

Bloomsburg

THE UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE



Research at the World's End

Page 13

A Legacy Honoring Excellence:

Alumnus Stephen J. Jones Elevates the CU Honors Experience

Page 10

Q&A with Madelyn Rodriguez

Page 24





Greetings Bloomsburg Family,

Earlier this spring, we had the privilege of celebrating the achievements of our 2024 graduates. The class of 2024 represents a group of hard working, determined, creative students, many of whom began their college careers at the height of the global pandemic. Their story is one of perseverance, grit, and the power of a positive mindset. My colleagues and I were immensely proud to watch them walk across the stage on commencement day.

I'm sure that many of you can relate to the feelings of excitement and uncertainty that arrive upon graduating. Change can be daunting. That is a lesson we have all learned these past few years. My hope for our graduates is that they will embrace the future with open minds and courageous hearts. Our graduates have proven that they are capable of rising to the occasion and overcoming any obstacle in their path.

This, I believe, is also true of our Commonwealth University family. Despite the difficulties inherent in the ever-evolving higher education landscape, our CU community remains focused on providing an affordable, high-quality education for students and families.

In our last issue, we shared the launch of our first-ever strategic plan. Since then, we have remained steadfast in our efforts to put our plan into action for the benefit of our students. Our mission and our vision are built on student success. Our top priority is helping students to achieve their goals and improve their lives through education.

Having experienced the transformative power of education myself, I believe it is crucial to support our students by providing them with the resources they need to succeed without the burden of financial stress. This is essential for the success of our students, and for our region's growth and prosperity.

A college degree remains critical for upward economic and social mobility; and we remain steadfastly committed to walking alongside our students and their families to help them afford a CU degree so that they can experience the transformative power of education firsthand.

Our efforts are making a real difference to Pennsylvania students and families, and it is encouraging to know that Commonwealth University has become a destination of choice for our region's students. They rely on us to prepare them for successful careers and fulfilling lives. We are keeping our promise to them through an updated curriculum that offers the latest programs that are relevant to the workforce and available at an affordable cost.

The pages that follow include stories of our alumni and students who have shown incredible generosity, overcome challenges, and chosen to lean into opportunities to expand and grow their worldview. Their stories are at the heart of what we do and why we do it. I hope you will draw the same inspiration, encouragement, and motivation from them as I have.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Basha Hanna".

Dr. Bashar W. Hanna,
President





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Bloomsburg: The University Magazine is published two times a year for alumni, students' families, and friends of the university. Back issues may be found at bloomu.edu/magazine.

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Bloomsburg

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FEATURES

| | |
|---|-----------|
| The Career Intensive Boot Camp | 6 |
| Spring Commencement 2024 | 8 |
| A Legacy Honoring Excellence: Stephen J. Jones | 10 |
| Research at the World's End | 13 |

DEPARTMENTS

| | |
|---------------|-----------|
| Common Ground | 2 |
| Athletics | 18 |
| Husky Notes | 21 |
| Then & Now | 23 |

Susan McDowell



Benefactor Elevates McDowell Institute's Reach Across Commonwealth U Campuses

Commonwealth University has received a \$400,000 gift from longtime benefactor Susan McDowell for the McDowell Institute, a CU-based organization supporting the facilitation of social, emotional, and behavioral wellness of children, youth, and young adults across school and community settings.

The donation, made through the Bloomsburg University Foundation, brings McDowell's contributions to the program to more than \$3 million. The funds are earmarked for additional staffing and consulting services, further bolstering the institute's ability to extend its reach beyond its Bloomsburg roots to CU's Lock Haven and Mansfield campuses and their surrounding communities.

"We are immensely grateful to Susan McDowell for her unwavering commitment to our university, especially the McDowell Institute and its mission," says President Bashar Hanna. "This significant contribution will fortify our existing programs and allow us to deliver McDowell Institute services to even more communities, amplifying our impact."

Under McDowell's continued patronage, the McDowell Institute has thrived, broadening its range of offerings and cementing its role as a vital hub for community service and educational enhancement, according to Ann Larson, dean of the CU College of Education and Human Studies.

"Susan's compassionate spirit and tremendous generosity are a true inspiration," Larson says. "Her philanthropic support addresses the pressing challenges confronting education today, and her passion is integral to our collective mission in fostering positive change within our student body and the broader community."

The McDowell Institute operates an extensive array of initiatives, exceeding 40 programs annually.

"Susan McDowell's generous support allows us to sustain and expand our efforts to all campuses and communities within the Commonwealth

University footprint," emphasizes Danielle Empson-Shultz, director of the McDowell Institute.

"The McDowell Institute has a long-standing commitment to supporting the social, emotional, and behavioral wellness of youth, and the need for training and education has continued to increase. Susan's gift couldn't have come at a more opportune time, enabling us to address these pressing needs

with even greater effectiveness and reach."

"I am honored to support Commonwealth University and their efforts to expand the McDowell Institute and its original mission of raising awareness and increasing access to solutions for youth facing mental health and wellness issues," McDowell says. "It has always been my goal to make sure these resources are available to teachers who often have to help students with struggles that extend beyond the classroom. Now, together, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of individuals across the Commonwealth."

"Commonwealth University extends its profound appreciation to Susan McDowell for her enduring dedication to advancing education and wellness initiatives within our communities," says Erik Evans, CU vice president for university advancement.

“It has always been my goal to make sure these resources are available to teachers who often have to help students with struggles that extend beyond the classroom.”

Three Faculty Members Honored with Keepers of the Flame Award



Dr. Carroll J. Redfern

PASSHE has named a faculty member at all three CU locations as a recipient of the second Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Keepers of the Flame Award.

Award recipients are Dr. Carroll J. Redfern, faculty emeritus at CU–Bloomsburg; Dr. Frederick “Rick” Schulze, professor of health sciences at CU–Lock Haven; and Kim Shelton, faculty and director of TRIO Student Support Services at CU–Mansfield.

The award recognizes an individual for their contributions to creating and promoting diverse, equitable, and inclusive environments that cultivate a sense of belonging.

“Congratulations to each of the award recipients, who demonstrate the best of Commonwealth University through their commitment to



Dr. Frederick “Rick” Schulze

advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion across our campuses,” says Bashar Hanna, president. “Through their example we will continue to champion initiatives that support and foster a welcoming and inclusive environment where every student has the ability to succeed and thrive. Thank you to the award recipients for all they have done in support of our students. Their efforts and tireless dedication are to be commended.”

Redfern devoted his career to ensuring that individuals with special needs are valued, accepted, and fairly treated. In 1969, Redfern received a master’s degree in special education from Bloomsburg University and was hired as the university’s first African American faculty member. He rose to full-time student teacher supervisor, a position



Kim Shelton

held for 19 years before becoming chair of the department for special education for 10 years. As chair, he advocated for a range of student issues.

Before retiring from Bloomsburg in 2001, Redfern served on several university and community committees, taught undergraduate and graduate courses and assisted other university departments with recruiting faculty of color.

“Each recipient of the Keepers of the Flame award embodies the best in humanity—demonstrating a commitment to raising awareness about important issues and advocating for ‘doing the right thing,’” says Dr. Denise Pearson, vice chancellor and chief diversity, equity, and inclusion officer at the Office of the Chancellor.

Biochemistry and Pre-Medicine Concentrations Accredited

Commonwealth University’s Department of Biochemistry, Chemistry, Engineering, and Physics (BiCEP) has earned accreditation from the American Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB) for two Bachelor of Science in Chemistry degree concentrations: biochemistry and pre-medicine.

The seven-year full accreditation applies across the Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield campuses in recognition of their excellence in curriculum, institutional characteristics, and faculty qualifications. The accreditation enables graduating seniors to take the national ASBMB accreditation exam and demonstrate their proficiency in biochemistry and molecular biology on a national stage.



Commonwealth University Bands Perform in New Year's Day Parade in London



By invitation of The King of England, Commonwealth University bands were invited to perform in the London New Year's Day Parade and Celebrations from Dec. 28, 2023, to Jan. 4, 2024.

Students in CU–Mansfield's bands–The Spirit & The Pride of PA Marching Band and the Mansfield Concert Wind Ensemble, as well as members of the Lock Haven and Bloomsburg bands and color guard performed in the New Year's Day parade to ring in the new year. More than 600,000 people lined the parade route and the parade was broadcast on television to an audience of approximately 6 billion viewers.



A total of 69 performers traveled to London, along with four staff members. Ten students from Bloomsburg and six students from Lock Haven joined the 47 students from Mansfield who made up the core of the group. In addition, six Mansfield alumni rejoined their alma mater. Staff members included director of bands, Dr. Adam F. Brennan and his wife, Jonelle and Eric and Wendy Griffin, alumni staff assistants and former LNYDP participants.



Helping People Hear Better

Audiology Doctorate Graduate Researches at Mayo Clinic

Monica Amarante, who graduated in May from CU–Bloomsburg with a Doctorate in Audiology, completed her fourth-year externship in the audiology program in the 2023-24 academic year at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Florida.

Her research at the Mayo Clinic included investigations into how headphone placement affects hearing tests, the effectiveness of home self-assessment of over-the-counter hearing aids, and how cochlear implants change the quality of life for caregivers of a hearing-impaired person.

“I chose audiology because I wanted a career that allowed me to help others, that was diverse, and in the healthcare field. I enjoy science and technology, but did not want to become a physician,” says Amarante. “I was encouraged to explore audiology, speech pathology, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. Audiology was perfect as it was a good

mix of science and technology that allows me to establish rapport with patients and witness their progress.”

Amarante is also a 2020 alumna of CU-Bloomsburg’s undergraduate program in audiology and speech pathology.

“I decided to attend Bloomsburg for graduate school as well because it offered a range of opportunities that some of the bigger name schools couldn’t provide, such as a rotational chair on campus, an entire class devoted to tinnitus, and the opportunity to see patients in the on-campus clinic on day one. It also allowed me to continue research I had started during my undergraduate studies with Dr. Thomas Zalewski. The research was later presented at the American Academy of Audiology National Convention.”

Amarante has joined Geisinger Medical Center in Danville as a clinical audiologist.

Students Donate to Bloomsburg Food Cupboard



At the end of each academic year, students of CU-Bloomsburg have the option of donating their unused FLEX dollars from their dining accounts so food and household items can be purchased to support the Bloomsburg Food Cupboard. FLEX is money used for purchases at campus dining venues beyond a student’s set number of meals each week.

This year, Bloomsburg students donated more than \$4,600, allowing ARAMARK, the campus dining service, to purchase items for the Food Cupboard that were delivered on May 30. Over the last six years, students have donated more than \$34,000, which is used to purchase food.

Additionally, in April a food drive, “The Hungry Husky Hustle,” was held on campus and resulted in approximately \$3,300 in cash and food donations for the food cupboard.

A WEEKEND WORTH THE INVESTMENT:

By **Andrea O'Neill**

On a chilly Saturday in February, students milling about at an early morning breakfast at the Greenly Center seemed uncomfortable in their business attire; stiff and nervous with a cuff adjustment here, a collar adjustment there.

The group of juniors and seniors from all three Commonwealth University locations had signed up to spend a weekend honing the skills that will enable each of them to graduate as a confident professional. It was inspiring, relieving, and exhausting. And it was intense. It was, after all, “boot camp.”

The Career Intensive Boot Camp (CIBC) is exactly what the name implies—an immersive weekend designed to prepare students for everything the professional world can throw at (and trip up) a new grad. Students practice everything from how to dress and eat in a professional setting to surviving the first week on the job, to paying back student loans.

Sessions began Friday with team building and dining etiquette. On Saturday, students dove into workplace diversity and personal finance workshops before moving into resume reviews, mock interviews,



Students participating in the Spring 2024 Career Intensive Boot Camp gather for a group photo with members of the Commonwealth University Department of Alumni and Professional Engagement. Students, staff, and alumni from all three Commonwealth University locations gathered at the Greenly Center in downtown Bloomsburg for an intense weekend of student professional development.



Left to Right, Dr. Mary Murphy-Kahn '98 and Mike Bucher '97 conduct a mock interview with a student participant of the Spring 2024 Career Intensive Boot Camp. Murphy-Kahn and Bucher were two of fifty Bloomsburg alumni who volunteered for the event.

and a keynote lunch, then finished the weekend Sunday with professional headshots, a networking lunch, and alumni panels.

“The boot camp provided an important learning experience that extended beyond technical knowledge,” says Aviel Kuhn '25 (Bloomsburg). “It allowed me to forge meaningful connections within the industry and the workshops offered guidance on navigating the professional landscape.”

In order for CIBC to provide a high impact experience, Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield alumni, as well as community and employer partners, play a critical role by volunteering their time and expertise. They serve as keynote speakers, mock interviewers, resume reviewers, panelists, and presenters. Some stay several hours, while others stay for several days. Some travel to campus while others participate virtually from anywhere in the U.S.

“The connection between current students and alumni help graduating students understand their skill sets, begin to build a strong network, and land the job they have worked so hard for,” says Wren Fritsky, director of career and professional development for CU–Bloomsburg.

“I wish I had this when I was in school,” says Ryan McCourt '10 (Bloomsburg), transportation planning manager at Vroom. “I think it takes a lot of the nerves and the guesswork out of it and helps everyone prepare for what to expect. It helps everyone enter work a little better.”

While CIBC is a student-centered event, alumni also benefit from networking opportunities. Integration multiplied the connections among alumni volunteers as new grads and seasoned professionals

from three locations assemble for the same cause. The students they influenced in February will be among the newest Commonwealth University alumni—joining a 147,000 strong network of fellow Huskies, Mounties, and Bald Eagles that has the power to provide everything from camaraderie and encouragement to mentorship and, perhaps, their first professional position.

“Alumni I met that weekend are now connected with alumni from different locations,” says David Donlick '87 (Mansfield), director of alumni and employer engagement at CU–Mansfield, whose daughter, Nicole (Donlick) Brodt '18 attended Bloomsburg and one of the very first CIBC events in 2017. “The more we get involved and work together, the more we can offer students.”

By the end of the weekend, the students were visibly less nervous, more talkative, and moved a bit more effortlessly than they had at first—physical signs of the professional ease that will provide an edge in the hiring process. Once the thank-you notes had been written and contact information shared, the students headed back to their respective campus confident, connected and ready for their next chapter.

“It was an amazing experience,” says Breanna Koslowski '24 (Bloomsburg). “I hope I get to come back after graduating to help others as much as the alumni helped me this weekend.”

The Career Intensive Boot Camp runs each spring and fall semester and returns on September 20-22. To volunteer, email alum@commonwealthu.edu.



COMMENCEMENT



Hats Off to the Class of 2024



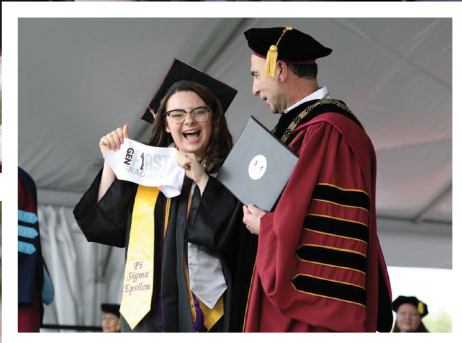
Commencement ceremonies at CU-Bloomsburg in May were highlighted by hugs, fist bumps, and flying caps.

Graduate students were celebrated on Friday, May 10, at 6 p.m. in the Haas Center for the Arts and undergraduate students were recognized on Saturday, May 11, at 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. ceremonies at Redman Stadium. More than 210 graduate students and 1,160 under-

graduate students received their degrees. The featured speaker for the undergraduate ceremonies on Saturday was Khalid Mumin, secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

“The skills you’ve learned will serve you throughout your lives. The world—and the Commonwealth—needs confident, influential leaders and scholars like yourselves,” said Mumin.





Kimberly Speece will soon be brightening the futures of students in the Warwick School District in Lititz, where she will begin working in August teaching ninth through 12th grade business education. The business education major from Lebanon spent her time at Bloomsburg actively involved with Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), serving in various leadership roles at the state and national level and most recently as the PA FBLA collegiate state president and the national FBLA collegiate executive vice president. She was a student worker for the military and veterans resource office at CU–Bloomsburg, where she provided support and resources to military-affiliated students and served as a learning community mentor for the Zeigler College of Business, working with first-year students and participating in welcome week activities. She also serves as a human resources specialist in the Army National Guard.





A LEGACY HONORING EXCELLENCE

Alumnus **Stephen J. Jones** Elevates The Honors Experience
At Commonwealth University With Transformative Gift

By **Amanda Alexander '09** (Lock Haven)

A transformational gift from Stephen J. Jones '83, and his wife, Melanie Sanchez-Jones, will enrich the Honors College experience for Commonwealth University (CU) students by expanding scholarships, experiential learning opportunities, and faculty support. The \$5.6 million endowment is the largest gift to date benefiting students across all CU locations, Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield. Combined with a previous \$1.5 million gift supporting the renovation of the Honors College residence hall on the CU-Bloomsburg campus, the new gift brings the couple's investment in the CU honors experience to more than \$7 million, enabling the integrated university to attract and retain bright students from diverse backgrounds into the CU Honors College community.

In recognition of the couple's generosity, the CU Honors College will be named the Eileen G. Jones Honors College, in honor of Jones' late mother.

"I wanted to name the Honors College after my mother because of the positive influence she had on my life and my siblings' lives," explains Jones, a first-generation college graduate. "She really pushed education. When we started going to school, my mother was a big influence on making sure we aspired to do better and did our homework and all those things. She was a big support throughout my life."

Eileen Jones unfortunately passed away at the young age of 52, but her legacy of support and encouragement for education will continue through the CU Honors College named in her honor. CU's Honors College welcomes high-achieving students and prepares them for leadership through high-impact, immersive experiences and academically rigorous coursework.

"I can say with confidence that a substantial portion of the gift will be used for scholarships and grants for our students. Increasing affordable faculty-led study abroad opportunities for honors students is also a high priority," says

John G. Hintz, interim dean of honors and interdisciplinary studies at CU–Bloomsburg.

Enhancing the Honors experience

Although Bloomsburg University, the CU legacy institution Jones attended, did not yet have an Honors College in the early 1980s—in fact it was founded in 1985, just two years after his graduation—Jones was able to create community as a student through his closely-knit fraternity, Sigma Iota Omega, where he forged friendships that continue today.

“That was an important part of my time at Bloomsburg,” says Jones of the fraternity of which he served as vice president and then president.

CU’s Honors College provides a similar sense of belonging for like-minded students who have big dreams for the future and also want to contribute to their communities in the present—volunteer service is a key component of the Honors College experience.

As a student, Jones also had the opportunity to study abroad, and is delighted to support professional experience grants (PEGS) for similar opportunities through this gift.

“What really impacted me was going abroad. I went to Liverpool, England, and it was eye-opening. I realized there was a whole other world out there,” Jones says. He knows there are many college students like him who may not have been outside of the United States or even Pennsylvania, and the Honors College gives students the chance to expand their cultural and personal boundaries through just this type of experience. Since his time in Liverpool, Jones has earned an MBA from Temple University and a law degree from University of Pennsylvania, lived in China, and done plenty of international traveling for business.

“That’s also part of experiential learning that the Honors College wants to provide to students,” he adds. “There’s a big world out there, and there are lots of opportunities.”

He hopes the financial support will lead more students to capitalize on the chance to dive into high-impact experiences without worrying about funding; from studying abroad to taking an internship or assisting with faculty research, he said, “Those types of activities for students help them realize what their potential is.”

Jones is also pleased his gift will increase scholarship funding for Honors students across CU, easing the financial toll on gifted students and making CU an attractive choice for their educational journey. Hintz noted the increased support for Honors students, and for

scholarships in particular, helps to bring CU closer to achieving its ambitious recruitment and retention goals, including an increase in honors students across campus populations, set out by CU President Bashar W. Hanna.

“To grow the Honors College and continue to offer small classes, student support, engaging opportunities and grants and scholarships, honors relies on donor support.”

— JOHN D. HINTZ, INTERIM DEAN OF HONORS & INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

“President Hanna would like us to increase enrollment in Honors to the point where we sustain an enrollment equivalent to ten percent of the undergraduate student population. This aligns with the scholarly literature on proven best practices within large Honors Colleges,” Hintz says. “The Jones gift will help in this regard immensely, and in so many other ways.”

Strengthening the value of a CU degree is important to Jones, who understands affordability is a significant consideration for prospective students, just as it was for him.



Honors Alumna Eliana Tate '24 knows her way around the stage, and a sword or two. The North Carolina native chose CU–Bloomsburg because it had an integrated theatre program—allowing her to hone her skills onstage as an actress and backstage as a set builder and designer. A double major in theatre and English literature, Tate has trained with the Society of American Fight Directors, holds Advanced Actor/Combat status, and has done the fight choreography for more than a dozen productions. A dedicated student and campus leader, Tate earned two professional experience grants, one of which she used to study abroad with the Prague Shakespeare Festival. This summer, Tate has been employed as an Associate Instructor at the A-Town Throwdown stage combat workshop in Atlanta, Ga., and will be on staff at the National Stage Combat Workshop in Ruston, La.



From left: Stephen J. Jones; his wife, Melanie Sanchez-Jones; and their two sons, Alex (left) and Zachary (right).

He adds, “There’s still a large percentage of first-generation college students going to those campuses, which I find amazing.”

As a first-generation college student himself, Jones says affordability was one of his main concerns as he navigated the college application process.

“I still think CU–Bloomsburg is a great value for the money. It was great value then,” he says, adding that he hopes the infusion of funding into the program will “entice different types of students to come to CU. Because you get the opportunities through the Honors College and now there’s the money there to take advantage of those opportunities.”

Hintz elaborates, “Every component of the Honors student experience costs the University money. Honors classes, for example, cap at 20 students. This is substantially lower than the typical general education class. Honors students receive extra mentoring ‘in-house’ in the form of peer mentors (upper-level Honors students) for their first year and faculty mentoring (Honors faculty directors) for their entire four years. We offer students many opportunities for participation in events throughout the year, including presenting at Honors conferences, overnight service trips, outdoor recreation events, and social events.”

Paving a bright future

A loyal Husky donor for nearly 40 years, Jones joined the BU Foundation Board of Directors nearly 10 years ago and was named chair on July 1, 2023. “There are challenges associated with merging three organizations and there are also opportunities,” he acknowledges.

These new opportunities stem from The Power of Three, which gives students access to more than 80 academic programs as well as more minors, courses, and faculty experts by pooling the resources of Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield. The integrated university makes it possible for philanthropic support to reach more students, too, through programs such as the Honors College that offer vibrant, closely-knit communities on each campus. Jones says the objective for his philanthropy is to impact the greatest number of students possible—and with CU’s ambitious strategic goal to increase its number of Honors students, the Honors program was a natural fit for his support.

“To grow the Honors College to ten percent of the student body, and continue to offer small classes, student support, engaging opportunities, and grants and scholarships, honors relies on donor support,” Hintz says. “Without generous gifts like this one from the Jones family, the honors student experience would not be close to what it is.”



RESEARCH AT THE WORLD'S END

HONORS ALUMNA AND BIOLOGY GRAD STUDENT **ELIZABETH LEE** JOINS NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EXPEDITION TO ANTARCTICA

By **Eric G. Foster**

Microplastics—microscopic bits of plastic broken off of discarded items—are everywhere.

Even at the furthest reaches of the globe.

Elizabeth Lee, a master's degree student in biology, is learning firsthand how widely microplastics are distributed. Lee voyaged on the 138-passenger vessel National Geographic Resolution for 20 days in February and March on a voyage organized by Lindblad Expeditions—National Geographic.

Lee's participation was made possible through connections forged by her mentors Abby Hare, associate professor and program coordinator for the Master of Science in Biology program, and Thomas Klinger, professor emeritus and former coordinator for the master's in biology.

"Bloomsburg alumna Kim Martin Baldwin '88 made the connections for us to do this," says Klinger, who accompanied Lee on the voyage. "Kim is a staff naturalist for Lindblad/National Geographic. When she heard that berths were open for researchers, she let us know."

Being offered berths aboard the Resolution is extraordinarily special. The vessel, purpose-built for exploration, is one of just four like it in the world. The ship, an icebreaker, is designed with an anchor-free propulsion system that allows it to back out of shallow coastal waters without damaging fragile seafloors.

"The samples I collected during this expedition will be the foundation for my thesis project," says Lee, an Honors College student who graduated from CU–Bloomsburg in December with a bachelor's



Abby Hare during her 2022 Antarctic research trip.

“Professional experiences can take many forms for our students from presenting at conferences to expeditions to the end of the world.

—ABBY HARE

degree in secondary education and a bachelor’s degree in biology. “This was an amazing opportunity and I am excited to have done research on a continent that not many people get the chance to see.”

Lee’s experience this year builds on previous research and trips taken by Hare and Klinger. In 2022, Hare collected limpets, small snail-like grazing animals, from the shallow waters off of the Antarctic Peninsula and the shores of Patagonia. “Microplastics consumed at the base of food webs by grazers may have profound consequences as the particles move up food chains,” says Hare.

The Antarctic research builds upon previous work that Klinger has done on microplastics in clams and crayfish in Pennsylvania streams.

“In other parts of the world, microplastics have been shown to decrease the growth, weight, energy, and food consumption of animals,” says Klinger.

“When discarded, plastic items are physically and biologically degraded into microplastic particles. Microplastic pollution in the environment is distributed widely, going as far as to include Antarctica,” explains Hare, who has witnessed firsthand larger pieces of plastic garbage washing up on the shores of the Patagonian peninsula just north of Antarctica. “However, very little is known about the potential impacts of microplastics upon animals grazing in the polar oceans. Our project is documenting the amount of microplastic consumed by common near-shore creatures of the Antarctic seas.”

Samples from the latest trip will be shipped to campus, a process that can take months. But the researchers are now analyzing the samples from the 2022 expedition.

For Lee, the decision to continue her education in the master’s program and to participate in

the expedition was based on the mentoring she found in the biology department. “Originally, I had no intention of going to graduate school. I chose Bloomsburg because of the relationship with Dr. Hare.”

Strong mentorship is built into the DNA of the MS in biology program. “The program provides one-to-one mentorships with faculty,” says Hare, who as a former Steven Jones Professional U Fellow, has been recognized for her work in connecting students to transformative experiences.

Lee plans on using her experiences in the graduate program to make her a top high school teacher. “When I started at Bloomsburg, my goal was to be an early childhood and special education teacher,” says Lee, who has received support from a professional experience grant from Michael and Beth Ann Boguski and a scholarship from David and Robbie Soltz. “I realized in my first year that I missed being in science courses, so in my sophomore year I changed my major to secondary education biology. I found what I am passionate about. My love for teaching has never changed. My goal is to complete a master’s degree, and then become a high school biology teacher.”

For Hare and Klinger, the latest voyage is another step in a continuing project. “This summer,” says Hare, “Thom and I are continuing the project in Iceland—the other polar region.”



Thom Klinger and Liz Lee with specimens aboard the National Geographic Resolution.

BEYOND THE *classroom*:

CU PART OF INITIATIVE TO EXPAND WORK-BASED LEARNING

By integrating real-work experiences into the academic curriculum and expanding a regional network of employers, Commonwealth University will provide invaluable opportunities for students to bridge theory and practice beginning in the fall semester.

CU is one of five State System universities participating in a pilot initiative with major employers to significantly increase work-based learning that provides real-world experiences like internships and apprenticeships for students.

Highmark Health is the initial partner employer and Strada Education Foundation awarded Commonwealth University \$100,000 of a \$750,000 grant to support the pilot project.

“Strong partnerships between universities and employers provide students with incredible experience through applying learning to doing and gives them the competitive edge they need to achieve social mobility,” says Hope Lineman, executive director of workforce development for CU.

The three-year pilot will reach a minimum of 370 CU students, beginning in fall 2024. The initiative will embed real-work experiences into the academic curriculum to broaden access and configure a shared online platform, Handshake, to help students identify opportunities that align with their career interests. CU will also expand the regional network of participating employers and integrate work-based learning into on-campus work study—an additional benefit for students who are using the paid jobs to help fund their education.

Employers will be able to partner with CU to create internships throughout the year that accommodate students’ class schedules, develop additional job-relevant instruction for interns and, when possible, link paid internships to potential jobs after graduation.



Above: A student operates a camera for a football game. Turn-in to watch a Huskies football game online, and you're seeing the skills of student workers from Instructional Media Services in action. Students operate the cameras and work in the control for the games as well as for commencement. Shown from left are Instructional Media Services student employees Myah Stackhouse and Cameron Beck.

“The partnership with Strada validates and strengthens the work we’ve done to intentionally integrate career and professional development in the student experience through Professional U,” says Lynda Fedor Michaels, associate vice president for alumni and professional engagement. Work-based learning, which can include internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing, allows students to connect their classroom education with technical and workplace skills and to develop professional connections and networks as part of their overall education. University students with high-quality, work-based learning, especially paid internships, have more confidence in their skills, are more likely to get higher-paying jobs after graduation, and are more satisfied with their education and career choices, according to findings by the Strada Education Foundation.

Low-income, first-generation, Black and Latino students, and women are less likely to have paid internships, which can reduce their employability and income after graduation. To address the access gap, the pilot has a goal of 60 percent of students in the initiatives being low-income, first-generation, or underrepresented minorities. “To impact social mobility, CU is piloting two initiatives that focus attention on moving students entering college from low-income backgrounds into the upper half of wage earners after graduation through Professional U On-Campus Apprenticeships and work-based learning within academic courses and programs,” Lineman says. “Through these two avenues Commonwealth University intends to level the playing field by giving all students the experiences they need to succeed.”

Husky Alums Honored



2024 MAROON & GOLD EXCELLENCE AWARD

Jacob Kelley '16

(they/them)

Mx. Kelley Queer Education LLC

Since graduating from Bloomsburg in 2016, Mx. Jacob Kelley has served as an entrepreneur, author, and queer-inclusive sex educator. Kelley earned a master's degree in human sexuality education from Widener University and is a doctoral student in human sexuality philosophy, and they have dedicated their career to creating content and promoting LGBTQIA+ inclusion that has transformed local communities and garnered national recognition. Additionally, Kelley serves on several executive boards, including the NEPA Pride Project, Eastern PA Trans Equity Project, and I Picture Hope. Kelley frequently donates time with the Women and LGBTQ Resource Center on campus.



2024 MAROON & GOLD EXCELLENCE AWARD

Kristen Wagner '15

Editor-in-Chief,

Lehigh Valley Style magazine

Kristen Wagner has spent the nearly nine years since graduation as the top editor of Lehigh Valley Style magazine, a regional lifestyle publication that reaches 80,000 monthly print readers. During her tenure, Wagner has been credited with creating addictive content and securing notable individuals like Amanda Seyfried, Carson Kressley, Mario Andretti, and Robert Rich, and has made diverse representation of the Lehigh Valley community a nonnegotiable priority. Wagner also returns to campus to speak on panels, present at seminars and events, and is the current chair of the BUnow Scholarship Committee.



2024 MAROON & GOLD EXCELLENCE AWARD

Emily Kinkead '09

Pennsylvania State Representative

After graduating from Bloomsburg, Emily Kinkead spent time working in Washington, D.C. for organizations such as Common Cause and the National Institutes of Health before earning her J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh in 2016. Kinkead clerked for the Honorable Judge Michael H. Wojcik of the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court, then moved on to work as a criminal defense attorney with The Grail Law Firm. In 2021 she was elected to the Pennsylvania 20th House District, where she has served on numerous committees and has championed criminal justice reform, affordable housing, livable wages, worker protections, healthcare, addressing systemic racism, LGBTQIA+ equality, reproductive justice, education funding, and more.



2024 DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Lynette Luckers '01

(she/her)

Dean of Counseling & Completion Services, Delaware County Community College

Dr. Lynette Luckers' professional history underscores her dedication to creating student-centered, inclusive environments. In addition to her bachelor's degree in social work from Bloomsburg, Luckers holds a D.Ed. in educational leadership and administration from East Stroudsburg University, and a master's degree in counseling from Shippensburg University. A licensed professional counselor (LPC), Dr. Luckers' educational journey and professional focus span equity in education, counseling, and student success, particularly among historically underrepresented and marginalized students. She has made notable contributions as the founder and president of the Marion Luckers Kidney Foundation with a goal to empower and cultivate women of color, especially those managing grief and navigating life as caregivers.

Saturday, October 12
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

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**2024 WILLIAM T.
DERRICOTT '66 VOLUNTEER
OF THE YEAR AWARD**

Kelsey Gallagher '12

*Talent Acquisition Specialist,
Enterprise Mobility*

Kelsey Gallagher began her tenure at Enterprise Mobility in 2013, where she has exhibited unparalleled versatility and leadership across three divisions. Currently serving as a talent acquisition specialist within the human resources division, Gallagher plays a pivotal role in sourcing and recruiting top-tier talent to fuel Enterprise's ongoing success. Her passion for connecting with individuals and fostering meaningful relationships has made her a presence on campus, where she actively engages with students and faculty through career fairs, panels, classroom presentations, and various networking events.



Senior Sendoff

On April 26, the Bloomsburg Alumni Association hosted the class of 2024 with a Senior Sendoff. Soon-to-be grads were treated to a champagne toast, food, a photo booth, grad cap maker space, music, and prizes, as well as helpful information for their first few months as Bloomsburg alumni. See the photos at tinyurl.com/24SpringSendoff





Hale to be Inducted into College Football Hall of Fame

Football coaching legend of the Bloomsburg Huskies, Danny Hale, will be inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame as part of the 2024 Induction Class, as announced by the National Football Foundation and ESPN in early January.

Hale, one of the winningest coaches in all of NCAA Division II, retired June 28, 2013, after 20 seasons as the head coach of the Huskies and 25 years overall as a head coach. Hale also spent five years as head coach at West Chester University (1984-1988).

At Bloomsburg (1993-2012), Hale posted a record of 173-56-1 (.754) and holds the school record for most coaching victories. Overall, in 25 years as a head coach, he had a mark of 213-69-1 (.754) and ranked among the top five active coaches in NCAA Division II in winning percentage and victories at his retirement.

In his 20 seasons as head coach at Bloomsburg, Hale led the Huskies to 11 outright or shared Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (PSAC) Eastern Division titles and eight NCAA post-season playoff berths. In his final 13 seasons (2000-2012), Bloomsburg was one of the most successful NCAA Division II programs with a combined record of 121-32 (.791).

While the official induction for coach Hale will take place in Las Vegas on Dec. 10, 2024, there will be an on-campus salute in conjunction with the National Football Foundation on Sept. 28, 2024 when the Huskies take on West Chester at Danny Hale Field at Redman Stadium. Registration for the event can be made at buhuskies.com/DannyHale.

Earlier this year, Hale appeared as a guest on President Hanna's Common Ground Podcast. Listen to the episode at commonwealthu.edu/commonground. It is also available on Spotify and Apple podcasts.

Football, Psychology Alum Shares Wisdom

By Mary Raskob

Alphonso Nathan '09, MS, LPC, author of the book *Not Worth My Energy*, returned to his alma mater for a stop on his book tour and made several presentations to students and student-athletes in April. This visit was the first stop on Nathan's book tour and was an inspiring and engaging experience for students and staff.

A former member of the football team, Nathan's self-published book is filled with relatable anecdotes and walks readers through practical strategies for delegating energy to the things that truly matter. From identifying and avoiding emotional vampires, to embracing the power of being an empath, the book is a roadmap for living a more fulfilling and energized life.

"I was originally recruited to play football at Bloomsburg and I really liked not only the environment, but the values that Bloomsburg had," Nathan says. "It was very similar values to my high school alma mater, the Milton Hershey School. Both had very similar coaching styles."

At Bloomsburg, Nathan tried majors in biology and marketing before finding a home in psychology.

"Psychology resonated with me because I'm a product of interventions," says Nathan. "I came from a 'not good' background and I was removed from that environment and put into a much better environment when I went to the Milton Hershey School. There were countless situations where those interventions helped change me and my life."



"When I started reading up on psychology, developmental disorders, and how smaller interventions can change someone's life or situation, it really resonated with me," adds Nathan. "It allowed me to understand what other people do and why they do it."

Professor Brett Beck, now retired, was a particular influence. "He was not a professor who lectured at you, he really talked to you and helped you understand the concepts, and experiments. He allowed us to dive into the foundational aspects of psychology," says Nathan, who is now a practicing licensed professional counselor. "The biggest takeaway from all of it, for me, was that it's not about where you start, it's about how you finish."

The lessons of the psychology classroom translated well to the gridiron.

"I started as a seventh-string defensive end, I asked the coaches, what do I need to do to play? They said, 'You're 5'3", get bigger, get stronger. You'll make a plan.' I knew where I needed to get to. I made that plan. I started lifting, I started really studying the playbook," recalls Nathan. "Most importantly, I didn't give up. I continued that work and I was able to be a two-year starter and All-Conference player because of the hard work I put in."

Nathan credits his coaches, including Bill Perkins, Chet Henicle, Paul Darraugh, and Danny Hale, and teammates for providing opportunities to prove himself and grow.

"I still have my core group of friends, Anthony Smith, who was All American, Chris Robinson, Andre Ellis, and the list goes on for the individuals that I still stay in touch with. And most importantly my brother Steph Pettit. He has always been a support for me."

Nathan finds parallels between the worlds of coaching and counseling.

"I'd never been to therapy because that wasn't something that was talked about or championed in our community. When I started studying psychology, I'm like, 'Oh, this is what therapy does.' I found out what a therapist was. It was a coach—a mental health coach," says Nathan. "It felt like the stars aligned and I really wanted to see where this could take me."

"Pablo Picasso said this best, 'The meaning of life is to find your gift, but the purpose of life is to give that gift away.' Psychology was something that I found," Nathan says. "I had always been an emotionally intelligent individual, and psychology allowed me to use and harness that gift to help others."



Student Athletes Help Make-A-Wish Come True

For the third time since 2018, Bloomsburg's department of athletics, thanks to the fundraising efforts of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), earned a Make-A-Wish reveal. The Bloomsburg SAAC put on a Wish Reveal in April at Nelson Field House for a young boy from the region, Levi, to tell him that he was going to Yellowstone National Park.

"To be a part of Bloomsburg athletics, let alone the incredible traditions of the Bloomsburg Field Hockey program, is something I am so proud to be a part of," says Courtney Noll, assistant field hockey coach and Make-A-Wish coordinator for Bloomsburg. "However, to be a substantial part in planning the three earned Make-A-Wish reveals for this department holds a very special place in my heart. If we can bring a smile and joy to the families that are battling more than I can ever imagine, our event is more than successful. It is more than heartwarming to help others, especially in the name of Make-A-Wish."

The NCAA Division II is a national partner of Make-A-Wish America and in partnership with student-athletes and schools across the country, DII has raised millions of dollars and brought hope and joy to hundreds of wish kids and their families when they needed it most. The NCAA then grants schools that raised \$10,000 for the Make-A-Wish Foundation an opportunity to host a reveal on their campus. In the 2022-2023 academic year Bloomsburg hit that mark and was granted a reveal.

SAAC put on a western-themed carnival for Levi, including a petting zoo, tractor rides, and carnival games inside Nelson Field House. His preschool class, friends, and family joined in on Levi's day.

"I mean giving back not only to our community but to kids in general always feels good in your heart," says football player Ben Ries.

"It's just a great thing to be a part of. It's important to change people's lives and I want Levi to know how loved and supported he is through all of this," says field hockey player Gracie Brosious.

"Through the planning process of these reveals, we get to experience the love and kindness of so many people who are willing to sacrifice their time and commitment for these events," says Noll. "It is truly inspiring to experience such support from the entire community. It takes an entire team to pull off the amount of time and energy to create a Make-A-Wish reveal that we hope lasts a lifetime for the families involved. You truly learn what it means to be a Husky when the support from so many people is involved."



For more
photos, visit:

80s

Steven Johnson '80 retired from the Vanguard Group in Malvern after 25 years as an IT project manager. He resides with his wife in West Chester, Pa.



Jean Vojtek Runyon '80 was recently installed as the sixth president of Piedmont Virginia Community College in Charlottesville, Va. Previously, Runyon was the campus vice president at Front Range Community College's Larimer Campus in Colorado and served in progressively responsible leadership positions at Anne Arundel Community College in Maryland.

Rebecca Funk Campbell '83, retired Walt Disney Co. executive, is a new member of the Meow Wolf board of directors. Meow Wolf started in 2008 as a small collective of Santa Fe artists sharing an interest in publicly displaying their works and developing their skills together. This collaborative approach blossomed into Meow Wolf's distinctive style of immersive, maximalist environments that encourage audience-driven experiences. Most recently, she was chairman of Disney's international content and operations; before that, she was chairman of direct-to-consumer and international operations.

Anthony "Rocky" Bonomo '87 is a volunteer assistant coach with the Misericordia University women's and men's wrestling teams. At Bloomsburg, he was a two-time All-American at 126 pounds while compiling a career record of 110-19. He finished eighth in the country as a junior and capped his career with a fourth-place showing at the 1988 NCAA Championships. Bonomo spent 13 years as an assistant coach at Lock Haven.

90s

Sharon Eyster '90, chief operating officer/vice president of operations for United Church of Christ Homes, Camp Hill, has been inducted into the Hall of Honor in the McKnight's Women of Distinction awards, a joint program of McKnight's Long-Term Care News, McKnight's Senior Living, and McKnight's Home Care.

Jason Hawkins '93M was named chief administrative officer (CAO) of PeaceHealth Cottage Grove Community Medical Center in Cottage Grove, Ore. He remains CAO for PeaceHealth Cottage Grove Community Medical Center in Florence, OR., and oversees operations at both campuses.

Mark Vineis '94 was appointed as the new country president of Novartis Canada, based in Montreal, Quebec. In Canada, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Canada Inc. employs approximately 600 people and invests over \$30 million in R&D yearly in Canada.



Cole Complesse '96M has been named vice president for technology and chief information officer at the University of Texas at Austin.

William Fiege '96M was named president of Brightpoint Community College in Chesterfield County, Va. He was a vice president there since 2012. Before joining Brightpoint, he was a dean at Germanna Community College and an assistant athletics director at Longwood University.

Lisa Lehman McCracken '96 is the new head of research and analytics for the National Investment Center for Seniors Housing & Care, in Annapolis, Md. She most recently served as director of senior living research and development for the investment bank Ziegler.

Hope Edwards Wormuth '96 was named director of Lackawanna College's physical therapy assistant program.

Meena Soleiman '97 has been named senior vice president of technical operations and engineering for Comcast Cable's Northeast Division. Soleiman oversees technical operations, engineering, and the residential and commercial construction teams. Soleiman has been with Comcast for 20 years.

Zhenia Klevitsky '98 has been named chief growth officer at cBEYONData, a consultancy firm known for its focus on enhancing processes and technology where finance and information intersect with a particular emphasis on federal customers.



Christine Sowden-Haase '98 is the projects billing manager at Danella Companies working in the construction division in Plymouth Meeting. She oversees the department responsible for all invoicing and billing functions associated with private companies and PECO gas accounts/contracts.

00s

Heather Kriebel D'Onofrio '00 has rejoined Post & Schell, a law firm, as a principal in the firm's professional liability department. D'Onofrio previously served as an associate in Post & Schell's professional liability department and spent several years at The D'Onofrio Firm. She rejoins Post & Schell from the law firm of Youman & Caputo, LLC.

Deja Barone Gilbert '01, has been named president and chief executive officer of Gaudenzia, Inc., the first woman to hold the role in its 55-year history. Gaudenzia is one of the nation's largest nonprofit providers of treatment for substance use disorder and co-occurring conditions.

Dulcimer Stahler Hause '01 was honored by the Florida Art Education Association at its annual meeting and award breakfast held in Ponte Verda, Fl. Hause has worked at the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens in Jacksonville for the past 16 years.

Matthew Resnick '01 has been named vice president of the Wenger Food Group (a business unit of The Wenger Group) and general manager of the egg products division. He was most recently the director of operations for Dutchland Farms.

Crystal Skotedis '03 has joined Camp Hill-based Lane Enterprises, a steel and plastic pipe manufacturer, to oversee the finance, IT, and human resource departments and help build additional infrastructure to support the future growth of the company.

Michael Smith '03 has been made a shareholder/owner of the Pottsville-based law firm Fanelli, Evans and Patel. He was previously an owner of the Bloomsburg-based law firm of Hummel, Lewis and Smith. He began his legal career in Manhattan Beach, Ca., before returning to Pennsylvania, where he did a one-year judicial clerkship with Judge John Domalakes of the Court of Common Pleas of Schuylkill County.

David James '09M, a partner at Hill, Turowski, James and Lehman LLP based in Bloomsburg, was admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court Bar in Washington, D.C. Admission to the U.S. Supreme Court Bar allows an attorney to represent cases in front of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Joshua Kline '09 earned a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology from The Chicago School for Professional Psychology, Washington, D.C. He currently resides in Washington, D.C., and works as a psychologist at The Capital Center for Psychotherapy and Wellness. At Bloomsburg, he earned a bachelor's degree in art history with a minor in psychology.

10s

Andrew Brady '17 has joined the Middletown Township Police Department. Before joining the Middletown Township Police Department, Brady served as a police officer in Wilmington, DE.

20s

Sarah Gomish '20M was named assistant coach/recruiting coordinator for Virginia Tech women's volleyball team. Gomish totaled 1,195 kills and 1,046 digs in college over four seasons at Bloomsburg (2018) and Lock Haven (2014-16). She earned her bachelor's degree in kinesiology and exercise science from Lock Haven and a master's degree in exercise science from Bloomsburg.

Charles Norwood '22, a Caln Township Police Officer, was recognized with a Distinguished Unit Citation for his part in a domestic incident that occurred in August 2023 with an armed and suicidal individual. Officer Norwood and his two police partners de-escalated the situation without injury and loss of life.

Megan Stamm '22 is a business relationship manager with Doing Better Business, Inc. Covering Lycoming, Columbia, Montour, Northumberland, and Union counties, she assists clients with workflows and print needs.

Marriages

Connor Mirarchi '18 & Jayme Lentini, Sept. 9, 2023

Megan Beccari '18 & Anthony Rappa, Nov. 10, 2023

Births

Stephanie (Della Torre) Sabol '14, a son, Bryson, June 30, 2022

Domenique (Verrastro) Ashford '20 & Zachary Ashford '19, a daughter, Tatum Olivia, Oct. 7, 2023

James Michael Irely '22 & Amanda Jo (Weirich) Irely, a son, Jack Sumner, Oct. 15, 2023

Sarah (Weinberg) Downey '06/'07M & Bryan Downey, twins, daughter, Emma Lynn, and son, Liam Robert, Nov. 6, 2023

Lindsey (Plastow) Shingara '09 & Paul Shingara, a son, Evan Michael, Nov. 21, 2023

Amanda Lockard '10 & Ken Schetroma, a son, Cole Benjamin, March 7, 2024

Obituaries

Virginia Roberts Griswold '44
 Bette Fuller Smith '44
 Betty Zehner Dietrich '45
 Ralph Seltzer '48
 Katherine Chapin Fisher '50
 Mabel Horner Horner '51
 Homer Zeigler '51
 Joan Enama Cerula '52
 Laura Philo Patterson '52
 Madge Felker Kile '53
 NancyLou Rhoads O'Brien '53
 Sheldon Erwine '54
 Paul Rhodes '55
 George Viti '55
 Carmel Craparo Casper '56
 Alice Fegley Linn '57
 Robert Maurer '57
 Helene Stec Pozarycki '57
 Nancy Hughes Abbey '58
 Edward Braynock '58
 Alice Faux Green '58
 John Herman '58
 Stephen Stuart '58
 Dahle Bingaman '59
 Lamar Freeland '59
 Robert Murray '59
 Edward Flanagan '60
 Samuel Haupt '60
 Margaret Gunton Holmgren '60
 Gary Reddig '61
 Joan Gutgesell Faunce '62
 William Rice '62
 Robert Sarviss '62
 Michael Spontak '62
 Robert Christina '63
 Adam Gutosky '63
 Joseph Urbanski '63
 Robert Auker '64
 John Chyko '64
 Amy Daniels Goss '64

Robert Pierce '65
 Nancy Linde Schueck '65
 Carol Wertman Watters '65
 Susannah Wilson Brody '66
 Emily Benner Faust '66
 Joseph Kubert '66
 Jerry Seybert '67
 Jane Sheaffer '67
 Francis Truman '67
 Lawrence Foran '68
 Amanda Goldman '68
 Joseph Iwanski '68
 Maryann Benick Jaffee '68
 Lauren Miller '68
 Ben Pollock '68
 Arthur Steiner '68
 Gene Ward '68
 Margaret Ann Dunkleberger Williams '68
 Robert Zimmerman '68
 Camille Martelli Belolan '69
 Susan Ferg Booterbaugh '69
 Eugene Brokus '69
 Ronald Christina '69
 Robert Fink '69
 Ray Hock '69
 Duncan Kishbaugh '69
 Dorothy Wilkes Miller '69
 Harry Sinco '69
 Susan Sittler Yodock '69
 David Bunce '70
 Donald Keyser '70
 Mary Rachko '70
 David Steiner '70
 Anne Dunlap Vaughan '70
 John Dietrichson '71
 Nora Searfoss Avellino '72
 Lynn Croft Davies '72
 Marie Falvello '72
 James Hatton '72

Loretta Oswald Hitz '72
 Jeanne Phillips '72
 Terry Bires '73
 Marlene Wallace Finney '73
 Lawrence Westawski '73
 Rickey Bair '74
 Anthony Dellarte '74
 Deborah May Gownley '74
 Joseph Micko '74
 Robert Reed '74
 Joanne Kanjorski Thomas '74
 Jane Clause Branin '75
 Robert Memory '75
 Bruce Shoemaker '75
 Alice Pearl Corley '76
 David Crawford '77
 Roberta Larkan Drasher '77
 Andrew Hergan '77
 Mary Ann Herhal Kurcz '77
 Joseph Mattise '77
 Jean Sambor '77
 Scott Smith '77
 James Sweeney '77
 Ron Troy '77
 James Fetterman '78
 James Gross '79
 Terri Gibson Long '79
 Jerome Socha '79
 Joann Enterline Woodward '79
 Christine Johnson Kyle '80
 Vicki Myers '80
 Joan Colosimo Brownell '81
 Donna Gavlick '81
 Donna Horschmann Moyer-Kozlowski '81
 Sharon Robinson Slaybaugh '81
 Carol Shelhamer Wall '81
 John H. Ross, Jr. '95/'98M

Corrections: Ray Reinard, class of 1977, was mistakenly listed in the "In Memoriam" section of the Winter 2024 magazine edition.

The photo caption for the center photo in the Winter 2024 "Then and Now" column should have identified the student nurses as, from left: Debbie Sabalesky, Jill Laylon, and Sharon Remington (Schell) '81.

Send information to: magazine@bloomu.edu

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Taking the Leap

INTO DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY



On a warm September day in 2003, Bloomsburg University fully stepped into the world of fully digital photography.

Eric Foster, working for what is now the Strategic Communications and Marketing Office, was testing a new camera, a Canon 10D, the first digital SLR acquired by the university.

Near Carver Hall, he spotted friends, who had been cheerleaders in high school, practicing their lifts. The moment was captured as Katie McPeck '07 got a boost from friends Keri Bachman, Kristie Gardner '07 and Danielle Burke '07. McPeck and Burke cheered for the Huskies during their time at Bloomsburg.

The image, that so perfectly illustrated striving and cooperation, was used in the magazine ad for the Bloomsburg University Foundation several years later.

For years prior to 2003, the university's in-house photographers used Kodak slide film and black and white film that had been loaded into film canisters from bulk containers holding hundreds of feet of film. Purchasing and processing this film cost thousands of dollars each year and it took days to get the photos back after a shoot. Though the university had purchased several small point and shoot cameras for photos to use on the internet, the quality wasn't sufficient for large photos in major publications.

The new equipment changed that. Measured scientifically, images from film still showed more detail, but the digital images had much less grain, resulting in more apparent detail. For the university, film was out and digital was in. The remaining rolls of film were donated to the art department for student use in class.

The savings in film costs meant that instead of hundreds of images, it was possible to take thousands each year. And today, for certain assignments and signature moments like commencement, thousands in a day.

Photographers Jaime North and Foster travel to the university's locations at Clearfield, Lock Haven, and Mansfield, as well as Bloomsburg.

Their work, and that of other photographers on the campuses, is available to view on each of the campus' Facebook pages and on Commonwealth's Flickr page.



A portrait of Madelyn Rodriguez, a woman with long dark hair, wearing a black blazer over a black collared shirt. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green trees and a red building.

Madelyn **Rodriguez** '95

*Executive Director of Diversity,
Equity, and Inclusion*

Interview by **Sara Karnish**

Madelyn Rodriguez serves as the executive director of DEI for Commonwealth University based at Bloomsburg. A devoted Husky, Rodriguez has spent most of her professional life on Bloomsburg's campus. Thanks to the work of Rodriguez and her staff, thousands of students have been positively impacted by programs, organizations, and initiatives meant to shine a light on Bloomsburg's diverse student population.



Q | What are some of your major responsibilities as executive director of DEI?

A | I oversee a number of areas including the Women's Resource Center, LGBTQA Resource Center, Multicultural Center and Cultural Affairs Student Support Services. The supervision of those areas keeps me quite busy. There is also collaboration with key campus stakeholders—academic affairs, student success and campus life, as well as administrators and the leadership team. We're in everyone's pocket. We're there to not only implement policies and procedures, but to impact the graduation and retention rate of our students. We're working with all of our Huskies.

Q | Can you tell us about the DEI programming at Bloomsburg?

A | There's a lot. Every week we're having a program, lecture, event, for all three centers. This spring we had our 30 years of diversity conference that was supported by PASSHE—that's a big staple of the community. We're in the process of developing a DEI training certificate program. I work with over 25 clubs within the Multicultural Center and so many different student leadership organizations, from the Equestrian Club to the Gaming Club. Our students are so ingrained in all of these groups. We're very privileged to work with so many different student organizations.

Q | Why is Bloomsburg such a great place to be?

A | Bloom offers opportunities to students, faculty, staff, and individuals. It has given me the opportunity to grow in my career. I think I bleed maroon and gold. I'm a Husky for life; I'm always bragging about Bloom when I travel. It's a home away from home and that's a piece that many appreciate. You want to feel like you belong.

Q | What was your first job, and what were some important lessons you learned from it?

A | I was a resident director at Bloomsburg. One of my important lessons was to listen, don't be a know it all. Listen to others who were doing the work before me. I was fortunate to have mentors who helped me through that process and helped me learn to be a professional. I also learned from peers that I have a voice and I need to use it.

Q | 2024 is the 30th anniversary of the Multicultural Center at Bloom. Can you talk about how it has evolved over the years?

A | The Center has evolved tremendously over the years. I've really come full circle, not only have I sat behind the desk, I sat on the other side of the desk as a student. I was a student who helped create the Multicultural Center and worked with Harry Ausprich (Bloomsburg president at the time). I was part of a group of student leaders who wanted a center to help retain and recruit multicultural students. In the 90s, these centers were being created. I've also had the opportunity to help many alumni.

Another piece of DEI is our connection with the community. It is critical for folks to know we work with our town. We've been part of task forces and committees in the community. Anything we coordinate, organize, or develop—we invite the townspeople to attend. We recently celebrated a milestone in our MLK event, which still brings the town and university together in celebration of this honor. Our students have evolved with the center as well. I'm not just talking about underrepresented students—many different types of students have utilized our resources. Then they graduate and come back with these rich stories.



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Husky Hearts

Rahmayne Jackson-Bey and **Janae A. Clark** are truly Huskies at heart. The couple met on campus and both graduated this spring; Jackson-Bey, who was a captain on the football team, with a degree in business management and Clark with a degree in communication studies.

And their Husky journey is continuing. Jackson-Bey is pursuing an MBA and Clark is working toward a master's degree in instructional design and technology.



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