



THE Rock K

Slippery Rock University Magazine

Fall 2020

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THE ROCK

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ABOUT THE COVER:

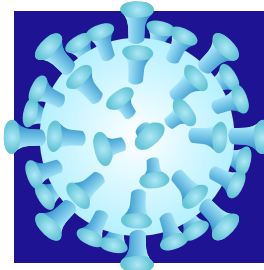
Slippery Rock University students, faculty and staff have supported the community in a number of ways throughout the pandemic. One example is handmade face masks crafted by members of the University's Theatre Department for various personnel – including Rocky, SRU's mascot. Read the complete story, page 6.



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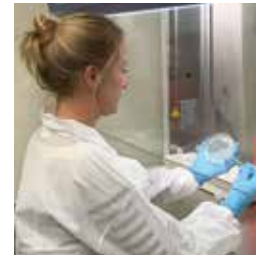
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UP AGAINST A BRICK WALL

Contractors from Marsa, Inc. in Pittsburgh were recently on campus to perform maintenance on the exterior façade of Old Main. Among the tasks performed were mortar repointing, replacing broken and cracked bricks, patching broken limestone and some limestone cleaning. Old Main is Slippery Rock University's first and oldest building, which opened in 1889.



CARING IN THE MIDST OF A CRISIS

***SRU students, faculty and staff
respond to coronavirus pandemic***

"Apart but not alone" and "We're in this together." Those phrases are just two examples of community-centric battle cries heard throughout the world's struggles with social distancing and stay-at-home orders at the onset of the fight with COVID-19.

Even now, as life returns to a semblance of what it used to be before the pandemic, those words serve as meaningful encouragement around the globe.

Closer to home, they provide a testament to the actions of the Slippery Rock University community. While it's impossible to document on these pages every act that bound the SRU and its extended neighborhood together, from faculty and students connecting online to outreach that benefitted the public good, here are just some examples of how SRU was indeed "stronger together."



MEDICAL SUPPLIES

At the onset of Pennsylvania's COVID-19 outbreak in March, the most immediate concern was supplying hospitals with adequate resources to protect the health care workers and first responders on the front lines of the crisis.

SRU administrators, staff and faculty, helped distribute supplies, including personal protective equipment, that were to be used in SRU laboratories, simulations and classroom instruction. At least three local organizations received supplies from SRU: Allegheny Health Network Grove City Hospital, Butler Health System's Butler Memorial Hospital and the Slippery Rock Volunteer Fire Company and Rescue Team.

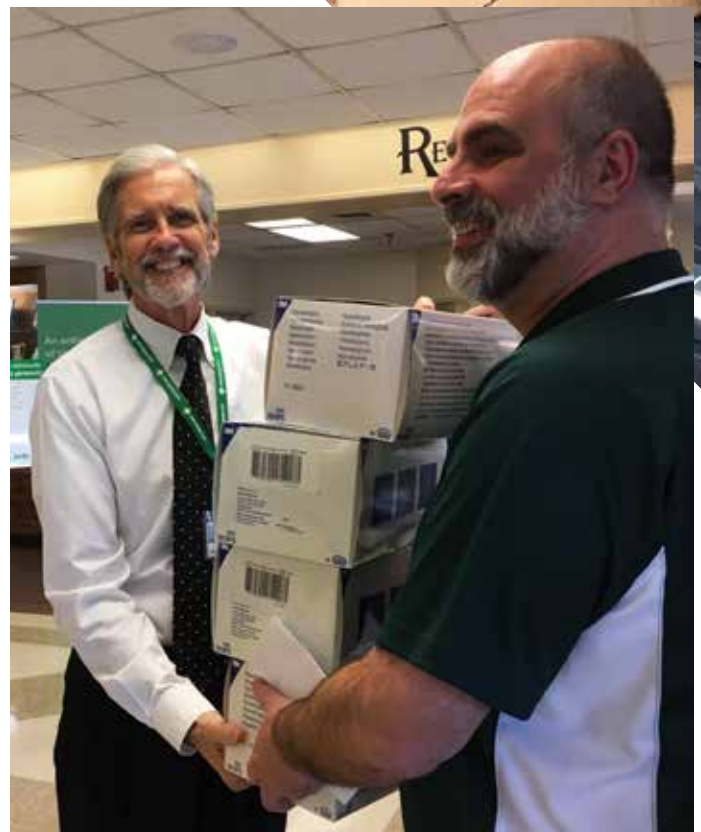
"This is a great example of the community coming together to address an important challenge," said SRU President William Behre. "As members of our community, we're fortunate to have these supplies and to be able put them to good use by delivering them to local health care providers."

Behre hand-delivered two shipments of supplies to AHN Grove City that included 200 protective goggles from the Student Government Association Bookstore and 200 surgical masks with face shields from SRU's physician assistant studies program.

Nearly 15,000 pairs of sterile gloves and 350 protective surgical gowns were made available by the PA program, as well as sanitary wipes, eye shields, bouffant caps and surgical masks. A case of 100 gowns were supplied to SRVFC&RT for medics to wear while responding to emergency calls for patients showing COVID-19 symptoms. SRU's Safety Management Department provided more than 600 items to Butler Memorial Hospital, including the N95 surgical masks that were in short supply at hospitals across the country, as well as respirators, filters and other components.



SRU President William Behre hand-delivered medical supplies from the University to AHN Grove City.



From left, Dave Poland, chief executive officer at AHN Grove City, accepts goggles and surgical masks from Behre.



3D PRINTING

SRU's pandemic relief efforts didn't just stop after the University emptied its surplus of personal protection supplies. Faculty from across multiple academic disciplines worked together to create new ones using 3D printers.

Eight 3D printers from various SRU departments were used to create more than 100 face shields. The printers were delivered to the homes of faculty members for them to create plastic frames that, when affixed with 8.5-by-11-inch clear plastic sheets, produced the face shields.

"Every little bit helps," said Jack Livingston, associate professor of geography, geology and environment, who helped coordinate the effort. "If everyone who has a 3D printer is using them for projects like this, that will make a huge difference."

Livingston delivered 80 face shields to AHN Grove City, while Kris Benkesser, director of SRU's Student Health Services, delivered another 20 to SRVFC&RT.

3D printers are devices that use a computer-aided design model to create three-dimensional objects by layering filament, often a type of thermoplastic, onto a printing surface. Most of the 3D printers at SRU are used for design purposes and student learning, such as creating a fossil replica, although some faculty use them to save from ordering parts for their laboratories.

"We have faculty from across several departments who wanted to do something for a good cause," Livingston said. "We have professors from geology, engineering, computer science, art and even a dean with a background in English who were all saying, 'Hey, this is a good idea; let's get this done.' This is where the idea of silos completely goes out the window, and it's a reminder that SRU is a community filled with really good people."

Livingston brought his department's printer home, while Jon Shumway, professor of art, operated two from his department at his home, and Sam Thangiah, professor of computer science, housed the remaining five. Two students assisted in the effort: Kyle Sayre, a 2020 graduate with a degree in physics, who normally worked with the three 3D printers in the engineering lab; and James Jablonski, a 2020 graduate with a degree in interdisciplinary programs, who previously worked with the machines in an Archeology Techniques and Lab class.





CLOTH FACE MASKS

SRU faculty members also used their ingenuity to protect employees whose jobs required them to continue working on campus. Mary Frances Hodson, instructor of theatre and costume shop coordinator, and Rebecca Morrice, associate professor of theatre and department chair, literally gave props to their fellow employees by making cloth face masks using fabric from the Theatre Department's costume shop.

Although nearly all SRU faculty and staff were working remotely from mid-March through the end of July, there were some essential employees who remained on campus, including personnel from University Police, Student Health Services, and Facilities, Planning and Environmental Safety.

"This was a project we were both excited about because it blends our sewing, crafting and patterning skills with a direct need on campus to help our coworkers," Morrice said. "Because we have the skills and materials on campus to manufacture these items, we could produce them at little or no cost to the University and it provides us with a way to contribute to the greater good."

Top from left, Rusty Karnes and Scott Abrino, from SRU's Maintenance Department, wear masks made by the Theatre Department. Bottom, Jack Livingston demonstrates how face shields made from 3D printers are assembled.





MOVING THE CAMPUS ONLINE

While a number of essential employees looked after the campus in the wake of the pandemic, the remainder of the SRU community kept the University functioning remotely, which presented unique challenges of its own. However, the collective resolve of Rock Nation rose to the occasion in crafting a nearly seamless conversion.

Two departments in particular were instrumental in making that transition happen: Information and Administrative Technology Services and the Center for Teaching and Learning.

"The process was a total team effort as we worked through all the functional areas and did a lot of behind-the-scenes work to

and internet access at home, some do not. Behre implemented an initiative leading up to the University's changeover to online exclusive classes called "Connectivity." Part of that initiative was to direct students who were faced with computer or internet access challenges to contact IATS for assistance.

Through the initiative, IATS loaned at least 30 laptops to students while nearly a dozen more received assistance with their internet connectivity. Students without internet were either reimbursed for expenses through their cell phone provider, turning their smartphone into a personal hotspot to gain wireless internet access for their computer, or for obtaining internet access through their cable

or satellite television provider.

Faculty and staff who rely on desktop computer terminals in their offices also required accommodations.

IATS loaned more than 100 laptops to faculty and staff and helped establish nearly 400 virtual private network connections, which is a way for

people to access files and other digital assets on the University's private network.

"We had to make sure that people's computers worked effectively from home so that they could conduct their classes or, in some instances, a virtual lab that we created for them," Ziegler said. "We were able to get everything up and running so students could register for classes and the University could still process financial aid. It was a matter of doing what needed to be done in order for each office or department to be able to do their business. There were a lot of things going on in a small amount of time. We basically moved the campus from being bricks and mortar to online in about two weeks."

"The process was a total team effort as we worked through all the functional areas and we did a lot of behind-the-scenes work to make it all come together."

— John Ziegler, associate provost for IATS

make it all come together," said John Ziegler, associate provost for IATS, who leads a staff of 19 employees. "When we started running the campus electronically, a lot of responsibility fell on a few people in a big hurry. (Making that kind of switch) is a whole different way of doing things."

The University announced March 11 that spring break would be extended two weeks and that classes would resume online only beginning March 30. Also, during those 18 days of preparation, employees that would be able were directed to work from home beginning March 17.

While most of the 8,800-plus SRU students have computer

REMOTE TEACHING

The Center for Teaching and Learning, meanwhile, provided SRU faculty with support for instructional design, educational technology and professional development for teaching strategies. The CTL staff, which consists of Brian Danielson, director; William Huber, learning systems administrator; and Mark Tarcy, information technology technician, communicated with faculty by packaging existing online training resources to help prepare them for remote teaching.

"We made tremendous strides," Danielson said. "Everything we did to assist faculty and students to prepare to teach and learn in a remote way was completed by March 20, after that, it was more about supporting the faculty as they rolled out their instruction, troubleshooting things that were supposed to happen and correcting those issues.

"Authentic online teaching requires months and months of preparation, development and working with an instructional designer. The University has all the tools necessary to help faculty be successful online teachers, so really it was making sure all faculty knew what those technologies were, what problems they solve and how to access online tutorials."

Danielson estimated that at least one-third of SRU's faculty had already had some formal training for distance education. Also, about 85% of faculty use D2L, which is the University's online learning management system that provides an online component to face-to-face courses for posting lectures, homework assignments and exams, as well as conducting online discussions and more. In addition to rolling out content to help faculty, Danielson conducted more than a dozen videoconferencing meetings with individual academic departments that were attended by more than 70 faculty members.

Faculty used Zoom, a videoconferencing application, to conduct live online classroom instruction, known as "synchronous" learning, while also providing course content for students to access on their own time, known as "asynchronous" learning. Not including the synchronous Zoom classes, SRU students began watching a combined 30,000 minutes of asynchronous video content per day. Prior to the pandemic-related conversion to online classes, students were averaging a combined 600 minutes per day.

TIPS FOR REMOTE WORK:

CREATE A WORKSPACE
Whether it's a desk in your bedroom, the dining room table, or other quiet space, a dedicated workspace to call your own is important.

FORWARD YOUR PHONE/VOICEMAIL TO EMAIL
Continuity of communication is key. If you're able, forward your desk phone to your mobile number and/or contact helpdesk@spru.edu to have your office voicemail sent to your SRU email.

USE TECHNOLOGY & TOOLS
Use Microsoft Teams or Zoom to stay connected, attend meetings, collaborate on projects or instant message/chat with colleagues inside and outside of SRU. Be sure to test any technologies out in advance thereby easing your comfort with a webcam, microphone and allowing you to be proficient in the new technology.

BE ACCOUNTABLE
Demonstrate accountability and strong communication with your supervisor and colleagues. Check in regularly to provide updates so they know what you are working on.

STAY CONNECTED
Stay connected with your colleagues virtually, by phone and by email. This keeps everyone involved, maintains engagement and helps avoid feelings of isolation. Try scheduling a virtual lunch or coffee with your colleagues using Microsoft Teams, Zoom or Skype.

MAINTAIN REGULAR WORK HABITS
Establish a routine and get ready for work like you were going into the office. While casual dress is a bonus for telecommuters, staying in your pajamas all day can make it hard to get into "work mode." If you get yourself dressed and ready for work as a daily ritual, you will find it beneficial to your productivity.

TIPS FOR ONLINE TEACHING:

BE YOURSELF
Most instructors enjoy teaching in person because of the opportunity to interact with students. Distance learning can pose certain limitations to that interaction. Remember to be human and deliver your communications with warmth and support. Thank students for their hard work and dedication in class, let them know you're there to help them be successful and you're always available.

PUT YOURSELF IN THEIR SHOES
Distance learning can create feelings of isolation and anxiety for some students. Imagine that you are the student, are you sure, trying to make sense of what is in front of you on the screen. Get outside your own head – where your online class makes sense and everything is clear. Instead, try to envision how your students are experiencing the class. Are your instructions clear? Did you include a detailed grading rubric? Did you provide an example of a successful final project so students can see your expectations and don't have to muddle through while they wait for a reply from you?

ADD VISUAL APPEAL
The appearance of our surroundings affects our engagement and our engagement. A little attention to presentation goes a long way. Do you have a lot of written lecture notes or instructions? Break up long chunks of text with subheads and space between paragraphs. Embed relevant images. Include thumbnail videos that you've either created or sourced from YouTube, news sites, or library resources.

EXPLAIN YOUR EXPECTATIONS
Online students can't ask for, or receive, clarification in the moment they first encounter your assignment instructions. Explain what you're looking for as clearly as possible. Think about writing directions as if you were having a conversation with a student, so they don't read like a textbook; create a short, informal video to flesh out details; share examples of previous student work that earned high marks or maybe even missed the mark.

REMOTE LEARNING TIPS:

ESTABLISH A DAILY ROUTINE.
Waking up, getting dressed and eating breakfast at the same time each day can help you settle into your schedule. Block out ample time to complete homework assignments and study.

CREATE A WORKSPACE.
Whether it's a desk in your bedroom, the dining room table, or other quiet space, a dedicated workspace to call your own is important.

SET BOUNDARIES.
Being home can create unintended learning obstacles – family, pets and chores – can all unintentionally want more of your time. Remind everyone that your studies come first, but you'll spend time with them when done.

TAKE A BREAK.
Try to avoid "digital overload" in our new online learning environment. Spend time outside and with those in your household; meditate; check in with friends; and remember to relax.

CHECK YOUR SRU EMAIL 2X PER DAY.
Use it to communicate with faculty, staff and classmates, and receive the latest University news and updates.

USE YOUR SRU RESOURCES.
Your faculty and your academic advisor are just a click or call away. Everything you need on campus – Academic Services, Tutoring Center, Student Success Coaches, and more – are all still available. Learning remotely doesn't mean learning alone. We're here for you.

Instructional graphics for staff, faculty and students, created by designers from SRU's University Communication and Public Affairs Department that were posted on the University's COVID-19 webpages.



PHOTO CREDIT: Kristina Serafini, Tribune-Review

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

SRU students also maintained a virtual presence with the University community outside of the virtual classroom as a 15-member ad hoc committee called the Student Involvement Team helped develop online programming for students. Programs included online trivia games, home fitness classes, group discussions on social media and more.

"A lot of us are missing the daily interaction that we've had with other students," said Celine Halt, a 2020 SRU graduate with a degree in resort, recreation and hospitality management, who was the University Program Board president. "This shows (our fellow) students that: 'Hey, we're still here for you even though we might be many miles away from each other.' We were here for each other while we were on campus, we were here for each other while we are away and we're going to come back even stronger."

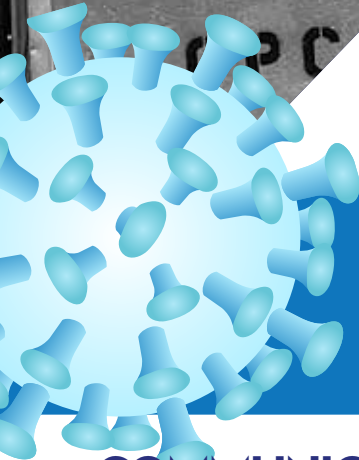
SRU students weren't just the recipients of outreach; they responded to needs in the community as volunteers and front-line service workers as well. For example, more than 150 student-teachers from SRU helped ease the transition to online or remote classes for local school districts.

Students like Abby Genter, a graduate student majoring in student affairs in higher education from Allison Park, didn't just interact virtually with her fellow students as a graduate assistant in SRU's Office of Student Engagement and Leadership, she also saw the importance of engaging with her local community. Genter volunteered for the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, helping load boxes of food into hundreds of cars lined up in the Kennywood Park parking lot on a cold, rainy day in late March.

"I just wanted to do something," Genter said. "It's definitely a scary time and you feel helpless that you can't really make an impact with the social distancing, but this was a hands-on way that you could do something significant and help a lot of people. You can still make a difference without the risk of spreading the virus."

"We were here for each other while we were on campus, we were here for each other while we are away and we're going to come back even stronger."

— Celine Halt, a 2020 SRU graduate



COMMUNICATION

Throughout the pandemic, students, faculty and staff received continual communication from the University with up-to-date plans and resources available during a tumultuous time. Special COVID-19 resource webpages were quickly developed at sru.edu/covid19 with information about everything from remote student counseling services to answers about housing refunds.

President Behre also hosted a town-hall style videoconference to answer questions, along with sending frequent emails to students, faculty and staff to keep everyone updated about the University's plans for adapting to the changing circumstances.

In one of his early emails to faculty and staff, Behre said "It takes

a village ... thank you for being the village," although many of the people who read the message were well outside of the 660-acre "village" that is the SRU campus.

But because of the collective efforts of the campus community during the pandemic, the very idea of the University has proven to have no boundaries, much like its people's dedication and support for one another.

"The pandemic has been difficult in a variety of ways," Behre said. "But we have proven that we are stronger together, even while we're apart. That's what I love about this University."

POMP AND UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCE

The largest gathering of people at SRU each year comes in the form of students, faculty, staff, families and friends at commencement. Because of social distancing restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, the University's spring ceremonies did not take place.

While some institutions canceled their commencement or replaced it with a virtual ceremony, SRU committed to giving its graduates an opportunity to celebrate receiving their degrees in-person at a later date.

Despite the postponement, there were exchanges marking the occasion prior to what would have been the May 8-9 events. More than 1,500 graduates received a packet from the University which included a letter from President Behre, a 2020 tassel affixed to a congratulatory card, a diploma cover and an SRU Alumni Association zipper-pull. Students who graduated with honors also received medallions, ribbons and cords that corresponded with their level of summa cum laude, magna cum laude and cum laude. Diplomas were then mailed to the graduates later in the summer.

In addition to the mailings, there were also two videos for the Class of 2020 that were shared on the University's website and social media channels on what would have been commencement weekend. First, there was a short congratulatory video featuring a variety of campus images, drone footage of the University and photographs from the past academic year. Second, there was a video to observe the accomplishments of the graduates, featuring remarks from Behre; Jerry Chmielewski, then-interim provost and vice president for academic affairs; and Kelly Bailey, director of alumni engagement, as well as the names of each graduate.

Neither of these videos were meant to replace an in-person commencement. The spring 2020 graduates will be invited back to campus after it is safe for large groups of people to gather together.



SRU AIDS THE WAR EFFORT

The COVID-19 pandemic isn't the SRU community's first time responding to a global crisis.

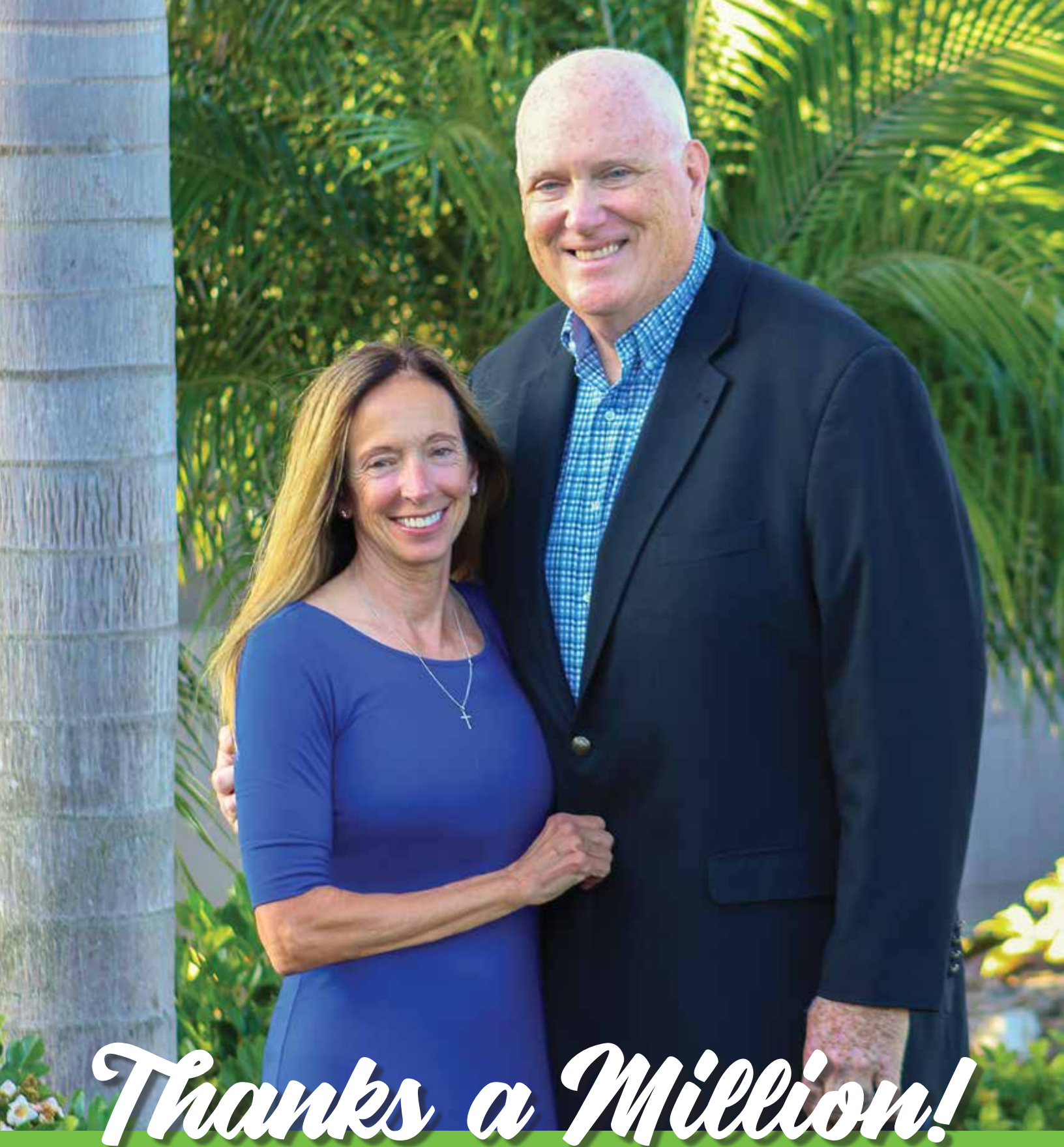
During World War II, what was then Slippery Rock State Teachers College changed rapidly. In 1941, Pennsylvania legislation was proposed to close the state's teachers' colleges and reopen them for vocational training in defense work. While that change didn't occur, enrollment did drop sharply, by more than 25% by 1943.

In the fall of 1944 there were just 187 students on campus, nearly the same enrollment figure as when the University first opened its doors in 1889. All but two of the students were women.

However, from April 1943 to February 1944, the campus became home to a U.S. Army Corps training site, with more than 500 cadets stationed in Slippery Rock. While no flight instruction took place on campus, there were drills and academic training with SRU faculty, who would've been otherwise furloughed with the dramatic drop in enrollment, teaching the classes that included modern history, geography and physics.

According to the flight school's newspaper, *The Flyin' Rapier*, many cadets felt like their time in Slippery Rock seemed more like a college experience rather than military training. After all, they lived in South and West Halls and participated in social functions with the mostly female student population.

By the fall of 1945, enrollment at SRU rebounded to 284 students. That total did not include the more than 50 nurses who trained at the University as part of a government-sponsored program.



Thanks a Million!

**SRU ALUM FUNDS STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP
WITH LARGEST SINGLE GIFT IN HISTORY**

Ask members of the Haverlack family and they will tell you that Slippery Rock University has played a big role in their lives.

Brothers Stewart and Elliott graduated from The Rock in 1979 and 1980, respectively, and Elliott's son, Zane, earned a degree from the University in 2008.

Now, it's the Haverlack family's turn to play a big role in the life of SRU; one could even say a leading role. Elliott Haverlack and his wife, Rhonda, recently donated \$1 million to establish the Frank and Margaret Haverlack Good Citizen Scholarship, named in honor of Elliott's late parents.

"Being able to provide this scholarship and help students further their education while lessening the financial burden is something my family is able to do and something we are happy to do, given all we've received from SRU throughout the years," said Elliott Haverlack. "I guess you could say it's just the continuation of a 40-year love affair between ourselves and SRU."

That love extends well beyond the grounds of the campus, as the Haverlack family moved to the Slippery Rock community in 1973 when Elliott Haverlack was 15 years old.

It was then that Frank and Margaret opened the now-defunct Corner 8 grocery store and gas station at the corner of Route 8 and Branchton Road, while Elliott entered Slippery Rock Area High School as a 10th grader.

"We had the store for nearly five years," said Haverlack, "but it was a real mixed bag; business was great, but the personal side was pretty tough. It was like something out of a Charles Dickens work, 'It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.'"

While the business saw revenues grow from \$30,000 to \$300,000 in just three years, the family saw upheaval. Haverlack's mother was diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy that required nearly 12 weeks of hospitalization, followed by his father's terminal cancer diagnosis and death just six months later.

"You tend to grow up rather quickly when you're helping run a family business and your parents are both ill," said Haverlack. "It was a bit of a rough time for me and my brother, but it taught me a lot about self-perseverance and seeing a project through to the end."

"My father was absolutely my best friend, and when he died I was completely crushed. But I knew he'd have told me to push through, so that's what I did. I put my head down and did what had to be done, whether it was school or in business. He taught me to provide exceptional customer service, to always offer it with a high level of integrity and to offer people something that they either want or need and you'll be successful. When I couple that with the great education that I received at SRU, I was able to launch a fairly successful career."

Fairly successful, indeed. Haverlack, who earned a bachelor's degree in environmental science at SRU and resides with Rhonda in Estero, Florida, spent a majority of his 39-year working career in the pet industry. He retired in 2012 as the president and chief operating officer of Meadville-based Ainsworth Pet Nutrition following a 13-year run as a vice president with the pet food division of Heinz. He and Rhonda were the cofounders and principals of Targeted Pet Treats, headquartered in Warren. Haverlack currently operates a continuing education and executive coaching company and is a member of the board of directors for CJ Foods. He also serves as vice chair for the Pennsylvania Chapter of Child Advocacy Centers and Multidisciplinary Teams.

"There was an early retirement package being offered by Heinz, and if I'm being honest, I didn't feel that being there was as good a fit for my life as it had been," said Haverlack. "I took advantage of the offer and looked for something that I could really get my hands into and I ended up at a small family-owned business in Meadville, Dad's Pet Care, which subsequently was renamed Ainsworth Pet Nutrition."

"They hired me to switch (the company) over from family owned and operated to family owned and professionally managed. When I joined them in 2000, they had a market cap of \$30 million; when I left 12 years later, we had increased it to \$500 million. My successor was able to continue carrying the ball forward and they sold the company in 2018 for \$1.7 billion to the J.M. Smucker Company."

"Whether it's been business, education or, most importantly, family, I've had great fortune throughout my life and now it's time to share some of it with others. My family is honored to partner with SRU to connect the good citizen leaders of tomorrow with a 'Rock Solid' education. My parents loved the Slippery Rock community and its people and they believed in the importance of education. My time at SRU was far more than just a classroom education, it prepared me to achieve success and fulfillment in life."

The Haverlack Scholarship will be awarded to one incoming first-year student each year starting with the fall 2020 semester. The scholarship will cover up to half of the recipient's tuition and will be renewable for up to four years.

Frank and Margaret Haverlack, who passed away in 1976 and 2004 respectively, served the Slippery Rock community through sponsoring scouting and church organizations. They left a legacy of caring, kindness and social awareness, especially for their sons.

"The gift from the Haverlacks is the largest that SRU has ever received from an alumnus," said William Behre, president of SRU, who announced the gift at last December's Celebration of Giving. "I am humbled by their generosity and grateful for their commitment to providing life-changing opportunities to future generations of SRU students. As our current and former students will tell you, once you become a part of The Rock family, no matter when you leave or where you go, you are always part of The Rock family."

"I can't think of a better or more perfect example of that than this gift. During his time here, Elliott 'clicked' with this institution and it with him. To have that kind of

relationship with your University is very special."

In addition to meeting a required high school GPA of 3.0, scholarship candidates must demonstrate a commitment to community service. Examples include work as an emergency first responder, as a volunteer with a nonprofit organization, or having a leadership role within a scouting or religious organization. Upon receiving the Haverlack Scholarship, students must maintain good academic standing and serve as a campus leader at SRU by completing at least 10 hours of service per week during the academic year.

"This is an incredible gift that pays tribute to Elliott's parents while assisting SRU students for generations to come," said Samantha Swift, executive director of University development and advancement services. "We are extremely grateful to Elliott and his family. Their generosity is truly inspiring."

For additional information about the Frank and Margaret Haverlack Good Citizen Scholarship or to learn about contributing to other scholarships, contact University Advancement at 724.738.2004.

"Being able to provide this scholarship and help students further their education while lessening the financial burden is something my family is able to do and something we are happy to do, given all we've received from SRU throughout the years."

- Elliott Haverlack



Getting It 'Write,' *Down on*

Writers and dairy farmers seemingly don't have much in common. One job is grueling manual labor and the other, well, it used to be performed on a manual typewriter. But what they do share are rigid deadlines that are often met when most people are asleep. And let's not forget that both require tedious work well outside the perceived fundamental tasks of typing words or milking cows.

Carol Ann Gregg can relate. She has worked nearly her entire life educating and changing perceptions about her vocation, not only because she's a female farmer, but also because she's a writing farmer ... or is she a farming writer? Either way, she's taken the black-and-white differences of two professions to make the tools of her life's work, just like the colors of Holstein cattle or the newspapers that are read all over.

"Many women are not considered 'farmers;' they are 'the farmer's wife,' but they do a lot of the work," said Gregg, who after graduating from Slippery Rock University in 1963 married a farmer,

George, and worked on his family's dairy farm that was just five miles north of Slippery Rock in Liberty Township.

"We farmed," Gregg said matter-of-factly, designating how she described her occupation to others as a collective family business.

The perception of farming women changed during Gregg's lifetime, during which – and perhaps because – she also became a writer.

For her lifetime achievements in farming, and advocating for her industry and other farmers, Gregg earned the 2019 Outstanding Woman in Agriculture Award, given by the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee.

At first, Gregg's career seemed destined for the classroom, not the farm. As a teenager living in Sharpsville, Gregg met her future husband through Mercer County 4-H groups. She eventually enrolled at SRU in 1959, and like many women at the time, she saw teaching as a logical career path. That changed not long after graduating in 1963 as she and George married and, later that same year, welcomed their first child. Gregg taught fewer than three months in the Lakeview School District before calling it a career in the classroom.



the Farm





Carol Ann Gregg, '63, won the 2019 Outstanding Woman in Agriculture Award from the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee.

"In that era, if you were pregnant, you couldn't teach," Gregg said. "I really think it was God's way of saying, 'You don't belong in a classroom,' and in the long run I know it was the right thing (to move on). I was way better at raising dairy heifers than I was teaching. But at another point in my life, having a college degree gave me credibility. It gave me credentials, so to speak, and I was glad I had it."

The Greggs raised two boys, Tim and P.D., while maintaining the family farm with George's brother, Bob; sister-in-law, Eleanor; and their two boys. Together the family farmed as many as 500 acres, which was a relatively large dairy farm in the area, boasting 100 dairy cattle. In 1969, they transitioned to a then-modern freestall barn system and "milking parlor," while using corn and hay as feed, all of which were changes from the ways George's parents farmed: having each cow tied up in a separate stall for milking and using oats as feed.

"The cows had to learn and so did we, and I don't know whose learning curve was greater," Gregg said with a laugh. "It was all new to everybody."

Teaching her fellow farmers, as well as the public, about the farming industry came easy to Gregg, especially through her writing. By 1980, Gregg was writing the Mercer County Farm Bureau's newsletter and sharing information with the local newspapers. The general manager of the Grove City Allied News asked the Greggs if they knew anyone who could write an agriculture column for the editorial page of the newspaper. Gregg offered to do it, and so began a weekly column titled "Agriculturally Speaking."

"My job was to visit with the farmers and let them tell me what they did," Gregg said. "What better job could you have?"

Gregg's columns provided readers with first-person accounts of life as a farmer, as well as reports from farm shows and meetings to keep the public updated about trends and new techniques related

to agriculture. The nearly decade-long success of her column landed Gregg a full-time reporting position with the Allied News in 1988. But with her sons having already graduated from high school and left home, there were fewer hands to work the farm. Not exactly an ideal time to land a new gig.

"That didn't go over too well at home (with George)," Gregg said with a grin. "I was afraid I was deserting the farm. I still came home for lunch and I did calf chores. I wasn't able to do as much on the farm (because of the newspaper), but it turned out fine."

As a full-time writer, Gregg covered county commissioner, school board and municipality meetings until 1990, before departing for the Harrisburg-based Pennsylvania Farmer Magazine as its first remote reporter. That appointment was short-lived however after the publication was bought by another company in 1991 and Gregg, being a relatively new employee, was let go. She again resumed freelance work, writing for various farming publications and doing public relations work for Farm Credit.

Three years later, in 1994, the Greggs sold their entire dairy herd as the husband-and-wife tandem dedicated all their time to advocated for farming across the state. George became the regional director for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. Carol Ann, in 1992, had already become the education coordinator for Pennsylvania Ag In The Classroom, a program now known as the Educators Ag Institute. The program features teachers from across the state participating in a summer workshop to integrate agriculture-related topics into their K-12 curriculum. The program is operated by the Pennsylvania Friends of Agriculture Foundation, a charitable organization affiliated with the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau.

"It's important for people to know where their food comes from," Gregg said. "We need to teach people to care about their food, so they know it's safe, good and nutritious. There are ways you can incorporate some of this into the classroom. Whether it's in reading, science or social studies, there's a place for agriculture in just about every piece of a teacher's curriculum."

After 12 years with the PFB's foundation, Gregg returned to writing part-time for the Grove City Allied News and its sister publication, the Sharon Herald, until 2011. She continues to write freelance for several farming publications, including American Agriculturalist and Lancaster Farming, a statewide agriculture publication.

Throughout her career, she kept an active role with American Agri-Women, a national coalition of farm, ranch and agribusiness women, for which Gregg was a one-time president and state chapter president. During her time as Agri-Women president, she successfully advocated for changes in the U.S. Census of Agriculture survey to better reflect the contributions that women made in the industry.

"I was proud to be part of those conversations and seeing the changes to the Ag Census form," Gregg said. "(People started) looking at the numbers and saying, 'Oh, there are more women owning farms and involved in agriculture (than we thought),' and I'm thinking, 'You never asked the right questions, because there were women doing this a long time ago.'"

"My job was to visit with the farmers and let them tell me what they did. What better job could you have?"

Other changes over the years have included fewer people per capita who choose farming as a way of life. That reduction includes Gregg's sons: Tim is a propane distribution manager near Pittsburgh and P.D. is a technical director for a community theater in Wheeling. According to Farm Bureau data, the average U.S. farm annually feeds 166 people from around the world. That's a stark contrast to Gregg's introduction to farming in the 1960s when one farm, on average, fed just 26 people. That reduction in the number of farmers has forced those who do farm to become more innovative and efficient.



Gregg writes freelance articles for several farming publications, including American Agriculturalist and Lancaster Farming.



Gregg has played a role in making that happen through her writing, whether its sharing how dairy farmers are now using a mobile app that alerts them when a cow strays from the herd, or environmentally friendly practices, like using recycled newspaper for cattle bedding, an irony that is not lost on Gregg.

She also finds it poetic and even gratifying that even though she didn't become a teacher, she wound up educating teachers through the Ag in the Classroom workshops.

"That was rewarding because a lot of them were just launching their careers and they would be able to carry that knowledge with them, and be able to share it, for years to come," Gregg said.

Former volunteers of the Ag in the Classroom program approached Gregg to express appreciation last November when she received the Outstanding Woman in Agriculture Award in Hershey at the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau convention.

"She has such a passion for agriculture and educating people and she's able to do that through her writing, at all levels, from children to (adults)," said Sandy Craft, a member of the PFB Women's Leadership Committee, at the awards presentation. "She really knows how to connect women to organizations that would benefit and strengthen their skills, and she's always encouraging women to belong to other organizations and things that would promote their leadership skills. She's just passionate about women being leaders."

Gregg still lives in Liberty Township, just north of Slippery Rock, on her family's farm, despite the family selling its dairy cattle herd in 1994.

A Donor

"Selfless" alumna



If you were to ask a room full of people who know Susan Tritt to describe her, the responses you'd get would probably be as different as the people you'd ask. And while the most common replies would likely include doctor, author, researcher and military veteran, Daniel Brown has a completely different take.

"She's selfless," said Brown, a Slippery Rock University junior biology major from Darby, who is the inaugural winner of the Tritt-funded Gaither Award for Excellence.



Daniel Brown, an SRU junior biology major from Darby, is the inaugural recipient of the Gaither Award for Excellence.

"I chose to attend SRU because I wanted to get out of the city and find something new and to experience a different environment and new people. When I visited the campus, the people are what really made the decision an easy one for me. Everyone seemed so genuine and giving and, from my experience, that holds true for alumni as well."

Tritt, a 1972 graduate from then-Slippery Rock State College with a bachelor's degree in biology, is a member of the SRU Foundation, Inc.'s Lifetime Giving Society through the establishment of a pair of scholarships in the name of her collegiate mentor, Thomas Gaither, a now retired SRU biology professor.

The Gaither Award for Excellence, a \$500 scholarship, is awarded to an SRU student in honor of Gaither's work in the Civil Rights Movement, particularly with the "Friendship Nine."

Prior to his career as a faculty member at SRU from 1968-2007, Gaither was a field secretary for the Congress of Racial Equality. On Jan. 31, 1961, Gaither led a lunchroom sit-in at a McCrory's five-and-dime store in Rock Hill, South Carolina. Gaither and the eight African American college students he recruited were charged with trespassing for

eating at the "whites-only" counter. Because they chose 30 days of hard labor, rather than paying a \$100 fine, the Friendship Nine ushered in the "Jail, no bail" movement that opposed giving money to governments supporting Jim Crow laws.

In 2015, South Carolina Judge Mark Hayes III threw out the conviction and apologized to Gaither saying, "We cannot rewrite history, but we can right history."

To be considered for the Gaither Award for Excellence, an SRU student, who can self-nominate, must fill out an application form and submit the following: a resume; a 200-word biography; a 500-word essay on civil rights, leadership and the promise of student activism; a degree-audit report; and a support letter from an SRU staff or faculty member. To be considered for the award, students must have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.75, be enrolled in a full-time academic program at SRU and be in good academic standing.

The award can be used toward the purchase of textbooks, tuition, funding research projects or travel to academic conferences or professional workshops.

"I only planted the idea for the award when I spoke to the Foundation staff," said Tritt. "I was thrilled so many others within the University felt the same about honoring Dr. Gaither in this way. When I arrived at SRU in 1968, I felt the way many women did at the time, that opportunities for us were limited. It was Dr. Gaither who asked me what I really wanted out of an education. He pushed me, as he did all his students, to be the best scholar and person that I could be.

Tritt, who retired in 2011 after 21 years as an OB-GYN, also established the Thomas W. Gaither Scholarship in 2004. That scholarship offers \$1,000 annually for an entering student majoring in biology with the intention of becoming a professional biologist, biology teacher or entering the medical field.

Clockwise from upper left: Tritt following her graduation from the University of Pittsburgh Medical School (1982); Tritt, Thomas Gaither and Rosemary Myers, recipient of the 2017 Dr. Thomas W. Gaither Scholarship; Gaither at an SRU academic event.

by any other name

funds pair of scholarships in honor of mentor

"He would always tell you that the only limitations a person has are the ones that they put on themselves," Tritt said. "His leadership changed the course of my career and my life. He did that for everyone he touched ... in the classroom or out in the world."

Following her time in Slippery Rock, Tritt would go on to earn a master's degree in immunology from Syracuse University and Ph.D. (physiology) and medical degrees from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. After a four-year obstetrics and gynecology residency at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital, she served four years in the U.S. Air Force Medical Corps, earning the rank of major. At the conclusion of her military service, Tritt completed one

year of maternal-fetal medicine fellowship in UCLA School of Medicine's Department of OB/GYN. Of the 15 publications she coauthored, six were related to research of fetal alcohol exposure. She left UCLA to practice general OB/GYN in Santa Monica until retiring in 2011.

"Somebody helped me with my educational pursuits (by providing scholarship dollars)," said Tritt, "and being able to do it for others just seems like the right thing to do. I'm fortunate to be in a position to be able to do that. If I had graduated (from SRU) with huge debt, I wouldn't have been able to attend graduate school."

"My undergraduate education is the solid foundation I built on through the rest of my career. Without it, all that came after wouldn't have been possible. To assist others in laying that groundwork, to help provide an opportunity, is an honor and I'm glad to do it. The scholarship support I received gave me the opportunity to get a degree at SRU. I think giving to the University, in support

of students, is a way of thanking the people that funded my education. Gratitude for what I received, when I needed it most, is what my giving is about."

Tritt credits the support of her husband, Lionel Galway, as one of the primary factors in her financial support of the Gaither scholarships.

"I would not have been able to do this if it hadn't been for him looking at it and agreeing that establishing the scholarship was a great idea," Tritt said. "Lionel didn't attend SRU, but he supports it as much as I do and I can't thank him enough for that."

"We both feel fortunate to have the opportunity to know Thomas personally. It is truly an honor to be able to support these two awards that carry on the legacy of someone like him."

Thanks should also be directed to the couple who, to date, has provided more than \$60,000 in funding to the two scholarships.

Recipients like Brown appreciate the support.

"I'm not the best essay writer, but I guess the one I wrote for my scholarship application was pretty good," Brown said with a laugh. "When I got the letter saying that I had won, I had to go back through it a second time

and call my mom to read it aloud to her just to make sure I was reading it correctly. The word 'congratulations' being in all caps should have been a clue, but I wanted to double check with her."

After graduation from SRU, Brown plans to attend graduate school with an eye on pursuing a career in agricultural biotechnology.

To learn more about the Gaither scholarships, visit www.srufoundation.org. For additional information about contributing to this or other scholarships, please contact University Advancement at 724.738.2004.

Clockwise from top: Tritt and husband, Lionel Galway; Tritt and Galway at an underwater photo course in Fiji (2018); Tritt and Lauren Harper, a senior aquarist, doing coral culture at Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach, Calif. (2019).



Running away



Running more than 60,000 miles, many in 100-kilometer and 100-mile chunks, requires dedication, fortitude, enthusiasm and a strong gut. Patrick Reagan, a 2010 Slippery Rock University exercise science graduate and world-class runner, has all of these characteristics – paired, oddly enough, with a deep appreciation of old-fashioned, toe-tapping jug band music.

The 33-year-old national, international and U.S. Olympic Trials qualifier, who is also a successful college running coach, is not certain how his two dominant interests relate, but they are clearly intertwined in his psyche. His jug band zeal carried him from SRU, across the nation and eventually to settling down in Savannah, Georgia, from where he runs miles and miles and miles.

The fact that Reagan runs to excess clearly shows his passion, but for some, it's his gut, and its various microbes, that provides the overriding interest in his athleticism and subject of ongoing, detailed and comprehensive research.

As an outstanding SRU cross-country runner, as evidenced by his status as an All-American and two-time all-conference top 10 finisher in 2007 and 2008, Reagan still holds the second fastest 8,000-meter, home-course time (24 minutes, 51 seconds) and the indoor track, 5,000-meter (14:26.03) records at his alma mater.

When he wasn't running for SRU, Reagan filled some his time by joining a Pittsburgh jug band. Jug bands play music with homemade instruments that include washboards, combs and, or course, an empty jug. Following graduation, his



musicianship saw him spend a number of years touring small-town clubs and seeing the sights.

"I transferred to SRU as a sophomore because of the exercise science program," said Reagan. "Most of my free time, away from class, was spent in cross-country and track and field training, but I also needed a break from those, and music was the answer."

It was also his post-graduation ticket to seeing the country. Almost immediately following commencement, Reagan hit the road with the Pittsburgh-based Long Goners and Slug's Revenge, a bluegrass band from South Carolina. Between his time in the two bands, Reagan saw 36 states.

"I play tenor guitar and tenor banjo, and primarily percussion on washboard," he said. "We played ragtime and jug band, a lot of pre-World War II songs from the Memphis Jug Band and Mississippi Sheeters and a lot of the 1930-40s jug band music. I had always liked different types of music, and I gradually went from punk rock to modern string music; then I went down the proverbial rabbit hole of older music, which led me to jug band."

The touring also led to a close friendship with Crystal Kanney, the fiddle player for The Black Death All Stars. "I came to Savannah a decade ago with the fiddle player – and just stayed," he said.

Settling in took some time. "My first two years, I was a pedicab operator, which is like a rickshaw, but with a bicycle attached. I enjoyed the workout," Reagan said.

His second year, he became assistant cross-country coach at Savannah College of Art and Design before becoming head coach for the cross-country and track and field teams, roles he had for seven years before leaving in February 2019. It was while at SCAD that Reagan met his wife, the former Adrienne Berkland, now SCAD's head lacrosse coach.

During his time as SCAD's coach, Reagan's teams boasted a number of national marathon and steeplechase runners-up. He coached 10 All-Americans and several national qualifiers and his teams won eight conference championships.

"I definitely enjoyed coaching and running alongside my team," said Reagan.

Yet all the while, in the back of his mind, his personal running obsession remained. Five years into his time at SCAD, he started running ultramarathons. He ran his first 50K, the equivalent of 31 miles, in 2015 and in 2016 he qualified for the Olympic Trials. In April 2016, he completed his first 100K at the USA Championships.

"In my eyes, that is when my running career began to take off," said Reagan. "I finished second in the 100K at the championships, and I qualified for the World Championship squad, running for Team USA, at the age of 29."

In ultrarunning, in particular, the biological clock lasts longer. Reagan began ultrarunning at age 28, and now at 33, believes he is just getting the feel for it.

"The potential is that I could compete in the sport into my mid-40s at a high level, maybe even my upper-40s," he said.

He took part in his first Western States 100-Mile Endurance Run last summer, finishing eighth out of 369 starters with a time of 15:54.31. Top 10 finishers are invited back the following year.

"The competition goes year-round, but you need to pick your battles," said Reagan. "Like any sport, you need to pick your season. I usually take time off in December and January and do most of my racing between April and very early-December. Most of the extremely competitive races are during the summer, including the Western States 100 and the Ultra Trail Mount Blanc. Within ultrarunning, I specialize in 100-kilometer and 100-mile races. But there are other aspects; you have 50-kilometer, 50-mile

Patrick Reagan, second from left, was the washboard player with Slug's Revenge when the jug band performed in Florence, S.C., as part of its 2011 American tour.





Reagan's running talents have taken him across the U.S. and around the world, including the 2019 Western States 100 Mile Endurance Run in Foresthill, Calif., along with races in Savannah, Ga., and to the Comrades Marathon in Durbin, South Africa.

and 24-hour races to see how many miles you can cover within a one-day period, which is one of the major world championships. There are also shorter course trail races, called 'mountain running,' where you run uphill the entire time. There are also ascent-specific events."

The governing bodies for those events are the International Association of Ultrarunners and the International Trail Runners Association.

Reagan has run in a host of races in a variety of states, including Arizona, California, Georgia, Kansas, Tennessee and Texas.

His personal bests includes a 4:11, 1-mile race; a 14.24, 5K; a 29.51, 10K; a 2:20.06 full marathon; a 6:33.50, 100K; and a 12:21.43, 100-mile run.

"I run daily, sometimes twice a day, averaging 85-115 miles per week," said Reagan. "Our sport is different in that you need to condition your quadriceps. You have to be able to load your muscles so you are able to run downhill upward



of 100 miles. You are a different type of athlete than a road marathoner when you do 100-mile trail races.

"The discipline is quite different. I don't do as many miles as a road marathoner. The specificity is quite different; I do a lot more climbing and a lot more vertical ascent and decent than I used to and more strength training.

"Like any sport, you go through periods of being extremely motivated – and relatively worn down and de-motivated. But it has been a really cool adventure to turn my passion into my living."

Reagan is now a professional runner, which has motivated him on a daily basis in what he calls "just another day in the office."

"It has been a pleasant transition to being a professional athlete," he said. "But it is like just any other job and some days can be a real challenge. You learn to properly recover. Recovering from a 100-mile run is quite different from recovering from a 15- or 20-mile run. You learn your limitations. The more I have been involved

in the sport, the more I have found myself better able to recover more effectively and keep the training sustainable."

Reagan's primary sponsor for the past four years has been HOKA ONE ONE, a specialty running shoe company founded in France but now based in California. He works with GU Energy Labs of Berkley, California, as his nutrition sponsor. The company specializes in performance sports nutrition products, including energy gels consumed during endurance events.

Reagan won his first national title at the 100-miles USATF Trail Championships in December 2019 with a time of 12:21.43.

Running has allowed Reagan to not only chock up miles with his legs but also with his passport. "I have already raced three times in Sweden, as well as in South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, France and New Zealand," he said. "This sport has allowed me to see the world and run on some gorgeous terrain."

In talking about how his body, specifically his gut, plays a key role in his

running, Reagan said he was the subject of an investigative research program headed by Gregory Grosicki, assistant professor of kinesiology and director of the Exercise Physiology Laboratory in the Biodynamics and Human Performance Center at Georgia Southern University.

"We did some gut bio testing and bone-density testing last year," Reagan said. "The most interesting portion was the gut biome testing, where he determined my ability to efficiently digest carbohydrates and fats while running. Some of the findings also indicated my ability to convert lactic acid to energy while running ultramarathons."

The study, titled "Rapid gut microbiome changes in a world-class ultramarathon runner," has been published on behalf of The Physiological Society and the American Physiological Society.

In part, the report noted, "To our knowledge, this case study shows the most rapid and pronounced shifts in human gut microbiome composition after acute

exercise in the human literature. These findings provide yet another example of how exercise can be a powerful modulator of human health." Science has recently begun examining how bacteria, fungi and other microbes, the so-called "probiotics of the digestive system," influence overall health and general well-being.

"I eat quite a bit per hour, and that is one of the best skill sets you can have as an ultramarathoner; you need to continue to put calories in the system to keep going during 100-mile races," Reagan said. "I am able to eat 400 calories per-hour while running, so I tend to have pretty level energy stores throughout the race, allowing me to finish quite efficiently."

"For years, I have been involved in what I call 'training the gut,' and that means practicing in training what you plan to race with. It does not come naturally necessarily, like drinking 20- to 25-ounces of fluid per hour or eating 400 calories per hour. It took me a long time to be able to eat that

much. It is definitely a learned 'skill' and involves finding food that works well for you. Some people do well with sports drinks, gels or other foods, but over the years we have found what works well for me on race day."

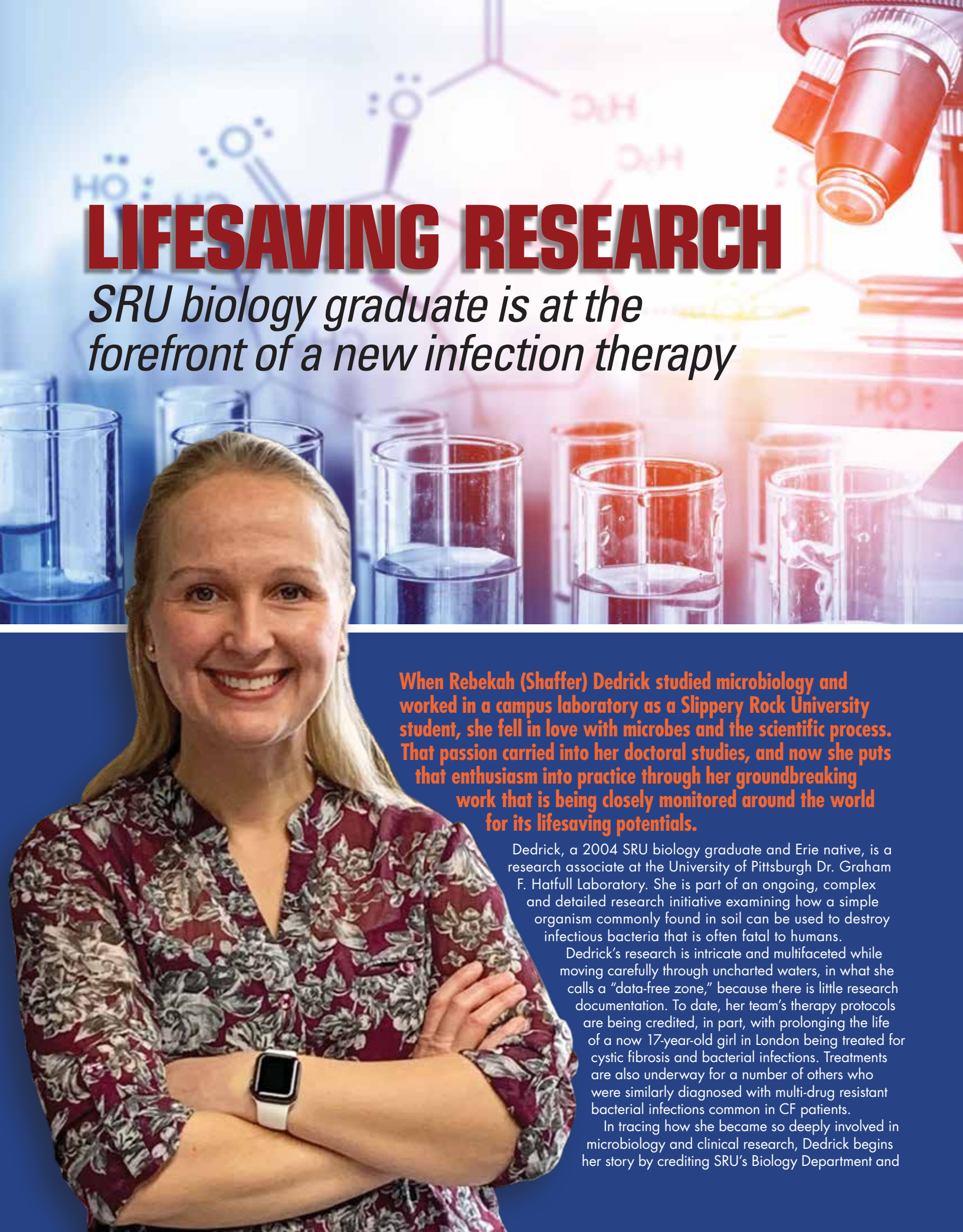
Reagan said he relies on a variety of sponsor-produced GU Energy products, combined with bananas, watermelon and Pringles chips, for the salt content. He said he ran a 100K race in New Zealand and only lost 2.2 pounds because he was so dialed in nutritionally. Reagan keeps his weight near 140 pounds and tries not to vary more than four pounds when racing.

In addition to running, Reagan offers online coaching services to national and international amateur and professional runners.

Reagan has also participated in endurance races in Needville, Texas; Los Alcazares, Spain; Squaw Valley, Calif., and Fountain Hills, Ariz., among other places.

Because of their length, often beyond 12 hours, his race-day equipment includes both a headlight and sunglasses.



The background is a composite image. At the top, there's a blurred image of a woman with blonde hair, smiling, wearing a patterned shirt. Behind her are several test tubes in a rack, some containing blue liquid. In the upper right, there's a close-up of a red microscope. The background also features faint, stylized chemical structures, including one with a carboxylic acid group (COOH) and another with a hydroxyl group (OH).

LIFESAVING RESEARCH

SRU biology graduate is at the forefront of a new infection therapy

When Rebekah (Shaffer) Dedrick studied microbiology and worked in a campus laboratory as a Slippery Rock University student, she fell in love with microbes and the scientific process. That passion carried into her doctoral studies, and now she puts that enthusiasm into practice through her groundbreaking work that is being closely monitored around the world for its lifesaving potentials.

Dedrick, a 2004 SRU biology graduate and Erie native, is a research associate at the University of Pittsburgh Dr. Graham F. Hatfull Laboratory. She is part of an ongoing, complex and detailed research initiative examining how a simple organism commonly found in soil can be used to destroy infectious bacteria that is often fatal to humans.

Dedrick's research is intricate and multifaceted while moving carefully through uncharted waters, in what she calls a "data-free zone," because there is little research documentation. To date, her team's therapy protocols are being credited, in part, with prolonging the life of a now 17-year-old girl in London being treated for cystic fibrosis and bacterial infections. Treatments are also underway for a number of others who were similarly diagnosed with multi-drug resistant bacterial infections common in CF patients.

In tracing how she became so deeply involved in microbiology and clinical research, Dedrick begins her story by crediting SRU's Biology Department and



Beta Beta Beta Biology Honor Society, which she joined as a sophomore and served as president her senior year. She said the mentorship of William Sigmund, a former SRU biology professor, was instrumental. She recently returned to The Rock to outline her work for society members and the department, urging their pursuit of research careers.

As part of her undergraduate studies, she undertook a scientific research project with Mark Shotwell, an SRU associate professor of biology, with something called *Brassica rapa*, a plant consisting of various widely cultivated species including the turnip and bok choy.

"That translated into my first real research project," Dedrick said. "We exposed plants to certain types of light and looked for the effects on their seeds. While a fairly simple project, you still had to go through the scientific process, create a hypothesis, test it, gather data and make conclusions. It gave me a taste of what was to come in my scientific career."

The research also resulted in a first-place award at the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania University Biologists Symposium during her senior year at SRU.

A microbiology class with Steven Strain, professor of biology, also provided significant influence on Dedrick.

"I really enjoyed learning how microorganisms work, and their genetics," she said. "Dr. Strain showed me the inner workings of a microbiology lab, including how to make media and pour plates on which microorganisms grow. I soon knew this was the area of biology I wanted to pursue."

"Following undergraduate graduation, I was accepted into the Duquesne University biology doctorate program. While in the biology rotations, I found the fields I particularly liked were those that were microbiology focused. I selected Dr. Joseph McCormick's lab, which concentrated on the microorganism called *Streptomyces coelicolor* for my doctoral studies. My dissertation focused on the genetics of *Streptomyces coelicolor*, and how it segregated its DNA into daughter cells."

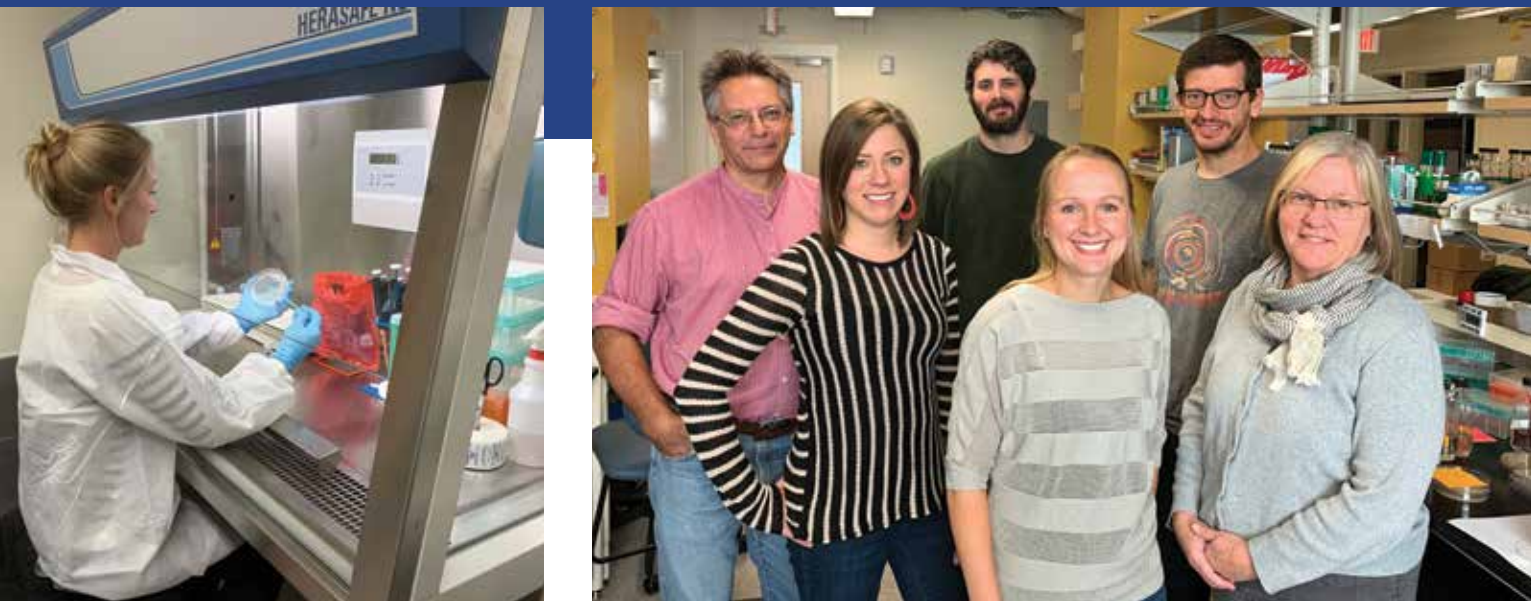
After earning her doctoral degree from DU in 2009, Dedrick began seeking a post-doctorate position in the region. Her husband, Steve, was working at Bank of New York Mellon in Pittsburgh, so the

couple wanted to stay in the area. Dedrick knew about the vast research opportunities in Pittsburgh and was curious about phage, so she asked Hatfull if he was looking for a postdoctoral researcher.

"I interviewed, was hired and began working with phages – a virus that can infect and destroy bacteria," Dedrick said. "Phages are very old. Scientists have worked on them for years, looking at very basic and fundamental research questions. In our most recent research, we have looked

Dedrick's student research project at SRU resulted in a first-place award at the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania University Biologists Symposium her senior year.

at phages for their medical application, such as treating people who have antibiotic-resistant infections. When I was hired, my work concentrated on a non-pathogenic organism called *Mycobacterium smegmatis*. My specific research objective was to study one of the mycobacteriophages, a phage that infects the genus *Mycobacteria*. I studied what genes are expressed at different life cycles of the phage, and I used



a specific method, developed in our lab, to knock out each gene in order to determine what the function of each is.”

Early in her lab career, Dedrick received a two-year National Institutes of Health training grant fellowship to study the molecular genetics of mycobacteriophage.

“We can ask whether a specific gene is essential for the infection of a host,” Dedrick said. “Basically, I would delete a gene in the phage, then see if it still infected the *Mycobacterium smegmatis* bacterial host. If it couldn’t, then I would conclude the gene was essential for the growth and replication of the phage. You can ask all kinds of different questions based on the results of knocking out these genes.

“There is a lot of basic phage research in our lab. We ask fundamental questions about mycobacteriophage. One of our underlying projects is studying *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, the causative agent of tuberculosis. We are finding and trying to use phages, these viral particles, to infect and kill this organism.”

Dedrick has published multiple research articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals on her work with phages. Her most recent first-author publication, a May 2019 article in *Nature Medicine*, made national and international news. It all started in November 2017 when James Soothill, a doctor at Great Ormond Street Hospital in London, a hospital that specializes in treating children, contacted the Hatfull lab after learning about its large mycobacteriophage collection.

Soothill had two patients with cystic fibrosis who had undergone lung transplants and were on immunosuppressives. They both had a *Mycobacterium abscessus* bacterial infection that was resistant to all of the antibiotics they tried. Nothing was working and both patients had been sent home on palliative care.

The cases presented a significant dilemma for the researchers and physicians involved. The clinical isolates were sent to the Hatfull lab to see if any of their mycobacteriophages could kill the bacterial strains causing the infection. And, if they did, the question was, “Could they be used to treat humans?”

“We were hopeful,” Dedrick said. “We knew it was going to be hard work, and we were up against the clock. We had never had a request like this before.”

The Hatfull lab has more than 10,000 mycobacteriophages in its freezer – thanks to a Howard Hughes Medical Institute program called Science Education Alliance-Phage Hunters Advancing Genomics and Evolutionary Science, or SEA-PHAGES. SEA-PHAGES is a two-semester undergraduate research course in which students at a variety of U.S. and international institutions find phages to be added to the Hatfull collection. During the first semester, students collected and processed soil for phage isolation on the non-pathogenic bacterial host. Each student found their own phage and extracted DNA. Then, some were sent to Pitt for DNA sequencing. In the second semester,

BRIEF COMMUNICATION

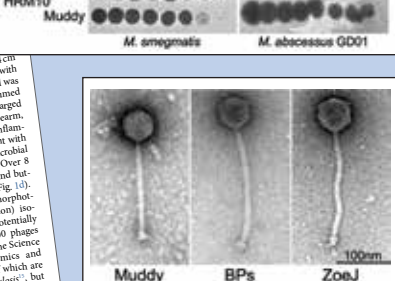
Engineered bacteriophages for treatment of a patient with a disseminated drug-resistant *Mycobacterium abscessus*

Rebekah M. Dedrick^{1,4}, Carlos A. Guerrero-Bustamante^{1,4}, Rebecca A. Garlena¹, Daniel A. Russell¹, Katrina Ford², Kathryn Harris¹, Kimberly C. Gilmour¹, James Soothill³, Deborah Jacobs-Sera¹, Robert T. Schooley², Graham F. Hatfull^{1,4} and Helen Spencer^{1,4}

A 15-year-old patient with cystic fibrosis with a disseminated *Mycobacterium abscessus* infection was treated with a three-phage cocktail following bilateral lung transplantation. Effective lytic phage derivatives were developed by genome engineering and forward genetics. Intravenous phage treatment was well tolerated and associated with objective clinical improvement, including sternal wound closure, improved liver function, and substantial resolution of infected skin nodules.

Mycobacterial infection in *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and non-tuberculous mycobacteria (NTM) is widespread¹. Patient with cystic fibrosis (CF) frequently have NTM infections (including *M. abscessus*), which are antibiotic resistant and difficult to manage clinically². CF is the third most common indication for lung transplantation, but persistent infection – particularly when NTM infections are present prior to surgery – result in substantial post-transplant morbidity and mortality³. Therapeutic bacteriophages are a plausible alternative treatment in patients with disseminated *M. abscessus* infection, but have not been used for mycobacterial infections in humans⁴; however, personalized intravenous phage treatments for other bacterial infections have been described (Supplementary Information⁵).

A 15-year-old patient with CF (homozygous for ΔF508) with comorbidities of pancreatic insufficiency, insulin-dependent diabetes, CF-related liver disease, Nissen fundoplication and gastrostomy, CF-related osteoporosis, and failure to thrive was referred for lung transplant. The patient was chronically infected with *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and *M. abscessus* subspecies *massiliense* and had been on anti-NTM treatment for 8 years prior to lung transplantation (Extended Data Fig. 1). Despite pre-transplant treatment with cefazolin treatment for 6 months prior to placement on the transplant (Extended Data Fig. 1), the forced expiratory volume in 1 s (FEV1) declined to 0.63 l (29% of predicted) normal lung function for height (Fig. 1a), with waiting list for predicted normal lung function. Immunosuppression and main pulmonary artery enlargement were administered after an uncomplicated bilateral lung transplant. Immunosuppressive drugs and multiple intravenous (i.v.) antibiotics were administered (Extended Data Fig. 1). Severe side effects including nausea, anorexia, diarrhea, and electrolyte derangement necessitated total parenteral nutrition and discontinuation of i.v. antibiotics. Within 1 week of stopping intravenous therapies, redness was noted at the



Dedrick has published multiple research articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals on her work with phages. Her most recent first-author publication in *Nature Magazine* article made national and international news.

Top left, Rebekah Dedrick works in the biosafety cabinet with a strain of *Mycobacterium abscessus*; top right, the University of Pittsburgh phage therapy team, from left, Graham Hatfull, Rebecca Garlena, Carlos Guerrero-Bustamante, Dedrick, Daniel Russell and Deborah Jacobs-Sera.

students received their phage genome sequence to analyze it bioinformatically.

As it pertained to the London patients' circumstances, Dedrick said the lab set about screening sequenced phages grouped into clusters based on genomic similarities. "We decided to take a couple phages from each cluster and test them to see if any could infect the *Mycobacterium abscessus* clinical isolates," Dedrick said. "This is a different species of bacteria than we were dealing with in our original research, so we weren't sure how much success we would have."

In December 2017, one month after the researchers received the isolates, they

They were in a data-free zone, not knowing how much to administer or what the effects might be, but they had counsel from Robert Schooley, a professor of medicine and chief of the Division of Infectious Diseases in the UC San Diego School of Medicine, who had treated a patient for a different type of infection with phage.

"The phages were very concentrated, so only a very small volume was needed," Dedrick said. "The doctors put a number of protocols in place, because we were not sure what would – or could – happen. We had to be prepared for every possible side effect and any emergency."

Luckily, there were no adverse side effects, and they soon saw clinical improvement.

Prior to the therapy, the patient, a then 15-year-old girl, was going into liver failure quite often because of the spread of infection. Also, the incision from her double-lung transplant was not healing because of another infection, and she had deep-seeded lesions on her arms and legs

that would come to the skin's surface and rupture. After treatment, scans showed the node in her liver was completely gone in about eight weeks. The incision had also healed, but the lesions on her arms and legs were slower to resolve. She was in the hospital for a week during the first treatment, but with no obvious side effects, she was released. Her parents now give her the phage therapy at home.

"We are told her most recent scans are clear, but because of the tissue lesions, she remains on treatment," Dedrick said. "It has been 22 months, as of April, she has been on phage therapy. We don't want to pull the therapy too soon. She is not having adverse reactions and, in fact, she traveled to Spain last summer. She is in school, she is learning to drive and she loves to cook. She is living a really good life."

This research is a milestone as the first case of phage therapy used for a *Mycobacterium* infection in a human.

"As word spread, our lab has received related inquiries and once the paper was

published everyone wanted to send their *Mycobacterium abscessus* patient isolates to us for phage therapy consideration," Dedrick said. "We have more than 102 clinical isolates from around the world being tested. Thus far, we have treated four additional patients with phage therapy, and we are processing data. Unfortunately, three have passed, but we did see their bacterial load decrease – or be eliminated – after therapy."

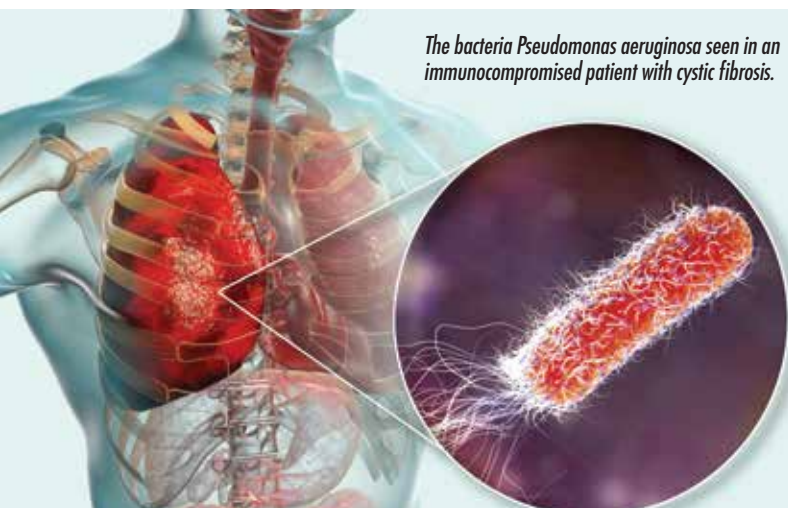
"These patients are really sick and often have a lot of other health issues. Using phage to battle antibiotic resistant infections is really a 'hot area' of research. Unfortunately, with the overuse and misuse of antibiotics, these types of resistant infections are becoming more prevalent. This research will hopefully add another tool to our arsenal in the fight against antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections."

When not screening clinical isolates and working with phage, Dedrick spends quality time with her husband and children. Her daughter, Ellie, 6, is involved with gymnastics and dance, and her son, Ben, 9, is into hockey and football.

"With that much activity, we are quite busy; but we still manage to have dinner at the table every night," Dedrick said.

Whenever she has "downtime," Dedrick spends it at the gym or reading fiction mysteries.

"When I speak to undergraduate and graduate students, I urge them to realize that they can have a family and undertake interesting and meaningful research that has impact while maintaining a healthy work-family life balance," Dedrick said.



*The bacteria *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* seen in an immunocompromised patient with cystic fibrosis.*

were able to find one phage for one of the patients; then, a short time later, a second ... and then a third.

"We had stayed in close contact with Dr. Soothill and had been informed that one of the patients had succumbed to her infection in January 2018," Dedrick said. "Luckily, the patient we had three phages for was still alive."

"We alerted him to our findings, and asked, 'What is our next step?' There were lots of people working together to try to make this happen, including the patient's doctor, Dr. Soothill and the pharmacist. There were all kinds of regulatory processes we had to deal with and, as we did not have clinical trials, each step took time. Nonetheless, we were able to get through the controls in about three months."

In June 2018, Dedrick flew to London for the patient's first phage treatment. The three phages were prepped in her laboratory to a very high quality and sterility. Doctors decided to give the patient an IV twice-a-day with 10^9 phage-forming units per dose.



Dedrick's family: clockwise from top left, husband, Steve; Dedrick; son, Ben; and daughter, Bekah.



‘AGENT of

SRU names Dennis Washington vice president for University Advancement

Dennis Washington wears a lot of hats. And no, we’re not talking about fedoras, bowlers or pork pies. We’re talking about figurative hats, the ones that come in the form of various job responsibilities.

For Washington, a native Michigander, that includes orchestrating activities related to the analysis, planning, execution, control and evaluation of fundraising and alumni affairs. As Slippery Rock University’s vice president for University advancement, Washington also provides leadership and management for working with and through the Slippery Rock University Foundation, Inc. relative to its philanthropic programs and activities.

“But above all, this job is about building relationships,” said Washington, who was named to his new post Dec. 18, 2019.

“What we’ve got to do, as a unit and as a University, is strengthen and further develop the relationships we already have with our alumni and friends and cultivate and foster those who are already donors and supporters of the institution to help us be able to do a little more. We also need to venture out and engage corporations, foundations, vendors and faculty and staff to become more active in the life of the University.

“The No. 1 priority for any advancement officer at any university is scholarships, and I want to make sure we’re doing everything we can in order to benefit our students. It’s also important for us to grow our endowment with an eye on our future in order to provide the tools our students need to further their

(Positive) CHANGE'

educations and to make sure we're providing the programs that the workforce needs and will get and keep our graduates employed.

"At the end of the day, this job involves me being a lot of things, but primarily, I like to think of myself as an agent of positive change."

Washington, who previously served as the vice president for institutional advancement and community relations at Salus University, is well acquainted with positive change.

At Salus, he was responsible for leading the university's community engagement and fundraising efforts to further enhance its mission of advancing integrated health care through innovative education, research and clinical services. During his tenure, he helped quadruple trustee giving; oversaw a \$5 million centennial campaign; and supervised a centennial gala that raised more than \$140,000 for student scholarships.

Prior to his time at Salus, Washington served as vice president for institutional advancement at Virginia Union University in Richmond (2013-18), where he completed a \$30 million campaign; executive vice president for advancement at Davenport University in Grand Rapids, Michigan (2010-12), where he raised more than \$5 million; vice president for university advancement at Kettering University in Flint, Michigan (2006-10), where he secured more than \$25 million in gifts and grants; and was director of corporate and foundation relations at Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan (2002-06), where he successfully secured more than \$30 million through a capital campaign.

Reporting directly to SRU President William Behre, Washington functions as SRU's senior advancement officer and, in overseeing the University's relationship with the SRU Foundation, Inc., ensures a coordinated approach to fundraising and advancement efforts. As such, Washington is responsible for providing development strategies, building philanthropic partnerships and creation and oversight of a capital campaign.

"Dennis brings experience, strong communication skills and, most importantly, a history of success to this critical position," said Behre.

"Strong, healthy relationships with alumni and the community help the University increase resources and support for initiatives that

enhance student learning. I'm excited he has joined us."

"SRU is a well-run, financially sound institution with a great reputation," said Washington. "What really attracted to me to

"I hope to bring strong leadership to the office and take fundraising to new levels."

this position was the wide-open ability to secure funding that will allow the institution to remain affordable, grow the endowment for future generations and increase the investment – both financially and emotionally – by our University community in the life of the institution. Throughout the interview process, I was excited by the administrators, faculty, students and staff that I met who were so enthusiastic about SRU and what it offers.

"I hope to bring strong leadership to the office and take fundraising to new levels. I want us to cultivate, solicit and steward donors in a very professional and collegial manner as we enhance the performance and professionalism of the fundraising team.

"SRU has a large alumni base and being in the Pittsburgh region should provide opportunities to increase our support from a variety of donors. There are many opportunities to engage many friends of higher education that may be primed to support the University. The quality of the University's academic programming, along with its athletic programs, are worthy of even greater support from donors, and I look forward to helping provide that."

Washington is familiar with donor support, not just from being the person helping to cultivate it, but from being the beneficiary of it.

"During my time as both an undergraduate and graduate student, I was the beneficiary of scholarships and fellowships," said Washington. "Those are a couple of the reasons why I'm truly passionate about fundraising for higher education, because it played such an important part in fostering my education. As a young person, people who I didn't know invested in me to the tune of about \$50,000.



Washington discusses potential fundraising ideas with SRU President William Behre.

"Because of that, I need to pay that forward with the next generation and share with others what it means to our world to invest in (those students). It's part of our obligation to make sure that future generations have opportunities and are properly prepared by their educational experiences to be placed on a path to being successful."

A native of Detroit, Michigan, Washington earned a bachelor's degree in English from Oakland (Michigan) University and a master's degree in planning from the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School of Public Policy. In the near future, he plans to continue his pursuit of a doctoral degree at The Rock, with an eye toward earning SRU's doctorate in educational leadership and administration.

"That's the plan, at least," Washington said with a laugh. "I started taking classes a little while ago, but because of work, my schedule, business travel and family, it kept getting put on the back burner. But I've concluded that I just need to bite the bullet and do it. I've always believed that if you want something bad enough, you just have to go after it. So, I guess it's time to put that into practice."

One thing Washington is currently practicing is his skill in house-hunting.

Joining Washington will be his wife of 32 years, Christine, and daughter Lauren, 12. The couple's other daughter, Simone, 24, is finishing her last year of law school in St. Paul, Minnesota.

EDITORIAL INFORMATION

To submit "Class Notes," email us at alumni@sru.edu or go to www.rockalumni.com. We do not publish engagements or pregnancies, but we do publish marriages and births.

Please note that due to space restrictions, submissions may be edited. However, remember that we are proud of all our alumni and all they do. GO ROCK!



SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

2020-2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Alaina Smith, '16, '18
Dominic Williams, '88
Ann Tager Winter, '15, '17
Richard Wood, '75
Michael Zody, '88
Sam Zyroll, '78

1970s

Allyson Saul Burnett, '78, and **Karen Hunt Ramos, '78**, former college roommates, have been employed by Seeing is Believing Me, a platform for coaching with video. Before joining SIBME, Burnett had a long career with the Houston Independent School District and Ramos with Dallas ISD and the Dallas County Juvenile Department.

John Gilliland, '77, won the Grove City Area Chamber of Commerce's 2020 Community Service Award which is presented annually to an individual who demonstrates care and service for the Grove City community. Gilliland was recognized for several contributions, including his work as a former board member of the Grove City YMCA; as founder of BeLoved Mercy Ministries, an organization that serves the homeless; as a youth sports coach; and for serving on the 79-80 Interstate Development Corporation and the Knights of Columbus.

Colette (Yesline) Iusi, '70, and **Glenn Brignolo, '75**, happened to be on the same tour of Greece with their spouses in November 2019. The pair had a fun time sharing SRU memories. ❶

Lynn Comer Kachmarik, '79, received the 2020 Paragon Award for Water Polo from the International Swimming Hall of Fame. Kachmarik was recognized for her 47 years of leadership and coaching experience in water polo. A six-time All-American in swimming and water polo at SRU, Kachmarik was a member of the U.S. National Water Polo Team from 1976-86, serving as team captain for six years and earning All-World honors in 1978. She's a former water polo coach at Bucknell University, where she became the first woman to coach an NCAA Division I men's water polo team.

Donald Sheffield, '74, was named the 2019 Beaver County Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year for his commitment to the people of Beaver County. Sheffield is the founder and president of TAME Inc., a consulting firm that encourages schools, families and businesses to maximize performance and achieve cultural excellence. Sheffield was recognized for workshops he conducted to aid parents in helping their children succeed and training he provided to corporations, businesses, social service organizations and schools.

A "Rock Strong" family shared a three-generational photo. **Dave Sceiford, '68**, (center) is pictured with his grandchildren, Will Baloga (far left) and Alex Sceiford (on Dave's left), who are current SRU students. Dave's daughter, **Heidi Baloga, '94**, (gray sweatshirt) and brother-in-law **Scott Thomson, '78**, (far right) are also pictured. Sadly, Dave lost his battle with pancreatic cancer and passed away in January. ❷

Bill "Zip" Zipparo, '76, retired in July 2019 after 43 years in elementary education. He spent 35 of those years as a principal in various school districts, with his schools being awarded a Federal Blue Ribbon Award and a New Jersey Star School Award. Zipparo is enjoying retirement and plans to travel with his wife. Zipparo says hello to all of his Riviera Dorm buddies.

1980s

Whitney Bennett-Perro, '86, earned a doctoral degree in curriculum and instruction from Walden University. Bennett-Perro is currently the director of special services for the New Milford (New Jersey) Public School District. Bennett-Perro has started various programs for the district, including a program for 18-21 year old students with special needs. Bennett-Perro was also named the New Jersey Special Education Administrator of the Year. ❸

B. Stephen Carpenter II, '87, was named dean of the College of Arts and Architecture at Penn State University. Carpenter serves as the principal academic and administrative officer for the college and oversees its programs in music, theatre, visual arts, art education, graphic design, art history, architecture and landscape architecture.

Shelly Collins, '87, was awarded the 2018-19 State Level Softball Coach of the Year Award for New York State from the National Federation of State High School Associations. Collins teaches physical education and coaches at Victor High School.

Sandy Connolly, '87, was named vice president for business and chief financial officer at Campbell University. Connolly was previously vice dean for finance and administration for Duke University's Trinity College of Arts & Sciences. Located in North Carolina with

a main campus in Buies Creek, Campbell has an enrollment of more than 6,000 students and an operating budget of more than \$350 million.

Barbara (Hartsy) Dzurisko, '81, was presented the Erie Times-News Varsity Cup Lifetime Achievement Award at the Best of Varsity Cup Banquet. Dzurisko received the award based on her work at Hickory High School as an athletic director and head coach and with District 10 as a track and field and cross-country tournament director. Dzurisko retired from the Hermitage School District after 38 years, including 17 as the supervisor of athletics and activities. ❹

Lawrence Firestone, '81, was named chief executive officer of Eastside Distilling, Inc., the first and only publicly traded craft distillery in the U.S. Headquartered in Portland, Oregon, Eastside Distilling's portfolio of brands includes several award-winning spirits.

Doug Fleegle, '89, was named the executive director of Las Ventanas, a continuing care active-adult community in Summerlin, Nevada. Las Ventanas has been recognized as a top assisted living, continuing care and memory care facility, providing for people with memory loss and Alzheimer's disease.

Timothy Giles, '87, has published a book titled "Seeking Stanley: The Elusive Search for The Michael Stanley Band." The book is available on Amazon.

Doug Labor, '80, was inducted into the Mercer County Hall of Fame, which recognizes people from Mercer County who have excelled in athletics or contributed as leaders in athletics. Labor, who was a star football player and javelin thrower at Grove City High School, was a three-year letter-winner in football and track and field at SRU. He was an SRU football team captain and team MVP as a senior. After graduating from SRU, Labor coached football, soccer and baseball in Grove City, Colorado and Montana.

Leo Saucier, '83, is a U.S. Navy veteran and has spent 28 years in teaching, including the past 20 at The University of Maine at Presque Isle. Saucier is the program coordinator for the university's physical education teacher program. During his career he also logged 13 years as collegiate baseball coach, including nine years at UMPI.

Thomas Wittman, '86, was appointed to the board of advisors for Jobility, a company that provides technology to assist employers and workers who participate in the gig economy.

1990s

Michael Baptiste, '99, was elected to the school board for the Moniteau School District.

Debra Fitzsimons, '91, was appointed vice president for administration and finance at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Fitzsimons and her husband, Shawn, reside in Hermitage. ❸

Tom Peterson, '92, was recently named chief marketing officer for Lazydays, a recreational vehicle company headquartered in Tampa, Florida. Peterson joined Lazydays after serving as CMO of Youfit Health Clubs. He is also a former CMO of two operators of restaurant chains, Ovation Brands and The Krystal Company, as well as Aaron's Inc., the nation's largest consumer durable goods leasing company. A publicly traded company, Lazydays offers the nation's largest selection of RV brands, with dealerships and service locations in six states, including the world's largest recreational dealership near Tampa.

Sean Rucker, '93, '95, was awarded the 2018-19 New York State Level and Northeast Section Baseball Coach of the Year Award from the National Federation of State High School Associations. Rucker teaches physical education and coaches at Victor High School.

2000s

Lauren Ashman, '04, was appointed as the executive associate athletics director/senior woman administrator at the University of Memphis. Ashman leads all aspects of the UM athletic department and its 18 varsity sports teams that compete in NCAA Division I.

Kelly Bonus, '07, a rehabilitation director in Orlando, Florida, was recently selected to participate in the Florida Occupational Therapy Association Leadership Development Program. A published author, Bonus was also selected to take part in the item development committee of the National Board Certification of Occupational Therapy for the past two years. ❹

Dean Boronyak, '01, was named Elementary Health and Physical Education 2019 Teacher of the Year by the Pennsylvania State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance Inc. Boronyak teaches physical education at Ingomar Elementary School

in the North Allegheny School District in Pittsburgh and was honored for creating and implementing exemplary curriculum that focuses on four pillars of wellness recognized by the PSAHPERD: physical fitness; nutrition; social and emotional learning; and physical literacy.

Catie Brown, '09, participated in the Pittsburgh Public Theater's presentation of "Little Shop of Horrors," at the O'Reilly Theater in Pittsburgh. Brown, the associate music director for the show's design team, conducted the orchestra and played keyboard for the production while working with Grammy Award-winning music director John McDaniel.

Liz Brunswick, '00, completed her military relocation specialist certification. A member of the National Association of Realtors and North East Tennessee Association of Realtors, Brunswick is a licensed agent with Keller Williams. She resides in Johnson City, Tennessee, with her husband, Donnie, and daughter, Reagan.

Antonio Butler, '15, was inducted into the Garrett College Athletic Hall of Fame. He was the 2012 Male Athlete of the Year, basketball Most Valuable Player, two-time All-Conference and two-time All-Maryland JUCO Player of the Year. He played at Garrett before playing two seasons at SRU (2013-15). At SRU, Butler was a team captain and earned first-team All-PSAC honors. He played professionally in Luxembourg before coaching AAU and high school basketball. ❺

Mark Kratz, '06, was named director of investor relations at BWX Technologies, a \$6 billion nuclear technology company based in Lynchburg, Virginia. ❻

Aimee Krauss, '00, was appointed director of health for the West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District in Connecticut. The West Hartford-Bloomfield Health

District is a regional health department serving the towns of West Hartford and Bloomfield. The district provides full-time professional public health services to more than 84,000 residents and is governed by an eight-member board of directors appointed by the elected officials of the member towns. Krauss was previously the district's acting director and assistant director.

Stacey McKavish, '05, was promoted to senior associate and is the recruiting and regional human resources director at Dewberry, a nationwide firm of planning, design and construction professionals, headquartered in Fairfax, Virginia.

Monte Ortel, '04, was appointed as executive director of the Gwinnett (Georgia) Sports Commission and executive director of the Mitsubishi Electric Classic, a PGA Tour Champions event.

Therese Picard, '06, was named chief ranger at Acadia National Park, a 47,000-acre recreation area primarily on Mount Desert Island in Maine. In her role as chief ranger, Picard works with staff and partners to protect and preserve Acadia, including overseeing and leading law enforcement rangers, rangers who assist with entrance passes, fire management, life guards, emergency medical services and search and rescue. Picard was Acadia's acting chief ranger since September 2019 and was previously the park's deputy chief ranger. Picard also worked at Zion National Park in Utah during her 17-year career in the National Park Service.

Aaron Rekich, '05, was named the 2019 Meadville Tribune Person of the Year. Rekich was recognized for improving the community by expanding youth ice hockey programs, which included launching the Sidney Crosby Little Penguins Learn to Play Hockey program in Meadville and receiving a \$50,000 grant from the Pittsburgh

Penguins Foundation. Rekich also led efforts to resurrect a summer parks program in Meadville.

Andrea Totten, '01, was appointed Flagler County judge of the Seventh Judicial Circuit Court in Florida by Gov. Ron DeSantis.

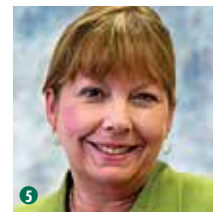
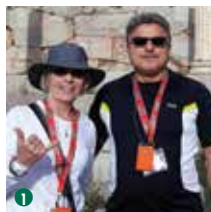
2010s

Lisa Belcastro, '12, was appointed by Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan to fill a legislative vacancy representing parts of Baltimore County in the Maryland General Assembly. Belcastro received the recommendation for the seat by the Baltimore County Democratic Central Committee. Belcastro works for Prince George's County Public Schools as an adapted physical education teacher and is also as an aide for Baltimore County Councilman Israel Patoka.

Jason Gay, '18, was appointed general manager of Keystone Fitness Center, a new gym located on the campus of Keystone College in Factoryville. ❶

William Killmeyer, '16, won "Best Brief" in the Burton D. Wechsler National First Amendment Moot Court Competition. Moot court competitions are extracurricular activities for law students who argue simulated cases. Killmeyer, a student at Cleveland State University's Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, was part of a team of three students from CMCL to win Best Brief. He is also president of the CMCL team. Killmeyer is the son of Mary Hennessey, SRU assistant to the provost.

Lauren Pollock, '14, was named director of development operations for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Ohio. Pollock oversees the donor database, events and volunteer efforts for BGCNEO, which serves more than 8,600 kids at 39 locations in the region.



Weddings

Tresa (Tesin) Gnalian, '14, and Nicholas Amoscatto were married Aug. 10, 2019, in Wexford. The couple resides in Pittsburgh. 10

Alexandra Miller, '10, and Anthony Niemiec were married Nov. 16, 2019, in Pittsburgh. The couple resides in McCandless with Alex's daughter, Sydney. 11

Shawn Miller, '98, married Eileen Johnston March 5, 2016.

Mark Seminara, '09, '12, and **Nichole Cropper, '14, '18**, were married Sept. 14, 2019, in Enon Valley. 12

Austin White, '14, and **Sarah Winesickle, '18**, were married Sept. 28, 2019, in Martinsburg. 13

Births

Ryan Adamaszek, '14, and **Maria Montemurro, '15**, welcomed their daughter, Taylor Mackenzie, born Dec. 18, 2019. 14

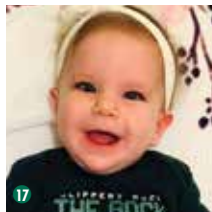
Tim Anglin, '98, and his wife, Aileen, welcomed their daughter, Scarlett Grace, born March 6. 15

Shawn Miller, '98, and his wife,

Eileen, welcomed their second daughter, Katriana, born Jan. 6, 2017, and their first granddaughter, Haven Garrett, born Dec. 15, 2017. 16

Julie (Byer) Snyder, '14, and **Dustin Snyder, '12**, welcomed their daughter, Mila Gray, born April 21, 2019. The family resides in Mercer. 17

Doug Strahler, '05, and his wife, Elizabeth, welcomed their son, Luke Douglas, born April 13. 18



In Memory

Richard Adams, '69
Louis Aiello, '76
Thomas Amsden, '94
Susan Arkwright, '90
Karen (Pretko) Arndt, '82
Josephine (Funari) Baker, '67
Garry Beck, '83
Marlene (Biebel) Becker, '57
Philip Bell, '78
Jennifer (Black) Benegasi, '94
Mary Lou Mack, '74
Barbara Blakeslee, '64
Helen (Hobbs) Boone, '45
Thomas Bower Jr., '91
Ruth Brewer, '70
Janice (Robinson) Brown, '59
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Patricia "Patty" Leslie, '84, bachelor of science in accounting, vice president of finance and CFO, University of Colorado Foundation

DAY JOB: I am thrilled to have recently joined an organization with a longstanding history of positive impact on students, donors and the community. I look forward to building a high-performing accounting and finance team to serve the mission and vision of the foundation and greater UC community. Previously, I served as the chief financial officer for the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research, a nonprofit consortium of more than 115 North American colleges and universities that provides research, observing and computing facilities for the atmospheric and related geosciences community.

BACKGROUND: I grew up in Ellwood City and came to Slippery Rock as a first generation college student at the age of 21. I worked on campus in the SGA Bookstore and was fortunate enough to obtain grants and loans and graduate in just three years. I earned an MBA from the University of Pittsburgh and moved to Colorado in 1991. I earned a second master's degree in information technology from the University of Denver.

INFLUENCE OF SRU: I had two great mentors at SRU in Bernie Freydlberg and Phil Kennedy. Bernie took me under his wing and helped guide me through the college process and high-level thinking required in higher education. Phil encouraged me to pursue a position with one of the big national accounting firms at the time, Pricewaterhouse. Without his encouragement, I never would have done that. I always felt really proud of being an SRU graduate. The campus community allowed me to feel independent and set me up for success throughout my career.

