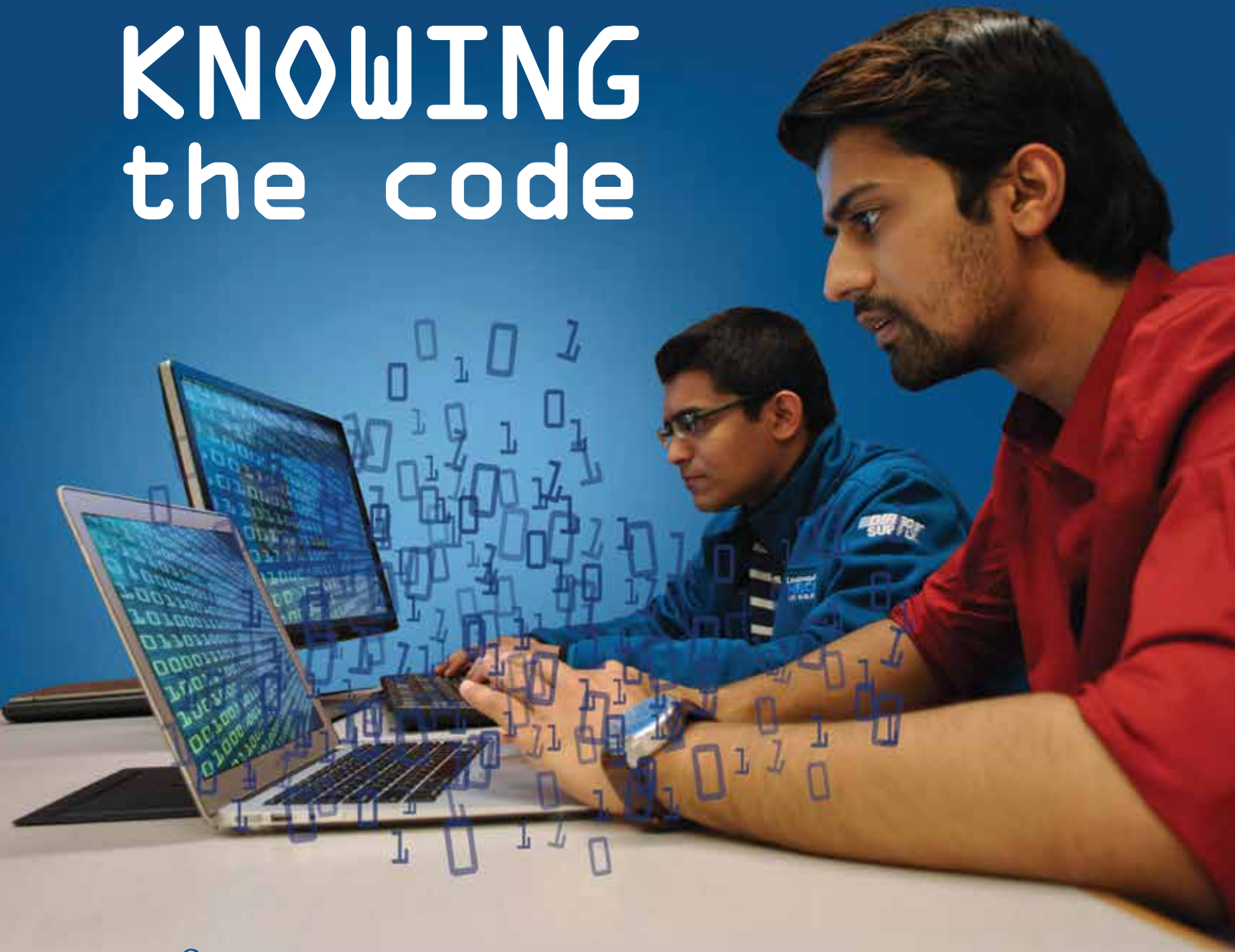


Penn State Harrisburg

Spring 2015

# Currents

## KNOWING the code



PENNSSTATE



Harrisburg

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Mukund S. Kulkarni

# Greetings FROM THE CHANCELLOR

This is an exciting time at Penn State Harrisburg! We are definitely on the move. As always, it is my pleasure to share with you all the great things happening at your alma mater.

In April, we broke ground for the new Student Enrichment Center, the 70,000-square-foot center will house space for key new and existing student services, including student lounges, food service and a convenience store, a theater/lecture hall, a spiritual center, the bookstore and offices for student counseling and disability services, honors education, international student support services and international study programs.

It is our goal to have this building complete by summer 2016, just in time to celebrate Penn State Harrisburg's 50th Anniversary.

This month, we were awarded \$50,000 in seed funding to begin developing the Center for the Next Step, which will enhance entrepreneurial environments and encourage students, faculty and community members to transform their intellectual property and creative works into commercial successes for local businesses, industries and communities. The funding is a part of Penn State President Eric Barron's INVENT Penn State initiative. We will continue to update on this exciting venture as the project develops.

Faculty research is a critical component of our success here at Penn State Harrisburg. In this issue, you will read about how faculty research in supply chain management is helping to ensure that items people need most are there when they are needed.

This issue also features stories about how our students are moving beyond the classroom and creating experiences that, combined with academics, will help them navigate the workforce after graduation. Whether it is worldwide competition that provides students with opportunities beyond their wildest expectations, or internships that help them discover their desired career path, our students find many opportunities to expand their learning.

Our partnerships with area businesses and alumni are stronger than ever. We are very proud to have such dedicated contributors to the success of the college community.

Recently, the TE Connectivity Foundation donated four state-of-the-art 3D printers to the college's engineering labs. These printers are a necessary enhancement to Penn State's engineering programs to improve the knowledge base in additive manufacturing and prototyping. The Foundation's gift continues a longtime relationship between Penn State Harrisburg, TE Connectivity, and the TE Connectivity Foundation, dating back 30 years.

These are just a few examples of the many exciting activities taking place at the college, and I am so very pleased to have such dedicated alumni and friends of the college joining with us, supporting our efforts, as we continue to grow.

Mukund S. Kulkarni, Ph.D.

# Currents

Vol. 27 No. 1

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Mukund S. Kulkarni, Ph.D.

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# Knowing the code to help

Armed with a crisp new suit and a wheelchair, electrical engineering graduate students Darshan Karnawat and Tapan Khilnani set off for the LeadingAge Hackfest competition last October in Nashville, Tennessee. They were looking for a way to get more involved with extracurricular activities; what they got was more life-changing than they could have imagined.

Having completed undergraduate studies in electronics and telecommunications in their native Mumbai, India, Karnawat and Khilnani had much in common when they met as students at Penn State Harrisburg, including the desire to enhance their career prospects with extracurricular activities. While brainstorming, sometimes into the wee hours of the morning, the two friends looked at computer competitions to which they could apply and came across LeadingAge Hackfest.

The two-day, worldwide competition, challenges teams to “Engage with Age” by creating a technology-driven tool aimed at improving the lives of older adults. Tools may include software applications, websites, interactive online experiences, or devices.

After an extensive application process, including submitting their résumés and taking an aptitude test, they were selected. Karnawat, who had forgotten his suit in India, quickly got a new one in New York City and Khilnani, who had recently broken his leg, had to depend on a wheelchair and crutches to get around.

Hackfest competitors came from around the world and from prestigious schools including Duke and Harvard. Karnawat and Khilnani weren't sure what to expect – other than a chance to hone their coding skills – but they were eager to participate.

Before arriving at the competition, they were assigned randomly into a five-member team representing different disciplines. The two

engineers were joined by a business management master's student from George Washington University, an undergraduate computer science student from Rice University, and a computer programming teacher. Dr. Robert E. Burke, the Gordon A. Friesen professor of health care administration at George Washington University, mentored the team.

Because the competition focused on improving the lives of older adults, the group also had two Council of Elders consultants helping out. According to Khilnani, the team was like a family.

After an intense and exhilarating weekend, Karnawat and Khilnani's team proudly came away with the top prize. Yet, the most inspiring and rewarding part for them came early in the competition at a group activity in which they had to experience what it was like to be elderly.

## A new perspective

To mimic physical issues that come with advanced age, competitors were outfitted in glasses that were shaded but for two small holes, earplugs, a drinking straw in one nostril and cotton in the other. One knee was tightly bandaged so it wouldn't bend, lentils were put in their shoes for instability, and several fingers were bound together. They then had to sign out, leave the room, use the bathroom, get a drink of water, and return.

Khilnani, whose broken leg hampered his efforts, was unable to complete the task. “I couldn't do it, I couldn't make it to the water fountain alone,” he said. “I had to have one of the elderly people there hold my hand and assist me. I was so touched, it brought tears to my eyes.”

Karnawat and Khilnani said they gained a new respect for what the elderly experience. “People tend not to know what's happening with the elderly. We got a chance to experience it,” Karnawat said. “We realized how much pain and suffering they go through.”

That experience inspired the students and their teammates. They brainstormed different project ideas, debating heavily, their emotions driven by the early group activity. Settling on one idea was a challenge, they said, but they were determined to find a tool to help people.

After discarding many ideas, including an automatic turn-off stove, the group decided on a software tool they dubbed “GaitMaster,” which works with the Xbox Kinect gaming console to measure gait and gait velocity via sensors on three different points on the hips, knees and ankles.



*Tapan Khilnani and Darshan Karnawat*



**Thanks to the computer competition, students gained a new respect for what the elderly experience.**

# others

**“We’ve learned that while classroom work is definitely necessary, what you do outside of the classroom can have a big impact as well.”**



Their tool was designed to assess risk factors related to falls with the ultimate goal of reducing hospital readmissions and providing higher quality care. The team envisioned the tool being used by physicians, physical therapists and discharge planners, among others, to assess the progression of therapy.

Karnawat and Khilnani asserted that the Xbox Kinect is a great platform for hacking into other uses.

“People are doing a lot of research with the Kinect,” Karnawat said. “It is a good platform that is easy to develop applications on. It can be used in science, agriculture, engineering.”

For the next 48 hours, they coded non-stop. Karnawat’s fancy new suit was thrown by the wayside as they rolled up their sleeves, furiously developing their idea – an idea that, once developed, became their personal property.

Khilnani, with his broken leg, provided for an excellent test subject. They tested their product more than 100 times before presenting to the competition judges. Having a prototype enabled them to do a live presentation, giving them a significant edge over their competition.

The students had to catch an early flight back to Pennsylvania so they couldn’t stay for the results. Karnawat happened to turn on his phone for a few moments before takeoff and discovered that they had won. They exuberantly expressed their excitement at winning, to the surprise and consternation of other passengers.

For their efforts, the team shared \$5,000 and prequalifies for this year’s Hackfest in Boston, Massachusetts. Karnawat said that his cut of the prize money was spent quickly, helping to pay for the new suit.

While winning this international competition was definitely an achievement, the students said that the networking and the chance to develop something to help others was significant.

“We went into this competition with an open mind and no expectations,” Karnawat said. “What we got was one heck of an experience. A great first experience in America. It was a chance to ‘do something different,’ as my dad always used to say.”

Khilnani, whose uncle attempted to encourage him to stay on campus and work on his thesis instead of going to Hackfest, said, “We’ve learned that while classroom work is definitely necessary, what you do outside of the classroom can have a big impact as well.”

Since the competition, Karnawat and Khilnani have continued to perfect their GaitMaster, adopting the design for one of their classes, and have participated in “hack-a-thons” in New York City. They say they are definitely planning to return to the LeadingAge Hackfest, this year.

Khilnani said that the experience opened doors for them and job interviews have come as a result of winning the competition.

Karnawat, who is going to work at a biomedical company that manufactures hearing aids compatible with iOS smart phones, said “When they hear that we have won Hackfest, their interest is immediately piqued and they want to hear all about that experience. It turns the conversation.”





## REDUCING VULNERABILITY

Dr. Swan studies how disruptive events, known as “black swans,” impact the supply chain management of retailers that rely on U.S. ports to import goods.

Major retailers like Walmart and Home Depot used to import all Asian goods through the Port of Los Angeles. Since 2000, several major disruptions have occurred at this port, mostly involving labor disputes like the one this year. More weather-related disruptions at U.S. ports, similar to the impact of Hurricane Katrina on New Orleans and Hurricane Sandy on New York, also can be expected, Swan says. Terrorist events are another potential black swan, he adds.

The biggest retailers, like Walmart, already have adjusted. They no longer depend solely on Los Angeles but rely on a mix of ports, including Seattle, Houston, Charleston and New York, Swan says.

The biggest retailers have resources to adjust on their own, so Swan sees his research of greatest benefit to mid-level retailers like Staples and Toys R Us, which typically import up to 50,000 20-foot containers (or their equivalent) in a year. By comparison, Walmart imported over 731,000 containers in 2013, followed by Target which imported more than 500,000.

Young has studied the vulnerability of U.S. ports to terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, research funded by a \$250,000 federal grant from the Defense Threat Reduction Agency.

“We talked to dozens of parties – government agencies, container shipping lines, port authorities, industrial firms, banks, insurance companies and freight forwarders (who arrange maritime shipping),” Young says. This resulted in us “making a whole series of recommendations, from training freight forwarders to simplifying some of the regulations that pertain to international transactions.”

In his research, Young also applies supply chain management principles to improve the flow of materials from governments, nonprofit agencies and private companies to natural disaster victims. He and co-researchers analyzed after-action reports submitted following disasters like Katrina and Sandy and the 2010 earthquake in Haiti.

These reports show public-private partnerships are best equipped to respond during a natural disaster, but agreements must be in place before disaster strikes. As an example of how this is done effectively, Young points to mutual aid agreements that make it possible for power companies from multiple states to respond when a major winter ice storm occurs in a specific location.

“Most supply chains are built with an eye toward improving service and reducing cost. This research has relieving human suffering as the proxy for customer service. We can reduce human suffering,” Young says.



**“MOST SUPPLY CHAINS ARE BUILT WITH AN EYE TOWARD IMPROVING SERVICE AND REDUCING COST. THIS RESEARCH HAS RELIEVING HUMAN SUFFERING AS THE PROXY FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE. WE CAN REDUCE HUMAN SUFFERING.”**



## IMPROVING EFFICIENCY

Dr. Dinesh R. Pai, Penn State Harrisburg assistant professor of supply chain management, has studied how the “complexity” of the import process contributes to costs incurred by multi-billion dollar companies based in the U.S.

Complexity includes factors like number of suppliers, whether these suppliers are independent or subsidiaries, and whether the company relies on one port or many. Government rules and regulations also add to complexity, Pai says.

How well a company manages complexity can impact how long it takes goods to clear a port following arrival. The longer it takes, the more likelihood for increased costs that get passed on to consumers, Pai says.

Closer to home, Pai hopes to include hospitals and other medical providers in the greater Harrisburg region in research on how supply chain management can help these entities reduce the cost of doing business.

“Health care facilities are looking for ways to cut their cost to improve the bottom line,” Pai says. “One way to do that is to streamline supply chain management. Approximately 35 to 50 percent of any health care facility’s costs are the costs of operations. There is a huge scope to bring down some of these costs.”



# INTERNSHIPS: A CAREER TEST DRIVE

For college students, an internship is a major rite of passage during their studies. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, 61 percent of the class of 2014 participated in at least one internship or co-op during college. Internships provide students real world work experience that can be crucial to their future success in securing a full-time job, they can also help students decide their career path by “test driving” different positions. Internships also provide networking opportunities and chances to boost a student’s academic studies. Here, Penn State Harrisburg students share their internship experiences.

## Kevin Icker

What started as a summer internship last year turned into much more for electrical engineering technology major Kevin Icker.

Icker worked full time at the Lancaster, Pennsylvania-based research and development facility of the global company Bosch Group, where he assisted the electrical engineering team on several projects testing components for security systems that Bosch manufactures. In addition to getting valuable hands-on experience, Icker said that has developed good relationships with Bosch associates, many of whom help to mentor him. Among them are two full-time engineers, Ben Dannan and Penn State Harrisburg alumnus Bogdan Iepure, both of whom currently are pursuing graduate degrees in electrical engineering at the college.

Apparently, Bosch was as pleased with Icker’s experience as he was. When the internship ended, the company invited him to stay on part time during the academic year – and to work full time again this summer. Icker successfully juggles work and school, noting that having the job helps to cut down on student loan needs.

Icker said he started his quest for an internship with the help of the college Career Services Office, using its résumé review services and its website to learn about opportunities. The payoff, in terms of learning, experience, and networking, has been significant.

“You can’t beat the experience you get while taking part in an internship,” Icker said.

## Kate-Lynn Scheib

Undergraduate communications student Kate-Lynn Scheib found her internship while watching one of her favorite programs, “Downton Abbey,” on PBS local affiliate, WITF. An ad appeared during a commercial



KEVIN  
ICKER



KATE-LYNN  
SCHEIB



break stating that the station was looking for college interns. Scheib, who is hoping for a career in graphic design and advertising, applied for the production and marketing internships at WITF.

She was interviewed and selected for both positions. Scheib worked four days a week, two in one department and two in the other, which she said gave her a well-rounded education in both.

During her internship, Scheib was able to write copy, press releases, attend photo and video shoots, and even curate the art gallery at WITF.

“I got a taste of everything,” she said. “It was really helpful to get my feet wet in both aspects. The internship was very informative and helped me discover what I did and didn’t like.”

Scheib also won the \$1500 Chronister Internship Endowment Award, an endowment that WITF interns competed for by writing an essay during the last two weeks of the unpaid internship. “They sent my essay to the family that sponsors the award,” she added.

Scheib said that she learned to feel more comfortable and confident in a





## MARIO SOLIMAN



“You can’t beat the experience you get while taking part in an internship.”

business setting. “Even though I was an intern, I still felt needed,” she said.

She also encouraged students to look for internships in uncanny places. “Keep your eyes opened,” Scheib said. “I found my internship through something that I already loved. I love WITF, but I didn’t know it [an internship] was a possibility until I saw that ad.”

### Mario Soliman

Mario Soliman is one busy student. He is an undergraduate biology student in the Schreyer Honors College who spends a lot of time in the Central Pennsylvania Research and Teaching Laboratory for Biofuels at Penn State Harrisburg assisting in projects led by Dr. Sairam V. Rudrabhatla, associate professor of biology and Dr. Shobha Potlakayala, assistant professor of biology. He is also a co-author on several manuscripts that are in the process of being published, as well as a tutor at the Learning Center and a teaching assistant.

Last summer, he participated in Penn State Harrisburg’s 10-week hands-on interdisciplinary undergraduate research program, funded by a National Science Foundation Research Experiences for Undergraduates (NSF-REU) grant, which focuses on minority and female students and aims to introduce and retain students in the STEM disciplines of science, technology, engineering and math.

During spring break, he and several other honors students took an ecotourism tour in Peru where he helped to develop a medical kit for tour guides in the rainforest.

All of his activities have led him to a 2015 summer internship at Harvard Medical School – Summer Clinical and Translational Research Program. Mario was one of eight students chosen from approximately 4800 applicants.

Soliman was prompted to apply for the internship by Rudrabhatla and even though he believed it was a long shot, said, “why not.” He also applied to seven other internships, including one at University of California, Berkeley.

He said that he is most looking forward to the well-rounded education he will receive during the internship, which focuses on aspects as a clinician, physician, and patient. “As a prospective medical student, you want to see the whole aspect of medical care, not just the research aspect, but the bigger picture.”

He is also excited to work one-on-one in a subject of his interest. “A nice thing is that each student is assigned to a lab of their interest, working one-on-one with a mentor.”



Career Peer  
Duc Dang

## For career help, students can go to their Peers

Students seeking help to begin preparing their résumé or looking for a job now can turn to their peers – Career Peers, that is. Penn State Harrisburg’s Career Services Office now enlists students to assist their classmates with utilizing the services the office provides.

A “Career Peer” serves as a liaison between the office and students, educating them about the opportunities and resources that are available. Career Peer volunteers attend biweekly meetings and all career-related events on campus, often managing the Career Services table at job fairs.

Among the services the Career Peers recommend are free résumé critiques, open office hours, and mock interviews, all offered by Career Services staff. For example, any student may send their résumé into the Career Services Office and have it critiqued within 24 hours. The office also helps students use The Nittany Lion Career Network, where they can search and apply for jobs and internships.

Sophomore accounting major Caroline Keith said, “As Career Peers, we are able to connect with the students easier. So at job fairs and other events, students are more likely to approach us because they feel they can relate to us.”

And, the Peers also benefit, themselves utilizing the resources they advertise to students. For example, Career Peer Emily Spillar, a junior marketing major, found her summer internship by using the Nittany Lion Career Network and skills she learned from working with the Career Services Office.

The Career Peers also recently conducted their first student-run event – a LinkedIn workshop at which students received advice on how to use the website and were also given the opportunity to have a professional headshot taken.

Caroline’s brother, freshman Justin Keith, summarized his best advice for job seekers, learned through his experience as a Career Peer: it’s going to take a good GPA, leadership skills, and a well-rounded résumé to be competitive in today’s job market.

## Attacks foster public unity for freedom of expression



In early January 2015, the Paris offices of the French satirical weekly newspaper Charlie Hebdo were attacked by two Islamist terrorists, leaving 12 people dead and 11 injured. Several related attacks followed in the Île-de-France region, where five more people were killed and 11 wounded.

The attacks, said to have been sparked by Charlie Hebdo's controversial depictions of the Prophet Muhammad, sparked worldwide attention and ignited the French public for several weeks. Across the globe, many declared, "Je Suis Charlie," or "I am Charlie," in support of the publication and its slain employees.

Penn State Harrisburg faculty member Dr. Juliette Toley has a unique perspective on the public reaction to the Charlie Hebdo attack, not only because of her background in political science, but also because she is a native of France.

### Attacking freedom of the press

In the case of the Charlie Hebdo attacks, Toley said that most of the public reaction in France and abroad really addressed Charlie Hebdo and the relationship of freedom of expression and freedom of the press.

Toley said that in France, the Charlie Hebdo magazine was not very popular, had a small readership, and often was the subject of controversy. But it was a part of French political culture.

"People liked to know it exists. It is an important institution that plays a particular role in the broader political system and media landscape," she said.

Following the attack, Toley said that there still was not widespread support of the magazine, but support for the right of freedoms of expression and of the press.

Public reaction to the attacks began even before the incident was over, two hours after the first shootings. French citizens came onto the streets in demonstration.

"For the French public, it was important to show that 'we are not afraid,' we'd rather take risk than be afraid," Toley said. "Terrorists are trying to create fear. We are going to show them that we are not afraid."

The "Je Suis Charlie" slogan was born out of the event. It was a defense of Charlie Hebdo from the attack on freedom of expression, Toley added.

"They (terrorists) were trying to attack freedom of expression, trying to silence this particular journal. We (the public) are going to become the victim and speak out in their name," Toley said of the reasons the public adopted the slogan.

The slogan was everywhere. Not long after the attack, an estimated 100,000 people poured onto the streets of cities all over France with "Je Suis Charlie" signs. It was printed on placards, displayed on mobile phones and on websites across the world. Within two days of the attack, the slogan had become one of the most popular news hashtags in Twitter history. It was a slogan that was embraced worldwide.

The remaining staff at Charlie Hebdo continued publication of the

magazine; the issue following the attack ran 7.95 million copies in six languages, compared to the typical 60,000 copies in only French.

Following the incident, the public and journalists around the world began publishing the Charlie Hebdo cartoons, including Bloomberg News, The Huffington Post, The Daily Beast, and Gawker in the U.S.

Toley said that the "Je Suis Charlie" campaign was successful in a sense because it said that freedom of expression is not going to be limited. Newspapers in France became emboldened about what they published, she added.

The unity march held a few days after the incident was the biggest march in France since World War II, according to Toley. About 2 million people, including more than 40 world leaders, attended the march and rally. Across France, approximately 3.7 million held demonstrations; others took place around the world.

### Erasing the middle ground

Despite the apparent success of the "we are not afraid" demonstration and the "Je Suis Charlie" slogan, Toley said that she doesn't think the terrorists were surprised by these actions or felt deleted in any way.

"Their real goal was to polarize and divide French society," Toley said, "and embolden extremism on both sides and force people to choose between the two extremes and remove the middle ground."

In terms of uniting the entire French society, the idea of "Je Suis Charlie" was actually problematic, she said.

"For the first couple of days, you could not, not be 'Je Suis Charlie,'" Toley said. "There was no room for criticism of Charlie Hebdo. It would have been perceived that you were siding with the terrorists. It erased the middle position, that you might be critical of Charlie Hebdo and still condemn terrorism."

She said that this silenced a section of French society that condemned the attacks, but did not support the ideals and messages in Charlie Hebdo. This silencing in itself is a problem, Toley said, because it diminished freedom of expression while attempting to protect it. She added that in one instance, police came after primary school children who did not want to observe a moment of silence after the attacks.

"Terrorism is about instigating panic, emotions, and terror in the public, as well as undermining the morale and trust people have in the political system and questioning that system's ideals and values," she said. "The way the public reacts can be used as symbolic tools both for future terrorists and for law enforcement and policy makers for mobilization and legitimization of future actions."

"[It also] gives a sense of how successful or unsuccessful a particular attack was and provides an idea of the future of this kind of violence. It is, therefore, important that the public is aware of the broader impact that an immediate emotional reaction may have."

## New academic leaders named

Dr. Gregory Crawford, director of the Penn State Harrisburg library, has been appointed to serve as the director of the School of Humanities on an interim basis, effective July 1. Crawford has served in the college's library since 1993, and as its director since 2005. He holds a Ph.D. in communication, information and library studies from Rutgers and an M.S. in library science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



*Dr. Gregory Crawford*



*Dr. Patria de Lancer Julnes*

Dr. Patria de Lancer Julnes will join Penn State Harrisburg as director of the School of Public Affairs effective July 1. With more than 15 years of academic and administrative experience, Dr. de Lancer Julnes comes to Penn State Harrisburg from the University of Baltimore, where she serves as special assistant to the provost. A professor of public administration, she also has served as director of the doctor of public administration program. She holds a Ph.D. in public administration and a bachelor of science in marketing, both from Rutgers, and a master of public administration from Fairleigh Dickinson.

Dr. Susannah Gal has been named as associate dean of research and outreach, effective July 15. Since 1994, Dr. Gal has been a faculty member in Binghamton University's Department of Biological Sciences, where she also has served as the departmental graduate director and department chair. She was named interim dean of libraries in 2014, guiding overall management of the university's library. She also had served as a program director at the National Science Foundation. Dr. Gal holds a Ph.D. in biochemistry from The Johns Hopkins University and her A.B. in biochemistry/chemistry from Smith College.



*Dr. Susannah Gal*

## Fulbright focus: violence against women

Dr. Chiara Sabina, associate professor of social sciences, has received a research-based Fulbright Fellowship for the 2015-16 academic year.

Sabina's studies will focus on intimate partner violence in Latino communities and will be conducted in Ecuador in collaboration with the Health Secretary of the Metropolitan District of Quito and San Francisco University of Quito, Department of Public Health.

Ecuador is considered a leader in Latin America for its innovation in addressing violence against women. Sabina will develop, implement, and evaluate culturally-sensitive training modules for health professionals on how to identify and respond to domestic violence. She also will devote time to teaching activities, lecturing, conducting workshops, and involving students in her research.

The Fulbright Program is the U.S. government's flagship international educational exchange program, providing participants with the opportunity to study, teach and conduct research, exchange ideas and contribute to finding solutions to shared international concerns.

## Cigler named distinguished professor

Dr. Beverly Cigler, professor of public policy and administration, has become Penn State Harrisburg's third scholar to be named distinguished professor by the University.

The title of distinguished professor recognizes a select group of professors who have achieved exceptional accomplishments in teaching, research and service.

Cigler has built a national and international reputation for her research and expertise in intergovernmental relations, especially state and local policy, politics, and management. She is a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration and has received national awards for her intergovernmental research and scholarship and



*Dr. Beverly Cigler*

community building for economic development and several statewide awards including a Legislation Citation for contributions to Pennsylvania.

## around campus



Penn State Harrisburg graduate student Tam Nguyen, of Vietnam, is featured in the documentary film, "Red Over The Rainbow," detailing the rise of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender community in Vietnam, which had its U.S. premiere at Penn State Harrisburg in April.



In memory of the late Barry Uber, a 1969 Penn State Harrisburg graduate, 59 donors from throughout the United States collectively contributed more than \$15,000 to the college's Student Emergency Assistance Fund.



## Kyle Maynard makes no excuses

If Kyle Maynard can play football, wrestle, lift weights, do mixed martial arts and reach the top of Mount Kilimanjaro – without any arms or legs – there is no reason everyone in his audience cannot reach their goals.

A motivational speaker and best selling author of the book “No Excuses,” Maynard travels the country to share his inspirational story. He visited Penn State Harrisburg on April 15.

Born with a rare deformity called congenital amputation, Maynard credits his parents with encouraging him to become as independent as possible. “They chose to not treat me any differently,” he said.

It was not always easy. Despite his upbeat message, there have been times he was depressed. He can remember, as a child, praying that he would wake up one day with arms and legs instead of stumps. When he was 10, he asked himself, “Will I have to live with my parents all my life? Will I be able to live on my own? Will I ever have a girlfriend?”

If he had kept thinking like that, he would have been unhappy, he said. Instead, he used persistence and humor to reach amazing goals. When strangers asked him why he had no limbs, he would make up stories – his dad dangled him over a lions’ den, he was attacked by a shark, he fought in Vietnam (at age 10).

For every success he has had, he said there were 1,000 failures. He dropped his spoon thousands of times before he could successfully get food to his mouth. The first time he put socks on by himself, at age 15, it took him 45 minutes. Now it takes just seconds. Learning to brush his teeth, use a phone, type, write, shower, drive a car – all took hundreds of hours of practice. When he started wrestling, he lost his first 35 matches. By his senior year in high school, he was ranked 12th in the nation in his weight class.

The most dramatic moment during his presentation came when he described his journey up Mount Kilimanjaro. He wriggled off his chair onto the floor to demonstrate how he bear-walked – crawled – up the mountain on his stumps, then how he used a spike attached to his arm stump to pound into a steep ice field over and over, dragging himself up inch by inch.

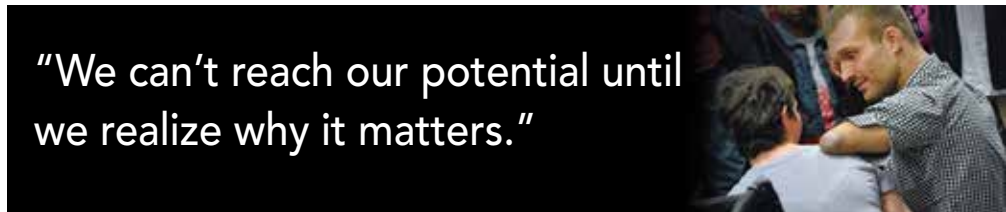
On the fourth day of the planned 15-day ascent of the 19,000-foot mountain in Tanzania, he nearly gave up. “I was lying in my tent, in tremendous pain. I was broken,” he said.

But a promise he made to a mother whose son was killed in Afghanistan kept him going.


Maynard carried the ashes of PFC Corey Johnson up the mountain at the request of the soldier’s mother. Johnson had loved to travel and climb mountains and had always wanted to visit Africa.

Maynard said that if he had quit, “I would have had to tell the mother of a soldier who was killed that I had failed...I realized then that he had sacrificed more than I had.”

When Maynard reached the top of Kilimanjaro and scattered Johnson’s ashes, he realized, “Corey became why I was there.



“We can’t reach our potential until we realize why it matters.”



## SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS

- In June, Penn State Harrisburg Athletic Director Rahsaan Carlton will be inducted into the Capital Area Chapter of the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame.
- The Penn State Harrisburg golf team finished second in the Capital Athletic Conference (CAC) Championship for the second straight year. Four players were named to the All-Conference team: Tyler Shank and Keith Miller, first team; Collin Hagenbuch and Tyler Massar, second team. Miller was also named CAC Rookie of the Year, the second straight Lion to claim the honor.
- Joseph Phifer, men’s track and field, is the first male athlete to score points at the CAC Championship with his fourth place finish in the men’s 800 meter. He is also Penn State Harrisburg’s first track and field athlete to qualify for the Eastern Capital Athletic Conference Championship.

[harrisburg.psu.edu/currents](http://harrisburg.psu.edu/currents)

## around campus



U.S. federal judge C. Darnell Jones II visited Penn State Harrisburg to discuss the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its implications 50 years later.



Penn State Harrisburg hosted guest artist Elizabeth Strickler who spoke on virtual and embodied worlds as a part of 1+1, an interactive game designed by college faculty to foster diverse student engagement with the college community.



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Read more online at [harrisburg.psu.edu/currents](http://harrisburg.psu.edu/currents)



## Students use spring vacation to “Break a Difference”

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”

Penn State Harrisburg students embodied the spirit of Margaret Meade’s iconic quote recently when they embarked on an alternative spring break trip. Sleeping on cots in a hot gym, taking cold showers, and helping elementary school children with their homework may not be your idea of a spring break, but this group would not have had it any other way.

The students spent a week in Newark, New Jersey, immersed in an experience facilitated by the service organization Break a Difference, the Boys and Girls Club of Newark, and the United Way, directly serving hundreds of Newark’s youth. The students received trip support from Penn State Harrisburg’s Alyce Spector Tolerance and Diversity Program Fund.

As part of their journey, students performed tasks ranging from helping to clean and organize the club facility to working with children on after-school activities. For many of the children, the mere presence of a positive, encouraging voice was enough to make them smile.

Students had the opportunity to form deep personal relationships with each other and with students from around the U.S. For sophomore Alyssa Subsinsky, who already had health concerns, the sleeping and shower arrangements were less than ideal. Still, the experience left an impact on her. “I struggled the entire time and wanted to come home for most of it. However, when I was at my weakest, that’s when it was the most beautiful. I will forever be changed by this experience. I’m so thankful for the friends – now family – I’ve made. We went to change lives but I think it was our lives that were changed.”

The students also saw firsthand the challenges found in many urban environments. Seeing broken glass on roads, graffiti on walls, bars on windows, and trash on the streets helped to show the students the real life problems many communities – including their own – experience.

Students performed nearly 300 hours of direct service with the Boys and Girls Club and participated in activities that helped them identify important social and civic issues. Students also

took turns each night facilitating discussions on insights from the day.

The experience deeply touched program coordinator and graduate student Andy Dessel. “I could not be more proud of our group,” he said. “Each student came away with a highly meaningful and impactful experience that will help to make them more informed, active, and engaged citizens.”

The Penn State Harrisburg group also explored cultural aspects of Newark and New York City that led to new perspectives for many of them. At a coffeehouse open mic night in the heart of Newark, students came to critically analyze important elements of a community’s culture and how that environment shapes individuals. This led to engaging dialogue about race, inequality, and poverty.

“It is amazing how one week of service can completely change your outlook,” said graduate student Yenushka Karunaratne. “You can live your whole life and never see real issues that many people face every day. The experience was really eye opening and put everything in perspective in my own life.”

Many of the students also learned important life lessons from the children and Boys and Girls Club staff. “I learned how much you can make someone’s day better just by making them feel special, almost like they are the only person in the world,” said sophomore Tim Howe.

The overall experience helped to instill in the students a new passion and energy to explore ways they can continue the lessons they learned. Sophomore Daniel Aung committed to becoming an active community member.

“A rundown building . . . has forever etched itself into my heart with the single best experience of my life,” Aung said. “Every single second of every single day was an absolute delight, and I would do it all over again, endlessly if I could. The ability to redefine important views in one week is groundbreaking in itself, but when combined with the friendships developed, the feeling becomes absolutely overwhelming. Not only did the experience ‘break a difference,’ but it also broke my heart when it had to inevitably end. But don’t worry, Newark, you have not seen the last of me...”



The new Penn State Harrisburg Educators Award will provide financial assistance – \$500 per semester – and recognition to outstanding students enrolled or planning to enroll in the college’s teacher education master’s programs.



More than 550 students received their degrees at the college’s spring 2015 commencement on May 10. James R. Hoehn, regional president of the Central Pennsylvania region for PNC Bank, delivered the keynote address.

## Nursing alums make global impact

Nursing alumni returned to campus in April to present highlights of their international health projects in Kenya, Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Malawi.

### Diana Davidson '12

Staff nurse anesthetist  
Holy Spirit Hospital, Camp Hill, Pa.

Davidson has been volunteering in global health since 2004 when she went to Thailand. Since then, she has been to Ethiopia, Honduras, Malawi, India, and Rwanda.

"Seeing how other cultures took care of their ill and the resources they lacked was a real eye-opener for me," she said. "The gratitude the patients expressed was astounding"

Davidson volunteers regularly on education and service global missions. She is working to develop, evaluate, and improve anesthesia education and provider retention in third world countries and has helped develop successful anesthesia educational programs in Africa that have continued to thrive without U.S. support.

"I do this for the people, for the children and their smiles," she said. "You get back what you give."



### Hadiza Fox '13

Intensive care unit nurse  
Community General Osteopathic Hospital, Harrisburg, Pa.

Fox is a native of Niger, Africa, one of the poorest countries in the world. She said she was motivated to become a nurse after watching her mother care for a sister with

Down's Syndrome, and wishing proper healthcare was available.

Fox's global health trip took her back to Niger, where she said she was shocked by the lack of proper equipment and drugs. As she watched family members participate in the care of their loved ones, it reminded her that "we can all make a difference."

She is working on a drive for plastic gloves, over-the-counter medication, and dressing supplies. Her future goal is to develop a mobile health clinic to provide basic healthcare and disease prevention education to African villages.

## around campus



The Capital Area Writing Project at Penn State Harrisburg recently began the 2014-16 National Writing Project Fellowship program whose graduate candidates and mentors represent 21 Pennsylvania schools and span all levels of elementary and secondary education and multiple disciplines.



Penn State Harrisburg Benefiting THON participated in THON Weekend at the Bryce Jordan Center, February 20 through 22, raising over \$37,000 of the 2015 THON total of \$13,026,653.23.



### Julie Wilson Kumar '12

Emergency nurse  
York Hospital, York, Pa.

Kumar visited Kenya, Africa on her most recent medical mission trip. She and a nurse friend visited slums in Thika, Kenya, where they provided basic medical services and medications, including deworming medication, which every

school age child is required to have. They also volunteered at an orphanage, testing babies for HIV.

Kumar said global health missions are important because people need the care. "Humanity should not be restricted to people in your own community, but should be given to people from all walks of life," she said.

She said that mission work provides the chance to help someone less privileged than we are in the U.S. It also offers a chance to "pay it forward" and "provides you a broader spectrum of healthcare knowledge."

### Sister Margaret Muchire '14

Occupational and travel nurse  
Holy Spirit Hospital, Camp Hill, Pa.

Muchire native Kenyan, focused her global nursing work on maternal and child mortality and morbidity. She said that children under five-years-old are dying from treatable diseases and that women are delivering babies at home, causing labor and delivery complications.

Muchire spent her early years as a nurse in Kenya, where she enjoyed the work, but found many challenges, including scarce medical supplies and few healthcare workers. When she saw the adequacy of medical care in the U.S., she was surprised: "Wow, is this the same world that we live in? There are good medical facilities, emergency care is just a call away, healthcare is available and accessible ..."

This spurred her desire to return to Kenya. She has big goals, but started small, by networking, and finding ways to provide materials and knowledge and create awareness. "I want to bring about change, little by little," she said. "Possibly build a maternity home or hospital in my village and promote health and formal education. The mothers and children have become my passion."



## New building will house student services

Penn State Harrisburg broke ground in April for a Student Enrichment Center that will house space for key new and existing student services.

The 70,000-square-foot center is being built in the core of campus, on the hillside between the Science and Technology Building and the Capital Union Building. It will house student lounges, a food service facility and convenience store, a theater/lecture hall, a spiritual center, the bookstore and offices for student counseling and disability services, honors education, international student support services and international study programs.

Penn State Harrisburg received leadership gifts from the late Russell E. Horn Sr., a 1933 Penn State graduate; William Lambert, a 1980 Penn State Harrisburg graduate, and his wife, Sandy; and Campus Heights, a developer of student housing near campus, to support the project.

Horn's \$1 million gift is dedicated to two areas within the Student Enrichment Center: the Learning Center, which offers a range of tutoring services and fosters student collaborations, and a spiritual meditation center that will accommodate students' varied religious and spiritual practices. The Lamberts' gift of \$250,000 will support advancement of student advising services, the offices for which will be located in the new building. The gift of \$375,000 from Campus Heights will support the recreational needs of students, including construction of the student living room.



*An April groundbreaking ceremony marked the start of construction on the college's new Student Enrichment Center.*



## College receives gift of 3D printers

The TE Connectivity Foundation has donated four state-of-the-art 3D printers to Penn State Harrisburg's engineering labs.

The Foundation's gift continues a longtime relationship between Penn State Harrisburg. TE employs several hundred Penn State alumni and in 2013 established the \$500,000 TE Connectivity Capstone Design Endowment to fund Penn State Harrisburg senior engineering projects and create the TE Connectivity Lecture Series in Connector Design. It also continues the collaboration between TE Connectivity, the TE Connectivity Foundation, and Penn State Harrisburg to provide cutting edge learning opportunities for students.

In May, the college recognized TE Connectivity with a gift created using one of the new 3D printers. Students designed and manufactured a plastic globe featuring the Penn State Harrisburg and TE Connectivity logos.

# alumni news

**We want to hear from you!**

Help us keep up with your whereabouts, activities, and achievements.

**Send updates to:**

Penn State Harrisburg, Alumni Office, [hbgalumni@psu.edu](mailto:hbgalumni@psu.edu) or 777 West Harrisburg Pike, Middletown, PA 17057-4898 • 717-948-6715



## College awarded funding to support entrepreneurial activities

As part of Penn State President Eric Barron's INVENT Penn State initiative, Penn State Harrisburg has been awarded \$50,000 in seed funding to help the college develop the Center for the Next Step, which will enhance entrepreneurial environments and encourage students, faculty and community members to transform their intellectual property and creative works into commercial successes for local businesses, industries and communities.

The center will assist individuals in the concept of commercialization of intellectual capital. It will also help address impediments to successful start-ups, such as potential business owners' lack of skills and start-up financing, by providing a tool set for entrepreneurs-in-training.

Penn State Harrisburg was one of six Commonwealth campuses to submit winning proposals, including Abington, Erie, Lehigh Valley, New Kensington and Wilkes-Barre.

In January 2015, President Barron announced "INVENT Penn State," a new initiative for the University, focused on leveraging Penn State's research, knowledge and entrepreneurial spirit to bring to market needed ideas, products, and services. The initiative is a collaboration, one in which students, faculty and campuses work with businesses and communities across the Commonwealth to improve the lives of Pennsylvanians and, ultimately, the people of the world.



*Students showcase innovative technologies and entrepreneurial potential on senior capstone design projects. Above left, an exoskeleton robotic arm; above right, DataGrow automated system for optimal plant care; below, a wireless hazardous environment rover.*

