's Opioid Use Disorder stigma reduction campaign is an 18-month, \$1.95 million, evidenced-based project that aims to become a model for other states to follow," said Weston Kensinger, Pollock Center director and principal investigator on the project.

Rural attitudes on key policy issues

With support from the Center for Survey Research at Penn State Harrisburg, researchers, led by Daniel Mallinson, collaborated to survey the attitudes of rural Pennsylvanians and how these attitudes affect their perspectives on issues relevant to state and local government, policymakers, and other stakeholders. Wingate University faculty member Chelsea Kaufman collaborated on the research, conducted in 2019 when she was a postdoctoral scholar in the Penn State Harrisburg School of Public Affairs.

"Knowledge of the attitudes of rural Pennsylvania residents specifically is needed not only so that policymakers may respond to this quarter of the population, but also because there is evidence that attitudes of rural residents differ from those of urban residents and that attitudes may further vary within rural areas," said Mallinson, assistant professor of public policy and administration.

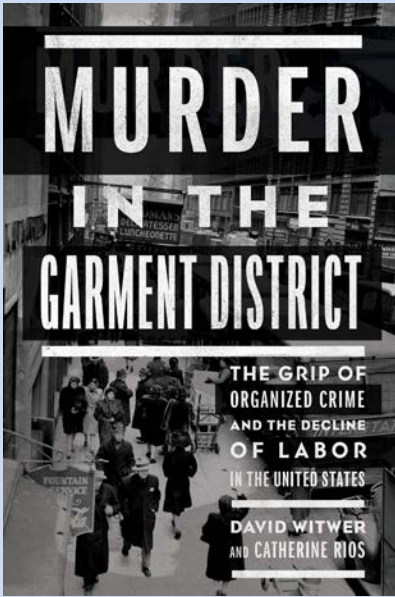
Findings include that rural residents agree with their urban counterparts on a number of issues: general satisfaction with their communities and with Pennsylvania; general agreement that most community and state issues should receive the same or higher priority; similar viewpoints on legalizing marijuana, keeping the death penalty, arming school teachers and staff, a graduated instead of flat income tax, the need to regulate fracking, support for a severance tax on natural gas, and support for renewable energy development; and some level of trust in state government institutions and officials.

Urban and rural residents also have some key differences, according to the study, including top priorities — jobs for rural residents, roads and infrastructure for urban residents. Both want action on opioids, but disagree on the forms — urban more supportive of treating this as a health care issue, rural more supportive for greater criminal justice response.



The dark side of organized labor

In 1949, International Ladies Garment Workers Union organizer William Lurye was stabbed to death in public by mob assassins. This event and its aftermath are at the center of "Murder in the Garment District: The Grip of Organized Crime and the Decline of Labor in the United States," a new book by



Catherine Rios, associate professor of humanities and communications, and David Witwer, professor of history and American studies. The book, named to The New York Times' 2020 recommended summer reading list, delves into corruption, coercion and crime and its effects on American organized labor, as well as the country's complicated relationship with organized labor.

The book also follows the circle of individuals involved in

that case to describe the political and economic context in which this history unfolded.

"The book shows the way that corruption was not specific to unions, but was an accepted part of the economic landscape," Rios said. "Also, organized crime was not an alien, invasive presence in these sectors, but instead was well-accepted by employers and understood to provide types of services that many employers wanted."

Witwer, the 2020-21 Penn State Laureate, spent time in France as an undergraduate during a time of labor turbulence in the country. He also worked for two years in the Labor Racketeering Bureau of the New York County District Attorney's Office as part of a task force investigating organized crime.

Rios' writing influences are drawn from her background and early work experiences, where she saw first-hand what happened when families did not have workplace protections and faced exploitation.

The two spent 10 years researching for the book, including reading FBI case files and the private notes and papers of contemporary investigative journalists. The book begins in the Garment District of mid-century New York, where more than 80 percent of the nation's dresses were produced. It then transitions to the national stage, where congressional anti-corruption hearings transfixed the nation and helped tarnish the reputation of American unions forever.

Keeping water and energy secure

Water and energy systems do not typically come to mind as cyber hacker targets, but those systems are often most vulnerable to such attacks, according to Javad Khazaei, assistant professor of electrical engineering at Penn State Harrisburg and affiliate professor of architectural engineering in the College of Engineering at Penn State University Park.

Khazaei is leading a project investigating the vulnerability of water and energy infrastructure systems and developing detection methodologies to counteract criminal acts.

Technologically advanced, or "smart," cities often integrate water and energy systems, which are controlled automatically by sensors and remote monitoring systems, according to Khazaei. If hackers gain access to these advanced metering infrastructures and inject false data readings, they can cause failures without detection.

To examine the feasibility of such attacks and understand cyber attackers' strategies, the researchers are using multi-objective mathematical formulations to create an attack model like one a hacker would use to carry out an attack. The researchers also will develop two big data analytics-based methodologies to detect stealthy attacks.

Research

Finding sustainable answers to industrial pollution

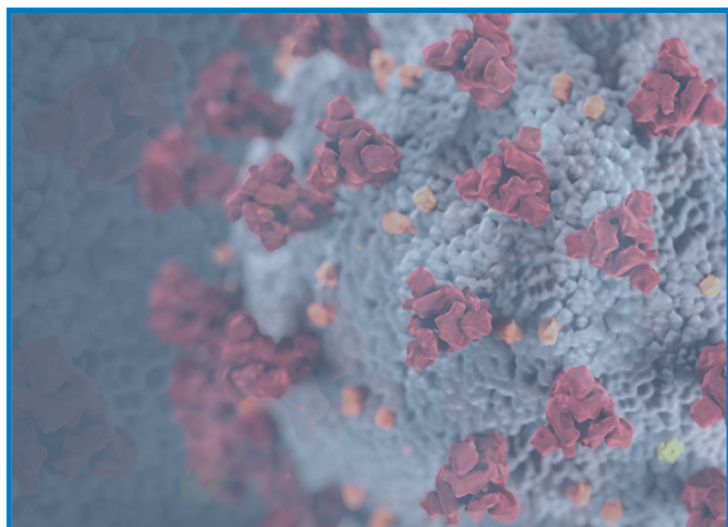
Recent Penn State Harrisburg graduate students in environmental pollution control Rizki Prasetyaningtyas and Saskia Putri have spent time eating lots of bananas and oranges and collecting the peels. Their goal – to test whether fruit peels can be used to remove heavy metals from wastewater coming from textile mills.



The women are from Indonesia, where they were working at the Ministry of Public Works, when they were awarded a full scholarship to study in the

United States through USAID. Indonesia produces much of the world's textiles, but their pollution controls are not very efficient, Putri said. Indonesia also grows bananas and oranges, with the peels usually ending up in a landfill.

The researchers first tested their theory on chromium, a known carcinogen. When mixed with a solution containing chromium in normal concentrations, the peels worked well to absorb and bind to the metal. While some textile mills produce higher concentrations of chromium, most would fall within the range where the peels appear to work. The duo have moved on to testing the use of fruit peels to remove other chemicals in wastewater, including zinc and copper, also common in industrial discharge.



COVID-19 impacts

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Institute for State and Regional Affairs (ISRA) at Penn State Harrisburg has been analyzing various impacts of the coronavirus and its effects on Pennsylvanians in an effort to help inform policy and decision makers in the ongoing strategic planning response to the COVID-19 outbreak in Pennsylvania.

Topics they have studied include the impact of social isolation in the senior population in Pennsylvania, which they studied in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Population Network; a comparison of counties in Pennsylvania that are vulnerable to severe COVID-19 outcomes based on medical risk factors; a comparison of the economic impact of the pandemic on business sectors in Pennsylvania; the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economic, physical and mental health of Pennsylvanians by age; Pennsylvanians' trust in key public figures to provide information related to the coronavirus; the views, experiences, and challenges of childcare providers in the Commonwealth during the COVID-19 pandemic; and attitudes of Pennsylvanians toward the coronavirus vaccine.

For a closer look at ISRA's COVID-19 reporting, visit isra.hbg.psu.edu/Publications-and-Reports.

PENN STATE HARRISBURG ATHLETICS

2019-20 YEAR IN REVIEW

Although the spring 2020 season came to an early end due to COVID-19, the 2019-20 athletic campaign was one of the most successful in Penn State Harrisburg history. Teams reached new heights and student-athletes earned a plethora of individual awards and honors. Filled with incredible highs, record-breaking performances, and historic resolve in the wake of unprecedented circumstances, the 2019-20 athletic season will be remembered for years to come.



The men's basketball and men's soccer teams capped their historic seasons with their first-ever trips to the NCAA Division III Tournaments after capturing each program's first North Eastern Athletic Conference (NEAC) Championships. In NCAA Tournament play, the men's basketball squad defeated No. 6 Johns Hopkins in a double-overtime classic and advanced to the round of 32. The women's soccer team made a run to the NEAC Championship Game, while women's volleyball and women's basketball each qualified for their conference postseason tournaments. Unfortunately for programs that compete for championships in the spring, seasons were halted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and promising starts from the baseball, track & field, and men's and women's tennis teams were cut short.

As individuals, numerous student-athletes achieved national, regional, and conference recognition. Baseball's **Bret Williams** was named to the D3baseball.com All-Decade Team after becoming the school's first CoSIDA Academic All-American and D3baseball.com Preseason All-American. Men's basketball's **Donyae Baylor-Carroll** earned a pair of all-region honors after being named Conference Player of the Year. He was recently named a Basketball Times Preseason All-American. Men's hoops' teammate **Nate Curry** was tabbed the Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) Division III Rookie of the Year after picking up NEAC Rookie of the Year honors. Men's soccer's **Shammah Gahomera** was chosen as conference Defensive Player of the Year before securing all-region recognition. Women's volleyball's **Brittany Ebaugh** was selected as an NCAA Woman of the Year nominee after being named conference Defensive Player of the Year. Ebaugh (block solos) also joined men's soccer's **Nick Guglielmetti** (goalkeeper shutouts) and men's basketball's **Dylan Daniels** (blocked shots, blocked shots per game) as NCAA Statistical Champions. Men's track & field jumper **Alex White** was named the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) Indoor Outstanding Field Athlete of the Year after winning a conference title in the long jump and capturing bronze in the high jump. He also won the ECAC Championship in the long jump and set a new program record in the event.

After an outstanding campaign, **Don Friday** was named the ECAC Division III Men's Basketball Coach of the Year. He was also voted the NEAC Coach of the Year by his peers. For his efforts, men's soccer's **Daniel J. Krzyzanowicz** earned conference Coach of the Year accolades as well.

Six student-athletes earned All-ECAC honors: women's volleyball's Ebaugh; men's soccer's Gahomera, Guglielmetti, and **Joey Aman**; women's soccer's **Mackenzie Haladay**; and men's basketball's Baylor-Carroll, while 21 student-athletes received NEAC or NJAC All-Conference recognition: men's soccer's Gahomera, Aman, Guglielmetti, **Jared Brewer**, **Luke Myers**, **Mason Jones**, and **Jacob Krantweiss**; women's soccer's Haladay, **Rhyan Socash**, **Haley Vavrek**, **Elizabeth Clippinger**, and **Sydney Hemler**; women's volleyball's Ebaugh, **Alexis Imler**, and **Katie Kreider**; men's basketball's Baylor-Carroll, Curry, Daniels, and **Zegary Scott III**; women's basketball's **Kendis Butler**; and men's track & field's White.

New programs meet workforce needs

Penn State Harrisburg continues to enhance its degree offerings to meet students' interests and workforce demands. Here's a look at the most recent additions to the portfolio of bachelor's degree programs.



Communication Sciences and Disorders (B.S.)

This program prepares students to pursue graduate education and certification as a speech language pathologist or audiologist. Administered by the college's School of Humanities, the program provides students foundational critical-thinking knowledge, skills and abilities

necessary to identify, assess, and treat communication disorders. The program was adopted through a joint task force of the college's School of Humanities and School of Behavioral Sciences and Education.

Human-centered Design and Development (B.S.)

Offered by the School of Business Administration, the new program will help prepare the next generation of software application developers and user experience



professionals. The program will provide students with expertise in designing and building software applications to meet the needs and expectations of users; identifying opportunities to leverage technology to enhance user experiences; and using quantitative and qualitative methods to identify how technology can better support human activity in its use.

Cybersecurity Analytics and Operations (B.S.)

The new major is an interdisciplinary program in the School of Business Administration that will help prepare students for careers as cybersecurity professionals. The curriculum builds on a foundation of mathematics and computer programming to prepare students to recognize, analyze, defend against, and manage cyber risks. The program emphasizes cyberdefense technologies, cybersecurity analytics and visualization, and risk analysis and management.



Biobehavioral Health (B.S.)

This new program in the college's School of Behavioral Sciences and Education prepares students to look at health issues in an integrated way, by taking into account the many different factors — biological, behavioral, social, cultural and environmental — that influence health throughout the life span. The program helps students become familiar with the multiple perspectives, approaches and methods needed to address and solve problems of human health and illness. It prepares graduates for entry-level jobs in a range of biomedical and health-related areas. It also provides preparation for advanced study in natural and social science disciplines and related professional areas.

FAST FACTS

ENROLLMENT

4,308

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

AVERAGE AGE

21

61%

MALE

39%

FEMALE



620

GRADUATE STUDENTS

AVERAGE AGE

32

41%

MALE

59%

FEMALE



75+

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

40,000+
ALUMNI

STUDENTS FROM



52

DIFFERENT COUNTRIES
OUTSIDE OF THE US

48

DIFFERENT STATES
OUTSIDE OF PA

(Including Puerto Rico and Guam)

around campus

A look back at activities and scenes from 2019-2020



Award-winning a cappella quintet from Zimbabwe, Nobuntu, performed the sounds of traditional and contemporary African music, ranging from folk tunes to Afro Jazz to Gospel.



The college community participated in "Mask Up or Pack Up," a University integrated effort to remind faculty, staff and students of the importance of doing their part to limit the spread of COVID-19.



The fall play "Machinal" was presented virtually in 2020. The play, inspired by the real-life trial and execution of Ruth Snyder, is about a young woman who is "crushed by the societal expectations placed around her." Cast and crew adapted to COVID-19 challenges and new conditions to safely bring performances to audiences via livestream.



Springtime flowers on campus never disappoint.



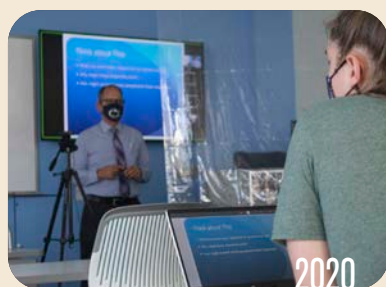
Penn State Harrisburg welcomed several speakers to campus, including actor Sean Astin, who discussed mental health; member of the "Exonerated Five" Raymond Santana, who discussed social justice, and Hiroshima survivor Shigeo Sasamori, who shared her first-hand account as an atomic bomb survivor.



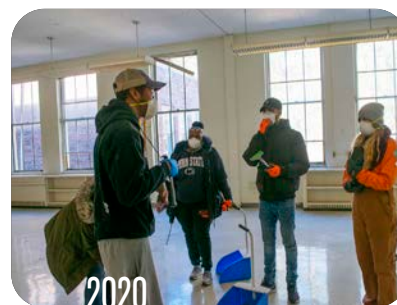
The college community came together in early March to celebrate the men's basketball team, as they traveled to Baltimore, Md. to compete in the NCAA Division III Men's Basketball Championship Tournament for the first time.



Staff members greet students during fall Move-In Day.



When limited in-person courses resumed in fall 2020, a series of changes, including classroom setups and the use of new technologies, were implemented to support the health, safety, and well-being of students, faculty and staff.



Penn State Harrisburg students joined others from the York and University Park campuses for an MLK Day of Service project with The Bridge, a community revitalization project in Harrisburg. The Bridge plans to convert a former high school into a sustainable "Eco-Village."

Commencement, Interrupted



Flood Village, 1972

A commencement ceremony is often one of the most memorable days in a person's life, not to mention quite an undertaking to orchestrate. Rarely does anything stand in the way of this important event. But three times in the history of Penn State Harrisburg, the college has been forced, by historic events, to cancel the official in-person commencement ceremony.

In 1972, when the ceremony was cancelled after Hurricane Agnes poured some 19 inches of rain on Central Pennsylvania in a two-day period and flooded much of the area, many seniors instead helped the nearly 1,000 people who fled their homes and sought shelter on campus. Trailers were set up in front of the Olmsted Building and 100 families lived there for months in what became known as "Flood Village." Some students organized their own "rump ceremony," as it was described, with several faculty members. In 1997, members of the Class of 1972 were invited to be officially recognized during that year's commencement at the Hershey Theatre.

When the coronavirus pandemic forced Penn State to move to remote learning in March 2020, for the first time ever in University history, the commencement ceremony also was moved to a virtual format in response. The University-wide ceremonies – in spring of 2020 and in fall of 2020 – included undergraduate students at University Park and the Commonwealth Campuses, and all graduate students in the Graduate School who had their degrees conferred by University leadership via a virtual presentation.

The virtual ceremonies offered the opportunity of a unique gathering of a united Penn State family – where all graduates, their families, and friends from across the entire University – were able to join together to celebrate at once.

Penn State Harrisburg Chancellor John M. Mason, Jr. has the unique honor of being a member of the Penn State Harrisburg community during all these historic events, in 1972 as a graduate, and as chancellor during the spring and fall 2020 ceremonies.



Virtual Commencement Spring, 2020



Journey to Commencement

Jessica Sheets and her father, Ethan, have a lot in common. Both of their birthdays are in August, back-to-back in fact – hers Aug. 1, and his Aug. 2. They both grew up in southwestern Pennsylvania, both completed their studies at Penn State Harrisburg – and both had their commencement ceremonies preempted by historic events.

Jessica, who received her doctoral degree in American studies as a member of Penn State Harrisburg's spring Class of 2020, attended her commencement virtually due to the coronavirus pandemic. Ethan was a member of the college's Class of 1972, which due to flooding in Middletown, Pennsylvania, as a result of Hurricane Agnes, did not have a commencement at all.

JESSICA SHARES THEIR STORY:

"I have worked at the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, Pennsylvania since 2006. To help further my career, I began the American studies doctoral program at Penn State Harrisburg in 2013. I successfully defended my dissertation, "'No More Striving of Brother against Brother': Family Divisions and Historical Memory of the Revolutionary War,' in December 2019. My degree was conferred in May 2020.

"As the coronavirus took hold in Pennsylvania, I braced myself for news that graduation had been postponed. Indeed, that word came. I held out hope that graduation would just shift to the summer – I wanted my adviser, Dr. Charles Kupfer, to hand me my diploma, and, having spent 6.5 years to reach this point, I wanted my family to witness the event. But, it was not to be. The safety and health of others is paramount. Thus, I looked forward to the virtual ceremony, and truly appreciated the efforts made to make this a memorable event for students. A bonus of commencement taking place on the original date: I graduated on what would have been my maternal grandmother's 100th birthday.

"My dad began his college education at Penn State Fayette and finished in Penn State Harrisburg's electrical engineering program in 1972. His class did not have a graduation because of Hurricane Agnes. I heard that story growing up probably more than any 'walked up hill both ways to school' stories!

"Agnes hit between the end of classes and the graduation date. Dad received a phone call while he was back home with his parents in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.

"Here's what he had to say: 'I was disappointed and hoped they would reschedule it for later in the summer. Then I found out they were using the campus as a relief center for flood victims and temporary housing (trailers). Thus a graduation ceremony was totally out of the question. Helping the flood victims was more important. I didn't lose a thing except a one day ceremony – many lost everything.'"



Ethan Sheets, 1972



Ethan and Jessica Sheets, 2020



Jessica Sheets, 2020



Gift provides valuable library support Community borrower Robert Smith leaves lasting legacy

The late Robert L. Smith astonished the Penn State University Libraries' Penn State Harrisburg Library with a \$1 million estate gift. Although he had no known connection to Penn State except as a community borrower of library materials, his posthumous generosity will support future generations of Penn State Harrisburg students' academic needs through books, technology, other equipment, and more.

"This generous gift offers a message of hope in difficult and trying times and reaffirms my faith in generosity and the selflessness of people," said Glenn McGuigan, Penn State Harrisburg Library director and head librarian.

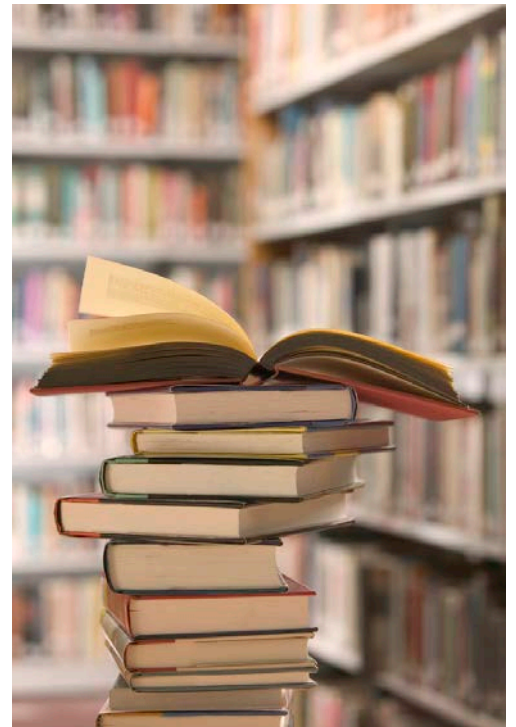
"Mr. Smith has shown how goodness and charity endure, and has ensured that future generations can continue to benefit from our valuable facility."

According to his obituary on Pennlive.com, Robert L. Smith was born in Harrisburg on Aug. 28, 1929, attended John Harris High School and the University of Pennsylvania, and retired from the Princeton University Book Store. A first lieutenant in U.S. Air Force Reserves, he served four years of active duty in the U.S. and Germany.

In retirement, Smith resided at the Masonic Village in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, where he died on Feb. 4, 2019, leaving no surviving relatives.

Smith's legacy, designated for the Penn State Harrisburg Library Program Endowment 17 years before his death, will provide funds for the benefit of Penn State Harrisburg Library's users through the purchase of books and other collection materials; equipment, software and other technologies; enhancements of facilities and learning environments; and activities in specific areas of educational interest. It also will support professional development opportunities for library staff and faculty.

All Pennsylvania residents are eligible for borrowing privileges from any University Libraries location on Penn State's campuses.



Couple pledges \$7.3 million to create honors scholarships at Penn State

Penn State Harrisburg alumnus Steven Overly and his wife, Donna, have made a \$7.3 million estate commitment to Penn State that will establish the Overly Scholars Program at Penn State Harrisburg and in the Schreyer Honors College, creating full-tuition scholarships and enhanced educational experiences for high-achieving students.

Steven and Donna Overly grew up in Hanover, Pennsylvania. Steven received his bachelor's degree in political science from Gettysburg College and his master of public administration degree from Penn State Harrisburg before earning law degrees from Stetson University College of Law and Georgetown University Law Center. He went on to a successful career in leadership roles at companies including General Electric, Lockheed Martin, American Casino & Entertainment Properties, and Textron.

Donna's first career was as a nurse, primarily in critical care. She received an associate's degree from St. Petersburg College in Florida and her critical care nursing (CCRN) certification. After 20 years in that profession, she changed direction and earned a bachelor's degree in studio art from the University of Texas, Austin. Today, she is a painter and a published novelist.

"Donna and I are excited to support honors students at Penn State Harrisburg and in Schreyer," said Steven Overly. "We know that the cost of a college education can prevent students from reaching their personal potential. **We want to remove that barrier for students so they can focus on their academic achievement first and foremost, and then to give them some extra experiences that will build their character and help them to become engaged citizens and leaders.**"

Donna Overly said that the program reflects the couple's shared belief in the importance of education and shared appreciation of their roots in Pennsylvania.

"We simply would not be where we are today without a solid education," she said. "We want to help people from the York and Adams County area where we were raised, as well as Westmoreland County, where Steve's father and aunts and uncles grew up and went to Penn State, to make sure they can receive an education without struggling to pay for it. Our hope is that they will find their path in life and thrive like we have, and that they will one day be in a position to give back as well."

The Overly Scholars will be selected based on their demonstrated excellence in academics, leadership and civic engagement, and the scholarship will cover the full cost of their in-state tuition. First preference for the Penn State Harrisburg program will be given to students from Adams and York Counties, while first preference for the Schreyer Honors College scholarships will be given to students from Westmoreland County.

Overly Scholars will be required to maintain a 3.5 overall GPA and meet other curricular requirements. They will also take part in special programs designed to extend their learning, leadership and positive impact on the campus and external communities. These activities may include service-learning, international study opportunities, and extracurricular experiences such as specially organized field trips, lab projects, and honors seminars and events.

"Steven and Donna Overly are showing remarkable community leadership with this gift," said Penn State Harrisburg Chancellor John M. Mason Jr. "In establishing the first named scholars program at Penn State Harrisburg, they are raising the bar for our most exceptional students, encouraging them to push themselves even further in their educational pursuits. Their gift will inspire the scholars not only to achieve great things, but also to follow in the Overlys' footsteps as philanthropists in the future."

Schreyer Honors College Dean Peggy A. Johnson expressed appreciation for the Overlys' support of the college's mission, saying, "The Overly Scholars Program will create and support tremendous opportunities for Schreyer Scholars from Westmoreland County, including supervised research, study abroad and service learning. It will help the Honors College develop accomplished, ethical, globally minded leaders who will have a positive influence on their communities and the world. We are so grateful to the Overlys for their generous investment in honors education."



Steven Overly

Donna Overly

ALUMNI AWARDS

The recipients of the college's annual Alumni Achievement Awards include one graduate from each of the college's five academic schools, who earned the accolade thanks to their outstanding professional accomplishments. 2020 honorees shared their thoughts on what their time at the college has meant to their career development.

“

I would encourage everyone to embrace their experience at Penn State Harrisburg. I would encourage everyone to take every opportunity and ability to explore and experience everything and everyone at the campus...you can get so much out of it...not only fulfill your academic goals, but think in the future as far as your career path and what resources and personnel the campus offers you for wherever you're heading in your career.

Carol Schaubhut '91, Communications
School of Humanities

”

“

I played basketball when I was there [at Penn State Harrisburg] and that helped to inform the way I approach everyday work. I come to work ready every day, as I had to prepare for every game. Can't take a day off. Couldn't take practice off. There were early mornings and late nights...it got me ready for this next phase of life...I think a lot of my achievements are attributable to lessons learned at Penn State and I'll forever be grateful.

David Ellis '91, Electrical Engineering
School of Science, Engineering, and Technology

”

“

I'm not sure my treasured career path would have happened had it not been for Penn State Harrisburg. The college provided an opportunity to build strength and determination during some struggling times. The experiences in class and campus activities became steppingstones to bigger opportunities.

Rita Girondi '73, Humanities;
'79g, Teaching and Curriculum
School of Behavioral Sciences and Education

”

“

I was able to think of the public policy foundation and think in terms of what my role should be...and that I always had to think of the people first. And that really comes from Penn State Harrisburg and the instructors there and the faculty members there and the administrators who supported me all along the way.

La-Verna Fountain '83, Public Policy
School of Public Affairs

”

“

Penn State allowed me to continue to learn as an adult, increase my knowledge, and become a better leader. I appreciate all the opportunities I was given while earning my degree...it wasn't just the coursework. It was the friendships, the connections, and also the experiences that made me a better person.

Brian Rusignuolo '13g, M.B.A
School of Business Administration

”

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

2020

School of Behavioral Sciences and Education

Rita Girondi

President, Training Masters Inc.
'73, Communications;
'79g, Teaching and Curriculum

School of Business Administration

Brian Rusignuolo

Chief Information Officer and Senior Vice President, Select Medical Group Corporation
'13g, M.B.A.

School of Humanities

Carol Schaubhut

Owner, Steri-Clean Maryland/Delaware
'91, Communications

School of Public Affairs

La-Verna Fountain

Founder and President, Meaningful Communications Matter, LLC
'83, Public Policy

School of Science, Engineering, and Technology

David Ellis

President and Chief Executive Officer, Entergy New Orleans, LLC
'91, Electrical Engineering

School of Business Administration

Joseph Murphy

Chief Executive Officer of the Masonic Villages' operations at Dallas, Elizabethtown, Lafayette Hill, Sewickley, and Warminster, Pennsylvania.
'78, Business Administration

School of Humanities

Amy Zeigler

Senior Director, The Hershey Story Museum, Hershey Gardens and Hershey Community Archives
'03g, American Studies

at the University of Maryland; Faculty Fellow, Hagler Institute for Advanced Study at Texas A&M University, and a visiting professor, Texas A&M Galveston Campus
'74g, Public Administration

School of Science, Engineering, and Technology

James Wallace

President and CEO, Electro Soft Inc.
'74, Electrical Design Engineering Technology

Also recognized at the 2019 ceremony was 2012 School of Public Affairs honoree **Richard D. White Jr.**, '97g, Ph.D. Public Administration, Dean of the Louisiana State University E. J. Ourso College of Business.

2019

School of Behavioral Sciences and Education

Charles "Chuck" McLister

President, CEO and Ex-Officio Board Member, Elwyn
'08g, Applied Psychology Research

School of Public Affairs

Gerry Galloway

Glenn L. Martin Institute Professor of Engineering in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering



PEOPLE TO WATCH AWARDS

The Penn State Harrisburg Alumni Society recently announced the winners of its 2020 People to Watch Awards, graduates from each of the college's schools who have made a significant contribution to the betterment of society through their personal and professional endeavors

2020

School of Behavioral Sciences and Education

Megan Armour

Regional Senior Human Resources Manager, Amazon
'08g, Training and Development

School of Business Administration

Toan Ngo

Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Next Phase Web Design
'11, Information Science and Technology

School of Humanities

Kathryn Sandoe,

Head of Communications and Public Affairs, Lancaster County Solid Waste Management

Authority; Adjunct Faculty, Penn State Harrisburg Communications Program
'13g, Communications; '17g, Ph.D., Adult Education

School of Public Affairs

Laura Kurtz

Attorney, Eckert Seamans
'07, Public Policy; '08g, Public Administration; '16g, Ph.D. Public Administration

School of Science, Engineering, and Technology

Siddarth Dahiya

Software Engineer, Microsoft
'13, Computer Science; '15 Mathematics; '15 Computer Science

2019

School of Behavioral Sciences and Education

Brad Sterner

Director of Educational Services for the Lincoln Intermediate Unit
'00, Elementary Education; '05g, Teaching and Curriculum

School of Business Administration

Fernanda Amarante

Vice President of Design, and culture
'13g, M.B.A.

School of Humanities

Amy Milligan

Director of the Institute of Jewish Studies and Interfaith Understanding, Old Dominion University
'12g, Ph.D., American Studies

School of Public Affairs

Kelly Fedeli

Director of Special Events, PA House of Representatives
'01g, Public Administration

School of Science, Engineering, and Technology

Jason Hostetter

Senior Vice President of Field Operations, TRC
'98, Electrical Engineering Technology; '06g, Engineering Science

Alumni restaurateurs lend a hand

(Adapted from a June 2020 news story by Nathan Rufo, speechwriter and communications specialist, Global Penn State)

While the COVID-19 pandemic has radically shifted how everyone lives, for international students in the U.S., it has an extra layer of complexity – many have been forced to stay in the U.S, leaving them far from their families back home even during breaks in the academic calendar.

During the pandemic, Penn State has been doing what it can to support these students – including working with local organizations to coordinate help. This past summer, at Penn State Harrisburg, the efforts resulted in a group of local restaurant owners coming together to provide a little slice of home cooking, providing hundreds of meals to students at the Penn State Health Hershey Medical Center, Penn State Harrisburg, and Penn State York.



A History with Penn State

RuYue Mao and Hao Dong, a married couple and owners of the HeGroup restaurants, have a long history with Penn State Harrisburg.

“We both went there from China for masters’ program in public administration,” said Mao. “We have many great memories there. We met and

fell in love at Penn State and got married while we were studying there.”

After graduating, the couple moved around and worked in different cities around the U.S., but knew that they always wanted to return to Harrisburg.

“We knew that we wanted to serve authentic Chinese cuisine,” said Mao, “and all of the beautiful memories we had [at Penn State Harrisburg] finally made us decide to open our first location close to campus in Middletown.”

Deep Gupta, a founder and chairman of Asian Indian Americans of Central Pennsylvania (AIACPA), has been active in helping Penn State international students for years. AIACPA provides regular support to Indian students in the area, including events, meals and festival celebrations.

Gupta, it turns out, has long-standing ties with Penn State as well – he was a student at Penn State Harrisburg in the early 1970s. His group also has long provided extra support to help Indian students feel at home. “For the last ten years we have been arranging dinners for Indian students to celebrate Diwali (the festival of lights), the largest and most celebrated festival in India.”

Rallying to Help

When COVID-19 left students stranded and lonely, Anna Marshall, global education coordinator at Penn State Harrisburg, began to brainstorm ways to support them.

Luckily for her, HeGroup and Gupta were already thinking about it.

“[We had been] hearing from Indian students that they were missing home cooked food,” said Gupta. “So we reached out to Ms. Marshall and offered to help.”

AIACPA coordinated for two restaurants to cater authentic Indian luncheons to Penn State students. AIACPA had also previously offered housing and board to students when the pandemic broke.

“We were students before and understand most of them don’t know how or don’t have time to cook, especially under this uncertain situation,” said Mao. “Lots of them are far away from home, and it’s easy for them to feel stressed or overwhelmed.” HeGroup had also donated antiviral sprays to the food pantry at Penn State Harrisburg when the pandemic broke.

So, with the combined efforts of HeGroup, AIACPA, Marshall, and two other restaurants in the area, the idea for giving pre-packaged meals to students was hatched.

“We hope that we can make them feel there are still people here caring for them,” added Mao. “We always appreciated the help we got from our time at Penn State, so we like to do what we can to help the students.”

“It is our pleasure to serve these students while they are 10,000 miles from home,” said Gupta.





Alum receives diversity award

The Penn State Alumni Association recently named Penn State Harrisburg alumnus Gibran Jones, '08, the recipient of the 2020 K. David Weidner Diversity Award.

The award is presented to an individual who has significantly contributed to fostering diversity at Penn State by sharing or volunteering his or her talent, time, and resources on behalf of the University.

For more than a decade, Jones has been a valuable resource in the campus community, committed to addressing the opportunity gap faced by many underrepresented populations. A military veteran who earned a bachelor's degree in information sciences and technology, he has served on the Penn State Harrisburg Alumni Society Board of Directors since 2015.

For years, Jones has been a mentor for campus clubs, as well as students studying information sciences and technology and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines, particularly those from minority groups.

"I'm so honored," Jones said while accepting the award during Penn State's virtual ceremony in October, 2020. **"Thank you to Penn State Harrisburg for always taking care of me and taking a combat veteran three months off deployment and showing me what family could be like on a college campus. Hopefully I can continue to work for diversity, equity, and inclusion for our students and make sure every voice is heard."**

Jones is a founding member and current mentor of the Penn State Harrisburg chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi, the oldest traditionally African American fraternity with nearly 300,000 members worldwide. He continues to serve the chapter as an advisor and speaker.

Jones enrolled in the U.S. Army following his high school graduation in 2000 and was eventually assigned to the historic 10th Cavalry "Buffalo Soldiers" in Fort Hood, Texas. In 2003, his unit was deployed to support operations in Iraq for two years. He earned the Primary Leadership Development Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, and the Army Accommodation Medal. He enrolled at Penn State Harrisburg in 2004.

An information technology professional whose work has spanned industries in the public, private, and government sectors, Jones has owned and operated Krimson Square since 2010. At Krimson Square, Jones is dedicated to aiding various businesses with search engine optimization (SEO), digital marketing services, and social media integration.

CAPITAL CONNECTIONS WITH ALUMNI

Beginning in May 2020, the college alumni office took its popular Capital Connections programming on the virtual road. Capital Connections at Home, a series of live and archived webinars for alumni and friends, allows viewers to experience Penn State Harrisburg from the comfort of home.

The series, which will continue through 2021, features Penn State Harrisburg faculty, staff, and alumni experts on a broad range of topics. Previous webinars included topics such as "Where's My TP – coronavirus and supply chains," a historical look at American football, a virtual wine and fresh fruits and vegetables tasting, the 2020 election and its financial impact, digital spaces and folklore, sustainable business practices, and supporting a successful transition to living and learning at home. For more information, to see the upcoming schedule, or to view past presentations, visit harrisburg.psu.edu/capital-connections-home

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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The Bertha and Boris Blai Sculpture Garden, located in the rear of the Olmsted Building, was named in 1994 after three of Boris Blai's sculptures (Seal Girl, The Evening Garment, and In Green Pastures) were donated to the campus by former provost and dean Ruth Leventhal and her sister. Renovated extensively in 2014, it incorporates geographic references to Three Mile Island as well as other small islands in the Susquehanna River. The garden also features Oliver LaGrone's "The University as Family" and "Angel in Flight", designed by Harrisburg-area native Deborah Masters.