

The magazine for alumni and friends of Slippery Rock University

The **ROCK**

SPRING 2012



Cheryl Norton,
16th president
of Slippery Rock University



Hello ROCK Nation,

I'm honored to join your ranks. As you read this, I'm probably sighing with relief that most of the moving boxes have been unpacked, my office is settled and I'm "officially" a resident of the commonwealth. WHEW.

Since arriving in early June, I've been busy learning about the internal operations of the University and meeting people on campus and in the community. To a person, they have confirmed my initial impression of Slippery Rock University. This is a community of people that genuinely care about SRU and want to do whatever they can to help the University grow and prosper.

That's important because I truly believe this institution's continued success in meeting the needs of our students and fulfilling our mission requires the collaborative efforts of the faculty, staff, administration, alumni and friends.

Slippery Rock University has made great progress in the last decade. In fact, one of the evaluators during the recent Middle States visit commented that he had never seen an institution "re-invent itself" in such a short period of time.

However, our transformation is not complete and we still face several challenges. Of particular concern is the declining level of financial support for public higher education and how that impacts a student's ability to enter or remain at Slippery Rock University.

As I've read past reports and articles about SRU, I've been struck by the stories you've shared relating how The Rock changed your lives. As the first in my family to attend college, I know how a college experience changed mine. We can't allow funding to become a barrier to higher education. Our collective wisdom and ideas are needed to address this challenge. I look forward to working with you to ensure all students that are qualified and want to attend SRU are able to do so.

My husband, Henry, and I hope to meet many of you at Friends and Family Weekend, Sept. 14th or certainly at Homecoming, Oct. 20th. In the interim, continue to spread the good word about the University and the great work we are doing in Slippery Rock.

Thanks for your ROCK Solid welcome.

Cheryl Norton, president

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To our readers

This edition of The ROCK introduces Cheryl Norton, 16th president of Slippery Rock University. Norton, a nationally prominent educator who replaced Robert Smith, demonstrates a passion for student success and providing access to higher education. Like many SRU students, she was a first-generation college student.

Even as their eyesight and memories dim, the World War II "greatest generation" continues to command our respect. Several World War II veterans who graduated from or taught at SRU share their memories of the struggle to defeat tyranny.

You will also learn more about another group whose eyewitness memories won't be available much longer – Holocaust survivors. Richard Martin, SRU professor of political science and director of the University's Holocaust Remembrance Program, explains why he teaches the Holocaust to undergraduates and brings survivors to campus.

Many alumni that remember gym class as an awkward combination of team sports and ratty sweatsuits, will be surprised to read about the changes happening in the physical education profession circa 2012.

This edition also explores innovative ways in which alumni support their alma mater, including deferred charitable annuities.

Thank you for your telephone calls and emails about the University magazine. I always enjoy hearing from you.

Gordon Ovenshine, '88
Editor, *The ROCK*
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THE ROCK

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The ROCK is a National Admissions Marketing merit award winner.

University Vision Statement

Slippery Rock University will excel as a caring community of lifelong learners connecting with the world.

**Slippery Rock University is a member
of the Pennsylvania State System
of Higher Education**

Contents: Spring 2012

8 World War II Veterans contribute great legacy



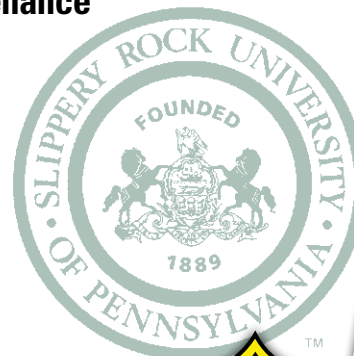
13 Acts of Remembrance

18 Making History

20 Cheryl Norton takes the helm

24 Physical education program reaches new heights

28 Unsung heroes, trio of Dennys anchor campus maintenance



HISTORY



About the cover

Cheryl Norton, 16th president of Slippery Rock University, in the historic Old Main archway. She started June 4.

University graduates largest class ever

Frank Barnes, a Slippery Rock University social work major who lost his sight four years ago, was among the nearly 1,600 seniors, graduate and doctor of physical therapy candidates who graduated in May. It was the largest graduating class in SRU history.



Barnes walked across the stage to receive his diploma with Samuel, his seeing-eye dog. As is SRU tradition, Charles Curry, acting president, shook hands with all the graduates – even Sam. Barnes, a former Walmart manager who went blind due to macular degeneration, wants to become a counselor.

SRU awarded 1,350 undergraduate degrees, 200 master's degrees and 50 doctor of physical therapy degrees.

'In the mane' of charity

Brad Kovaleski, director of the Center for Student Involvement and Leadership, agreed to shave his head if students raised more than \$1,000 for the J. Tyler Stufflebeam Scholarship, which honors a student-leader who died during the Fall 2011 semester.

Students stepped up and raised \$1,645, so Kovaleski's black mane came off. Students and alumni took turns cutting his shoulder-length hair.

"Ty was a very special student, and made a very positive impact on my life," Kovaleski said. "His family, friends and the campus community were devastated at the loss of such an amazing, kind, loving man. Ty lived his life with so much optimism and energy. I was willing to do almost anything to help the students reach this goal to honor Ty."



Rocket earns 17 journalism awards

The Rocket student newspaper collected 17 awards for excellence – 12 from the Society of Collegiate Journalists, three from the Pennsylvania Newspaper Association and two top awards from the American Scholarship Press Association.

The Rocket earned a first place with special merit and a special category award for outstanding sports coverage from the ASPA. The newspaper won the sports award for a special section previewing men's and women's basketball.

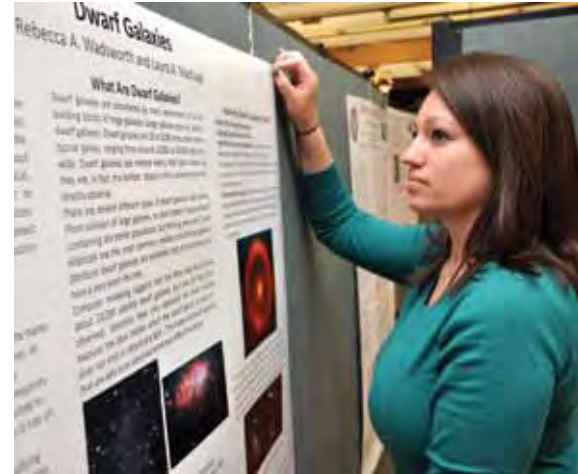
The Keystones and SCJ awards honored editors and reporters. Editor-in-chief Courtney Nickle, a communication major from Butler, won awards for front page and editorial page layout.



Research symposium continues growth

The University's annual Symposium for Student Research, Scholarship and Creative Achievement continues to grow, underscoring the importance of student-faculty research in preparing for graduate and professional schools as well as first careers.

This year's symposium offered more than 30 oral sessions, 35 poster presentations, four exhibits and four performances.



Students tone up through wellness expo

"Stop, drop and give me a push up" was the rallying cry recently when students offered a wellness expo in the Robert N. Aebersold Student Recreation Center.

Eric Klingensmith, an exercise science major from Berlin Center, Ohio, demonstrated how to use a pushup ball and asked students and staff to give it a try. Students manned 18 information booths presenting advice on wellness, fitness, nutrition, weight loss, hypertension and body fat index. The department of exercise and rehabilitative sciences sponsored the program.



Therapeutic recreation advocates visit Capitol Hill



SRU students with a cause can't be stopped. Case in point: a group of therapeutic recreation majors recently traveled to Capitol Hill to advocate for the field of therapeutic recreation.

Students met with U.S. Rep. Mike Kelly (Pa.-3rd) to ask him to sign a letter calling for greater insurance coverage for recreational therapy.

"When we walked into his Washington, D.C., office, there was a big Slippery Rock University flag hanging on his wall. That instantly made us feel at home," said Lacey Weaver, a therapeutic recreation major from Conneautville.

Colleen Cooke, associate professor of parks and recreation/environmental education, organized the trip. She said they asked Kelly to sign a request for a public clarification of insurance coverage.

Akiko Kotani shares fiber art inspirations



Akiko Kotani, professor emerita of art and the 2013 Pittsburgh Artist of the Year, has a message worth sharing: Slow down, take the

time to watch the rain, smell a flower or listen to the birds. You might find yourself inspired.

Kotani, who taught at SRU from 1979-2000, returned recently to guest lecture on her fiber art career.

"Rather than just doing a survey of my work, I thought I would focus where my inspiration comes from," she said. "Nature is very important. Living in Slippery Rock, I take my inspiration from things like the rain, temperatures and ambient dust."

Kotani has exhibited fiber art in 203 group exhibitions and 35 one-person exhibitions.

SRU earns 'Green College' designation



When it comes to campus greening, Slippery Rock University is at the head of the class. The University has been included in "The Princeton Review's Guide to 322 Green Colleges" for the third consecutive year.

"Your commitment to sustainability and to preparing tomorrow's green leaders is highly commended and a wonderful achievement," said Robert Franek, senior vice president and publisher of The Princeton Review.

The Princeton Review, which published the ranking in partnership with the U.S. Green Building Council, chose 322 schools based on a survey it conducted in 2011 of hundreds of colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada. Surveyors asked administrators more than 50 questions about sustainability-related policies, practices and programs.

In its "green highlight" of SRU, The Princeton Review said "SRU has been built on a sustainability ethic since 1889, when local residents, students and staff developed a farm community. The commitment to sustainable practices continues through a myriad of green initiatives, committees and environmental centers on campus."

Patrick Burkhart takes APSCUF leadership reins

Patrick Burkhart, professor of geography, geology and the environment, is the new president of the SRU chapter of the Association of Pennsylvania State, College and University Faculty, the union that represents some 460 faculty and athletic coaches at SRU.



Burkhart, who joined the faculty in 1998, takes over from Jace Condrary, professor of English and APSCUF president for the past nine years. "The first item we have to work on is a new contract," Burkhart said. "I am looking to help us persist through the budgetary process and forge a new collective bargaining agreement."

NEW ARMY OFFICERS:

(from left) Christopher Debold, a safety management graduate from Bethel Park; Thomas Foster, a criminology graduate from Volant; and Shannon Marie Redfoot, a psychology graduate from Fairview, were sworn in as U.S. Army second lieutenants during May commencement. Lt. Col. Patrick Callahan, professor of military science in the ROTC program at SRU, administered the oath of office.





Alicia Slade

Home:

Franklin Park, Pa.

Profession:

President and technical consultant for Plummer Slade, Inc., a computer networking company that my late husband Marty Plummer, '85, and I started in 1988.

Hobbies:

Skiing, golfing and gardening.

Greatest accomplishment:

Plummer Slade.

Why I Give:

Marty worked several jobs while he attended SRU to pay for his housing, food, books, etc. He applied for aid and had been awarded several scholarships. He was appreciative of the individuals who had provided the scholarships and had always planned to give back. Marty was one of the founders of the Board of Visitors, an advisory board to the Computer Science Department. After Marty passed away in June 2004, I took his place on the board. I attend meetings during the year and talk to students about information technology careers, their resumes and interviewing. Although I did not attend SRU, I feel as if it is home to me. Marty didn't live long enough to fulfill his dream to start a scholarship, so I have fulfilled it for him. The Martin H. Plummer Scholarship is awarded to a junior or senior from Ohio or Pennsylvania, majoring in computer science, information technology or information science with a 3.0 grade point average or higher. The scholarship recipient is awarded \$1,000 toward tuition and \$250 in discretionary funds.

'Trayless Tuesdays' conserve energy

More than 3,000 people eat at Boozel Dining Hall on a typical Tuesday, a large enough volume to make a "Trayless Tuesday" program a success.

The University is reducing waste and saving money in energy costs by eliminating the use of dining trays on Tuesdays. Consumption is reduced by not having to wash all those trays. Diners also tend to take less food when they can't load it onto a tray.

"Tuesdays are one of our biggest days," said Jeff McTaggart, director of dining services for AVI Fresh, SRU's contracted food vendor.



Students explore 'wallop' of a summer class



Forget the summer job selling retail or waiting tables, some Slippery Rock University students are spending their summer in Simon Beeching's biology class taught at Wallops Island, Va., near the Chesapeake Bay.

SRU is a member of the Marine Science Consortium that makes use of the marine station that offers both wet and dry laboratories and allows students to make use of sampling and oceanographic equipment as part of their coursework.

"It's an interesting biology course with practical applications – and it's on the water, in summer. What's not to like," said Elliott Baker, executive director of academic records and summer school.

American hero visits SRU

J.R. Martinez, an Army veteran and champion of last year's "Dancing with the Stars" television show, talked about his life and overcoming hardship when he lectured at SRU. "Life is not scripted," he told the more than 150 people in attendance.

In 2003, Martinez was serving as the driver of a Humvee in Iraq when the front tire hit an explosive device. Martinez suffered severe burns over 40 percent of his body and has since had more than 30 cosmetic and skin graft surgeries.



Field hockey team earns national academic honor

The Slippery Rock University field hockey team led the nation with a collective grade point average of 3.51 following the fall semester. The players earned Gladiator by SGI/National Field Hockey Coaches Association National Academic Team honors.

The National Academic team award recognizes institutions that compiled a collective GPA of 3.0 or above through the fall semester. This marks the second consecutive year that SRU has led all NCAA Division II programs academically.

"I am very proud of this accomplishment," Julie Swiney, head coach, said. "We pride ourselves on performing well in the classroom and to lead the nation two years in a row is a testament to how hard our student-athletes work."



Energy dashboards educate students

When students reoccupy residence halls A-F in August, it will be easier for them to make more informed energy conservation choices thanks to a \$15,000 grant from the West Penn Power Sustainability Fund and \$20,000 from the SRU Green Fund.

SRU purchased six energy dashboard monitors for installation in the main lobbies of the student housing buildings. With a touch of the screen, students will receive education about taking shorter showers, turning off lights, computers and lowering the thermostat to conserve energy, said Scott Albert, SRU director of facilities and planning.

Slippery Rock UNIVERSITY

Numbers

1,189,250,507

Dollar value of 11,374 contracts and subcontracts received (since 1989 inception) by clients of the Government Contracting Assistance Center.

155,415,986

Assets (traditional and Residence Suites) of the SRU Foundation as of March 31, 2012.

17,817,651

Value of the combined totals of the SRU Foundation and SRU Alumni Association endowments.

1,532,838

Gifts received by the SRU Foundation for Fiscal Year 2011-12 as of March 31, 2012.

1,000,000

Dollar amount in tax returns processed through the School of Business Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program.

18,500

Dollar value of travel savings totaled through March 2012.

12,943

Visits to Student Health Services as of April 1. Average visit time is 24 minutes.

2,143

Students participating in the three-tiered Compass Leadership Program.

135

SRU athletes attaining Director of Athletics Honor Roll status with a 3.5 GPA for Fall 2011. Sixty student-athletes attained a 4.0 GPA.

11

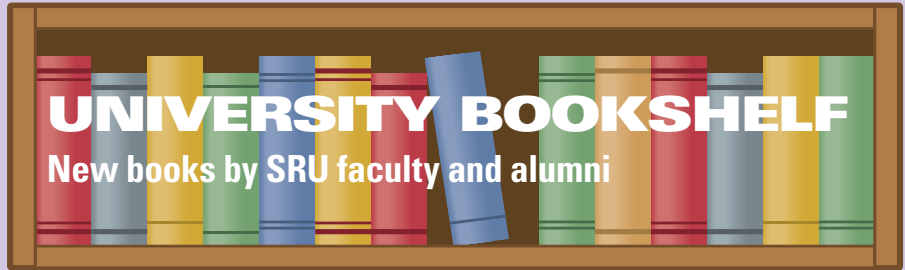
Lectures presented by Frederick White, English, as part of a Fulbright-Hayes Grant during a tour of Bosnia.

6

Undergraduate students selected to present their research at the Council for Undergraduate Research National Convention. The students were selected from more than 3,500 applicants.

3

Keystone Awards won by SRU's student newspaper *The Rocket* – more than any other PASSHE institution. The awards are presented by the Pennsylvania Newspaper Association.

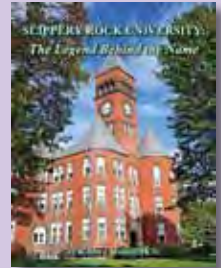


Robert Watson, '70, writes 'The Legend Behind the Name'

Robert Watson, '70, and retired SRU vice president of student life, has written "Slippery Rock University: The Legend Behind the Name."

The 400-page book covers the history of SRU, including its early years as a normal school, state college and university. Chapters include "In the Beginning," "Slippery Rock Becomes a State Teachers College, 1916-1934," and "A Century of Success, 1984-1997."

The book, which includes many photographs, is available at the SGA Bookstore. www.sgabookstore.com



Professor, facilities staffers co-author custodial chapter

Albena Iossifova, assistant professor of business, and Scott Albert, Diana Brest and Dennis Hempel, all from facilities and planning, have co-authored a chapter in "Operational Guidelines for Educational Facilities: Custodial."

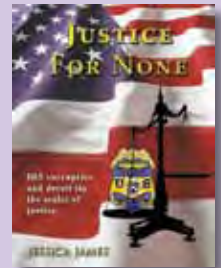
The book address topics such as the cost of cleaning, sustainability, determining levels of cleanliness in buildings and scientific measurement of cleanliness. The book is available at www.appa.org/bookstore.



Jessica James, '74, pens 'Justice for None'

Jessica James, '74, has written "Justice for None," a story about the judicial system and the IRS "attacking" the innocent. James points out that courts support and are maintained by convictions, not exonerations. Her book argues that winning, not truth or justice, is paramount.

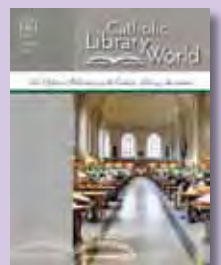
"Justice for None" exposes an unsophisticated witch hunt by sophisticated government entities," James said. The book is available at Amazon.com



William Buchanan, '07, examines "St. Jerome and the Vulgate Bible"

The Catholic Library World has published "St. Jerome and the Vulgate Bible" by William Buchanan, '07.

The article discusses the life of St. Jerome and his translation of the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin. Known as the Latin Vulgate Bible, it was the first book printed by Johann Gutenberg and was the Bible of the Catholic Church until the Vatican II reforms allowed for Mass in the native language of worshipers. The article appears in the December 2011 edition of the Catholic Library World journal.



★ ★ ★ ★ ★

WORLD WAR II VETERANS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

CONTRIBUTE GREAT LEGACY



They've been called "The Greatest Generation." They are the men and women who served around the world during World War II, and who kept the country going here at home. To those who lived through that time in history, including several Slippery Rock University alumni and one professor emeritus, the generation might not have been the "greatest," but it was certainly great for many reasons.

They were a dashing lot – parachuting behind enemy lines, charging onto sandy beaches and liberating countries from tyranny. They jitterbugged at night, sang about sweethearts and painted pin-ups on the noses of their B-17 bombers.

More than 400,000 American soldiers died during World War II – the "Big One." Now they are dying off of natural causes, taking with them their eyewitness accounts of the war that beat back Germany and Japan, and established the United States as a world power. For those still among us, memories are fading and voices have grown faint. Yet in the bits and pieces shared with family and friends, one can come to understand the characteristics that defined their generation.



By Amy Clingensmith Mongiovi, '08

“One of the qualities of my generation,” said Army veteran William “Bill” Coleman, ’49, “was bravery. Most did what had to be done. While I was in combat, I only saw one man break. Our squad acted as a family trying to survive. I suppose we were brave, but our motivations were survival, and that was best achieved by attacking the enemy.”

After testing high on an Army examination, Coleman was sent to Virginia Military Institute to study basic engineering. Like many other World War II veterans, Coleman had to grow up quickly. He began his World War II experience as a 17-year-old soldier and high school dropout in 1944. It was at VMI that he found a passion for theatre, taking a small role in a USO production. One of the lead comics was a funny young man named Melvin Kaminsky, who later became known as Mel Brooks.

But things changed quickly for Coleman, and there was little time for laughter after the invasion on the beaches of Normandy in 1944.

“There was a great need for bodies,” Coleman said, “not minds.” He was sent to Europe where he served as a rifleman in the 76th Division attached to Patton’s 3rd Army during the Rhineland and Central Europe campaigns.

While there, Coleman said he saw combat and was part of the longest march in the history of the Army. He received the

Combat Infantry Badge and two Bronze Stars for bravery.

After the war while on occupation duty, Coleman returned to his artistic roots and exercised that talent in another way, working as a cartoonist and helping to write and illustrate his battalion’s history. By 1946, Coleman’s military career had come to an end, and he enrolled at Slippery Rock University in time for the fall semester. At SRU, he continued with cartooning and theatre, drawing editorial cartoons for “The Rocket” newspaper and serving in productions both on stage and behind the scenes.

Coleman said his time at Slippery Rock shaped him academically. Coleman said he valued the faculty members who helped mold his passion for theater and the arts.

“We had many fine teachers,” Coleman said. “I fondly remember Janette Burns, Martha Hoffman Gault, Dr. Harold Weand, Wilda Brubaker, Dr. Carle Spotts and Dr. Pierpont Nichols. And Gladys Arnold fortified and enhanced my love of classical music. They guided me through to grad school, encouraging a very insecure young man to realize my goals and work toward abilities I didn’t know I had.”





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JOHN H. STEVENS, FC, 2/c
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c/o Fleet P.O.
San Francisco, Calif.

The six Stevens brothers of Karns City, including Calvin Steven, '49, (second from left, top row) served during World War II. All six survived.

be returning to the United States," he said. "I began to think the chances of me seeing my family again were doubtful."

It was an emotional goodbye for his parents, who were sending their fourth son to war. Eventually, two more brothers would be drafted for a total of six. Two brothers served in Europe and four in the Pacific. All six survived. Stevens served in the 63rd Infantry Division and the 263rd Combat Engineers Battalion in France and Germany. Combat engineers kept armies moving so they could attack.

A sergeant, Stevens recalled being told his division would be in a combat zone in a few days. Again, his thoughts turned to family.

"I couldn't help but think of my mother and father and the overwhelming anxiety they must be going through," he said. "With six sons in the service and at least five in or near combat, it must have been a heart-wrenching experience. As mother implied in her letters, every time a stranger came to the door, she would immediately think, which one has been killed?"

Stevens received a Bronze Star Medal following an incident in Heilbronn, Germany.

He was with a platoon of engineers on a mission to take some infantry across a river in assault boats. The platoon was pinned down by enemy fire and unable to move. Stevens ran 100 yards through heavy machine gun and rifle fire and an additional mile for help.

Stevens said it makes him feel important when groups honor World War II veterans, but he also remembers the death and destruction and friends who did not make it home.

"We knew we loved our country, our families and friends and our freedom, so we served."

— Calvin Stevens, '49

Today, Coleman is an award-winning playwright, screenwriter, author, director, professor, historian and actor. For 37 years, he taught and later led the theater department at Drake University, where he taught playwriting, screenwriting, acting and history. He directed more than 200 stage plays. He has also directed professional and amateur productions for television, radio and film; his students have won eight Emmys and many other national and regional awards.

Calvin Stevens, '49, graduated from high school June 3, 1943, turned 18 on June 17 and received his draft notice June 24. He was inducted into the Army 20 days later, leaving his home in Karns City and reporting for basic and medic training in Camp Grant, Ill. After basic training, he was assigned to the European theater, departing New York City on a large ship.

"As I thought of the 10,000 men on this ship, the question flashed across my mind as to how many of us really would



“We were so young and everything happened so fast,” he said. “We didn’t have time to think. We knew we loved our country, our families and friends and our freedom, so we served. Most of us had never been far from home and suddenly were living and breathing with soldiers from all over the country – of all races and ethnicities, in countries we had only read about.”

After the war, Stevens attended SRU on the G.I. Bill. He attended classes in the summer and was able to graduate in three years with degrees in health and physical education and biology.

“It was an exciting time,” he recalled. “I was so thankful to be alive and home. Slippery Rock State Teachers College provided me with a rock solid foundation for my career and life. My two daughters are employed at SRU, so I still hear first-hand about things that are happening.”

Walter Powell, professor emeritus of history, taught countless students during his 45 years at Slippery Rock University. And like Coleman and Stevens, Powell experienced World War II before he even hit adulthood, serving at the age of 16.

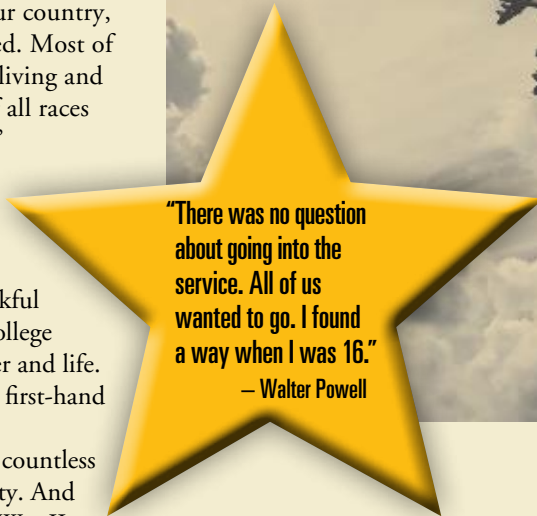
Powell’s birthplace of New York City was actively involved in the war efforts. Even as a child, Powell said he was interested in the military, so he began taking flying lessons at the age of 15, knowing he would someday be drafted. Long before he was old enough to enlist, Powell became a licensed pilot. When the war began, the New York State Guard was desperate for Americans who would keep the homeland safe, so Powell signed up at the age of 16.

By 1946, Powell was old enough to enlist, so he joined the Air Force and enrolled in RADAR school, just as new electronics were on the horizon. While in training, Powell studied how to use RADAR in the B-17 Bomber to bomb targets through fog.

After his time in the Air Force, Powell enrolled at the University of Connecticut as a history and political science major and joined Air Force ROTC, even though it was no longer required. The love of the military was still a part of Powell, and he wanted to go on to become an officer, eventually being commissioned as a second lieutenant.

After officer training from 1950-1953, Powell decided to change gears and become a college professor, earning a

master’s degree, doctorate and law degree, in the hopes of teaching political science and law. Powell spent a little more than a decade teaching at other institutions of secondary education before joining the Slippery Rock faculty. He started in 1965 and retired just three



“There was no question about going into the service. All of us wanted to go. I found a way when I was 16.”
 – Walter Powell

years ago – at the age of 80 – even though he says he could have continued teaching for another 10 years.

“And the students were excellent,” he said. “Many went on to become lawyers, judges, U.S. marshals and legislators. That was a great sense of accomplishment, that you were doing something useful, helping students to find their place in society.”

Powell married one of his former students, a 30-year-old Air Force veteran at the time. He and Nancy have been married since 1969 and several of their children also attended SRU, including Grace Hajave, who works as a nurse for SRU’s Student Health Services.

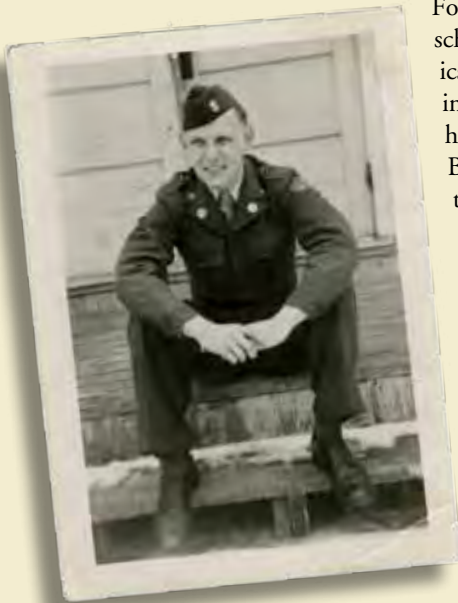
With an interesting story of his own history, Powell said what makes his generation great is its extreme patriotism. “We loved our country and were willing to die for it,” he said. “There was no question about going into the service. All of us wanted to go. I found a way when I was 16.”

Three of Powell’s uncles and one cousin were drafted during World War II. His cousin never came home. He was killed just nine weeks after leaving for Italy.

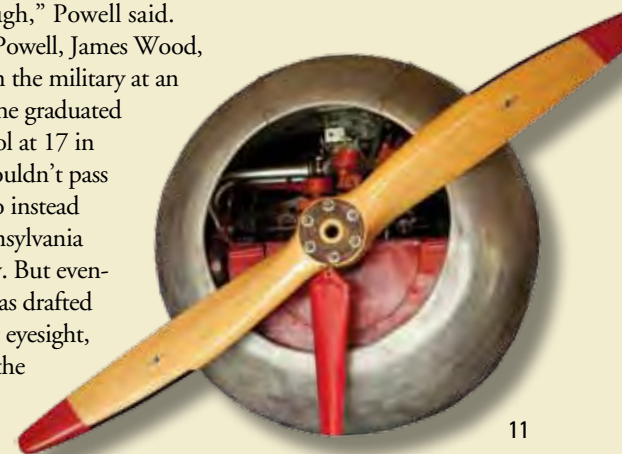
“You never forget those things,” Powell said. “It stays with you.”

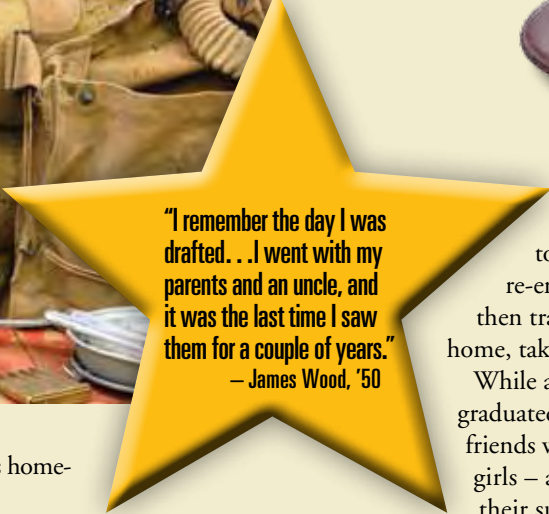
World War II stretched Americans to fill roles they had never imagined. Young boys were thrust into combat, and women were given jobs for the first time in industries where women were not welcome prior to the war. But those who survived came out better, with perhaps even more to give after the war. “The times made them tough,” Powell said.

Like Walter Powell, James Wood, ’50, tried to join the military at an early age when he graduated from high school at 17 in 1943. But he couldn’t pass the eye exam, so instead enrolled at Pennsylvania State University. But eventually, Wood was drafted despite his poor eyesight, gathering with the



Walter Powell, SRU professor emeritus of history, enlisted in the Air Force during World War II.





**"I remember the day I was drafted. . . I went with my parents and an uncle, and it was the last time I saw them for a couple of years."
— James Wood, '50**

When Wood returned to the states, he still hadn't turned 21, hadn't learned to drive and was too young to vote. He re-enrolled at Penn State for a semester and then transferred to Slippery Rock to be closer to home, taking advantage of the G.I. Bill.

While at summer school at SRU, just before he graduated in the summer of 1950, Wood and a few friends went to a dance at Rock Falls Park. Three girls – all sisters – came into the dance hall in their summer dresses. One would become Jim's wife. He and Iris have been married since

May 16, 1951.

After graduation from Slippery Rock, Wood took a job teaching sixth grade at Shady Side Academy, even though his major had been health and physical education with a minor in geography. But Wood found that he liked teaching the primary grades and went on to earn his master's degree in elementary education.

Over the years, Wood returned to teach at his alma mater, Wilkinsburg Junior High School, helping to form a new football program and reorganizing the physical education program.

Eventually, the Woods returned to Iris' hometown of Butler, where the economy was tight and jobs were few, even for a veteran with a master's degree. Wood worked for Pullman Standard until it closed and even worked as an apple picker.

"We just did whatever was necessary to take care of family," Wood said.

The SRU history of Edwin Cottrell, '43, dates back to his father, who was a physical education teacher at Slippery Rock and began the university's swimming program. Cottrell, now 90, followed in his father's footsteps, also becoming a physical education teacher, but not before writing his own World War II story.

Cottrell was a fighter pilot in the 48th Fighter Group with the European Theater. He joined the outfit right after D-Day and stayed until the end of the war, supporting the 9th Army and flying P-47 planes in Paris, Belgium and Germany, ending up in Frankfurt by the end of the war.

"I knew I was going to be drafted, so I took flying lessons while in college," Cottrell says, "with the idea that if I was to be drafted, I could fly."

Cottrell was finishing his student teaching in February of 1943 when he was called to action. He recalled one close call

rest of the young, would-be soldiers in his hometown of Wilkinsburg, near Pittsburgh.

"I remember the day I was drafted," Wood said. "We met in the Wilkinsburg High School auditorium. I went with my parents and an uncle, and it was the last time I saw them for a couple of years. I was praying I wouldn't be put in the Navy, because I knew I would be seasick, so I was happy when "Army" was stamped on my form. After trying so hard to enlist, I ended up in the Army with two pairs of wire glasses."

The young Wood was sent to infantry training for the 72nd Division in Camp Wheeler, Macon, Ga., in May 1944. There, John Eisenhower, son of Dwight D. Eisenhower and a graduate of West Point, was a 2nd lieutenant in one of the platoons.

By January of 1945, Wood took a troop ship to his new station overseas, celebrating his 19th birthday in the middle of the ocean. His platoon landed in Le Havre, France, for more training, then moved through middle and southern France, then north to join Gen. Patton's 3rd Army. Together, they circled around Frankfurt, Germany and over to the Czechoslovakian border before ending up in Austria, where the war ended for Wood.

On V-E Day, May 8, 1945, Wood said he remembers gathering around a radio, picking up signals from around the world, and hearing the celebration in the streets of New York, London and Paris at the news of the war's end.



continued on page 27



ACTS OF REMEMBRANCE

Teaching about the Holocaust



Ovens in Germany provide a stark reminder of the Nazi Holocaust.

Students are spared little.

They read the tormented words of survivors, examine visual evidence of the brutality and learn how the most systematic slaughter in human history was not just the work of a few Nazi terrorists.

The “good people” of Germany carried out the Holocaust, said Richard Martin, Slippery Rock University political science professor.

“I get about one gasp, either an individual or a group, every class period. Somebody says, ‘oh my God,’” said Martin, who teaches “Holocaust, Genocide and Political Violence.”

It’s a transitional time for Holocaust education. Seven decades after the mass murder of 11 million people, with the eyewitness generation passing, educators like Martin are becoming the transmitters of Holocaust history.

Martin, a political theorist and Holocaust scholar who has traveled to 15 concentration camps, teaches the Holocaust class. He also teaches an Honors Program “Great Books” course on the topic and organizes the University’s annual Holocaust Remembrance Program.

The term “Holocaust,” originally from the Greek word “holokauston” which means “sacrifice by fire,” refers to the Nazi persecution and planned slaughter of the Jewish people.

Unveiling the truth is what one would expect from a college class on the Holocaust. The surprise is student interest and

reaction. None of them are specialists; few of them are Jewish. They enroll to learn why the Holocaust occurred and discover a lot about the resilient human spirit too.

“I wanted to take the class because, as a political scientist, it is my job to see the very worst of what humanity has offered, in order to understand why and how it happened and to be able to see the signs to prevent it from happening again,” said Noelle Yester, a political science major from Zelienople. “To teach anything less than the truth as it happened, without exaggeration or censorship, would be a degradation to the people who died and lived. Dr. Martin is a phenomenal professor who has in many ways changed my life.”

“Remembering the victims is important, but Holocaust education is about more than memorialization,” said Andy Hollinger, director of communication for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. “This history teaches us much about the human condition – the consequences of unchecked hatred, the human capacity for evil, how even developed societies can break down, and the need to act against injustice.”

Martin said his goal is to contextualize the genocide, dispel misconceptions and help stem future trends toward discrimination and mass killing. He said students enroll often knowing little about what he called the most important political event of modern times.

“Many students think the Holocaust happened only in Germany. They think the Holocaust was pretty much the operation of a few Nazi terrorists,” Martin said. “They don’t realize that it took middle class engineers to design the camps, to design the crematoriums, to design the gas chambers, to develop the formulas of death. They used real chemists to work out how much gas it took to kill how many people and what duration of time. There was a huge amount of experimentation as they searched for the methodology that would let them kill 2 million people in four camps in 1942 and 1943. They were pure death camps.”

“I wanted to take the class because, as a political scientist, it is my job to see the very worst of what humanity has offered, in order to understand why and how it happened and to be able to see the signs to prevent it from happening again.”

Martin became focused on the Holocaust in the 1970s, when he was a doctoral student writing his dissertation on the late Hannah Arendt. The German-American political theorist wrote about the nature of power, politics and totalitarianism and is best known for the 1963 book “Eichmann in Jerusalem,” about the trial of Nazi Adolph Eichmann.

Martin joined SRU in 1979 and launched the Holocaust course in 1985, followed by the annual remembrance program in the 1990s. Martin said 200 students showed up for the first

remembrance program speaker. More than 800 attended this year’s lecture by survivor Fay Malkin.

Martin said he teaches the Holocaust as a model case for genocide in the modern world and makes connections to other incidences of genocide, such as the mass killings in Rwanda, Cambodia and the Sudan. The interest in the course has surprised him.

“We have this pretty remarkable interest in the course, which is not required and it is not an easy course,” Martin said. “The midterm is a bear. I require two papers and a final exam. There is a lot of writing. There are all these foreign names.”

– Noelle Yester
political science major

Martin said the Nazi’s carried out “the final solution” with an assembly-like precision once Adolf Hitler assumed dictatorial powers in March 1933 when the Enabling Act was passed. With total power available to him, he quickly developed a sophisticated police and military force and used them to squelch anyone who criticized his authority.

There were several types of concentration camps during the Holocaust, including transit camps, prisoner of war camps, and police detention camps. Six camps served as the main killing centers, all in Poland: Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec, Chelmno, Auschwitz/Birkenau, and Majdanek. The last two were also slave labor camps.



Holocaust survivor Fay Malkin as a child during World War II and seven decades later as keynote speaker for Slippery Rock University’s Holocaust Remembrance Program. At age 5, Malkin was hidden in a hayloft above a pigsty with nearly 20 other Polish Jews. The other Jews, including members of her own family, agreed that for the safety of all she would be poisoned. After a vial of poison was forced down her throat, Malkin was prepared for burial when a doctor realized she wasn’t dead.



Richard Martin, professor of political science, has visited and photographed concentration camps in Germany and Poland.

Contrary to the impressions of many students before they take the course, The Nazi's executed not just Jews but Soviet prisoners of war, male homosexuals, Jehovah's witnesses, gypsies and people with physical and mental disabilities. Many victims were executed within three hours of arrival at a camp, he said. The average camp laborer survived two months. Those sent to the coal mines lived on average one month. The Nazi's ran the whole operation in the black, he said.

"Prisoners had to buy their own tickets to the death camps. They negotiated a third class rate. They had to buy the guards' tickets. Children under the age of 6 or something were free. Isn't that nice?" he said with obvious sarcasm. "In my class I often get five people looking at each other as if saying, 'How much did the Jews have to pay?'"

While most Holocaust scholars reference 11 million murders, including 6 million Jews, Martin said he believes 12.5 million people died, including 7.5 million Jews.

Martin said he normally keeps the most bizarre and horrific details at arm's length. "I do not wallow in the bestiality, the medical experiments, the examples of rape of Jewish women or the more creative forms of torture," he said. "You don't need to dwell on the gore of it because the ordinary is so horrible."

He said students express surprise that everyday Germans were complicit. "The Holocaust was carried about by ordinary people. It was carried out by upper middle class people; it was carried about the good people of German society," Martin said.

Martin, who describes himself as an academic "somewhere at the nexus of philosophy, psychology, political science and history," began visiting concentration camps in Germany and Poland in the 1980s to augment his understanding of the tragedy.

"It struck me after a short while that I needed to see such places, to have a better understanding of what it must have been like," he said. "I wasn't really sure what it was I thought I was going to see, but after being there to those camps you can tell

what the distances were, what the parameters were, what the geometry of the camps was – how far did they have to drag the bodies; how far did they have to march to get to the gas chambers; how far did they go for meals, for work? Plus, you get the overwhelming sense of these horrible places."

He recalls his wife asking if he believed the camps are haunted. "She knows I don't believe in much of anything, certainly not ghosts and goblins," he said, "but I looked at her and said, 'oh yeah, can't you hear the screams?'"

The take away from his class is to recognize evil and to avoid complacency. "Speak up if you object to something. Don't settle," Martin said.

"What I want you to do is to recognize when you're in a meeting someday and somebody is standing up in front of the meeting, and they're talking about doing something that you think is morally wrong, maybe you won't sit on your

hands," Martin said. "Maybe you'll say, 'you know that's really morally objectionable.'"

Yester, who took Martin's class in the spring semester, said the course is graphic but not "horror movie" gruesome. "Not every class is a barrage of photographs of piles of bodies, although those need to be seen in some sense because without them it is far too easy to deny the extent of Nazi hatred of Jews," she said.

Yester met survivor Malkin when she headlined the University's spring remembrance program and appreciates Martin's mentorship in and out of the classroom.

"Dr. Martin has a distinct teaching style that I find to be incredibly effective for my learning style," she said.

Matthew Zovack, a political science major from Upper Saint Claire who took the class in fall 2011, said what surprised him most was the internal working of the Nazi regime and how they contributed to the materialization of the Holocaust.

"Many people do not realize what a profound effect the politicking of the major Nazi leaders had on the Holocaust," he said.



Still, Zovack said the class had an overall positive effect on his view of humanity.

“A particular story about the Danish government refusing to turn their Jews over left me quite optimistic,” he said. “I’ll quote Hannah Arendt when I say, ‘It could happen in most places, but it did not happen everywhere.’ The acts of the Danes provided a fresh sense of optimism about humanity in general. This showed things like the Holocaust could be avoided in the future.”

He said Martin handled the class with the utmost sensitivity and displayed a great depth of knowledge about the topic.

“His experiences of visiting many of the sites clearly influenced him and dictated the sensitivity with which things were discussed,” Zovack said. “I absolutely would recommend this course to other students. The lessons learned about the dangers of the rise of totalitarian regimes are critical. The course provides a chance for students to learn the many responsibilities they have living in a free society.”

Lauren Buckel, a political science major from New Castle, said she was curious about the time period of World War II and felt the Holocaust was “glossed over” in high school. Taking SRU’s class prompted dialogue with her parents. She learned one of her great uncles helped liberate Germany and another fought in the Battle of the Bulge.

“What I learned about humanity from the class was that not everyone in Europe was out to persecute those who did not fit in with what was seen as the only acceptable form of humanity,” she said. “Dr. Martin did take a great deal of time to talk about the important figures who denounced Nazism and shared multiple stories of sympathizers who sheltered those trying to escape the war.”

“Millions of people were put through tortures and manners of death that you and I, on our worst days, could not dream up for our worst enemies,” she said. “There is really no way to teach such a subject without getting into some really awful things. Despite that, trying to sugar coat some of the more alarming things would be worse than just getting the truth.”



REMEMBERING: (from left) Richard Martin, professor of political science, chats with one of his students at the end of his Holocaust class.

REMEMBER



Visitors to the Museum pass under this gate, a cast taken from the original entrance to the Auschwitz death camp, inscribed with the ironic phrase Arbeit Macht Frei (Work Makes One Free).

Credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately 6 million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators.

TIMELINE

- Adolf Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany Jan. 30, 1933.
- The SS opens the Dachau concentration camp outside Munich in 1933.
- Germany invades Poland Sept. 1, 1939, starting World War II in Europe.
- In 1933, the Jewish population of Europe stands at more than 9 million. Most European Jews lived in countries that Nazi Germany would occupy or influence during World War II.
- By 1945, the Germans and their collaborators killed nearly two out of every three European Jews as part of the “Final Solution,” the Nazi policy to murder the Jews of Europe.
- Although Jews, whom the Nazis deemed a priority danger to Germany, were the primary victims of Nazi racism, other victims included some 200,000 Roma (Gypsies). At least 200,000 mentally or physically disabled patients, mainly Germans, living in institutional settings, were murdered in the so-called euthanasia program.
- Most historians say at least 11 million people were killed in the Holocaust.
- American forces liberated the Dachau concentration camp April 29, 1945. Hitler committed suicide a day later.
- Germany surrendered to the western Allies May 7, 1945.

Source: Holocaust Museum, Washington, D.C.

Making HISTORY



When it comes to understanding the great social upheavals of the past, nothing beats the right context. That is one of the reasons why Michelle Barr, a Slippery Rock University secondary education/history major with an interest in the American Civil War, was thrilled when the University's history honorary sponsored a trip to Gettysburg.

Not only did she learn more about the decisive 1863 battle, Barr visited the house where Abraham Lincoln spent the night before delivering the Gettysburg Address.

"The Wills House is now a historical landmark and throughout the house a lot of focus can be placed on what the Gettysburg Address is about," she said. "During that part of the tour, I really found myself thinking about the cost of freedom and the Civil Rights Movement

that would move the country a century after this powerful speech was given."

The teaching of history at SRU is about much more than memorizing facts and figures. It is about learning from the failures and successes of the past, studying human nature, cultures, improving critical thinking skills and conducting student-faculty research, said Aaron Cowan, assistant professor of history and department chair.

"I tell students history doesn't repeat itself, but you certainly learn a lot about the tendencies of human nature," Cowan said.

The department currently has 300 undergraduates who are majoring in history or secondary education/history. Two-thirds plan to become teachers. The rest are part of a growing group, Cowan said, who are interested in public history, historic preser-

vation, park and museum work or graduate school, including doctoral work.

Cowan said he recently heard from a history graduate who has been accepted into a fully funded, five-year doctoral program at the University of Maryland. The student will focus on colonial slavery. Another graduate currently heads the West Virginia Historic Preservation Alliance.

"We've had some exceptional success stories," Cowan said.

The 36-credit history major stands out because of its broad curriculum of more than 60 courses, Cowan said. Ten professors teach U.S. and European history, as well as African, South American, Asian, Middle Eastern, ancient and women's history. Upper level courses include "Modern Japan," "History of the Jews," "The Middle Ages" and "Medieval Church."

“When I went to college, one group of professors taught American, another European and there was maybe one other person who did some world history,” Cowan said. “One of the real strengths of our program is students get a broader exposure.”

Another strength is professors teach students research methodology. All history majors take “Historians’ Craft,” which examines “how to do real historical research, not just go and get two or three books out of the library or look things up on Google,” Cowan said. “So whatever content they take away from a class, they will also take away those critical thinking and writing skills.”

SRU offers reenactment work at the Old Stone House, a restored 19th century inn and tavern. This gives students the opportunity to reenact Civil War and Colonial exhibitions. Cowan recently partnered with undergraduates to create a video about the Old Stone House.

Campus exhibits provide additional context on the past. Carlis White, assistant professor of history, recently curated “Writing as an Ancient Technology.” The exhibit included intricate, handwritten documents from ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt and Rome that conveyed the sophistication of ancient writing as tech-

nology and made connections to modern Internet communication.

Jordan Napoletan, a history major from Butler, said she started her college career at a community college and transferred to SRU. She graduated in May and recently accepted a job with the United States Information Service.

“Every history professor I had was so knowledgeable, helpful and encouraging,” she said. “The history department really

“The history department really emphasizes research and writing, which are skills that can be applied to a number of jobs, not just history.”

emphasizes research and writing, which are skills that can be applied to a number of jobs, not just history.”

Cowan makes the same point, citing research from The Association of American Colleges and Universities, a national agency that promotes liberal education.

“They take polls of employers all the time, asking them what they would like to see more of from employees. The number one thing they always wish employees had were stronger written and oral communication skills. The number two thing is

critical thinking and analysis skills. So, the top two skills that employers want, that’s what history is all about.”

Anissa Rutledge, a history major from Pittsburgh, said she plans to become a college professor and author. “My interest area is the antebellum, Civil War and Reconstruction eras and also African and Diaspora studies,” she said.

Barr said the weekend excursion to Gettysburg Battlefield helped her under-

stand the sacrifice of the blue and gray.

“We saw the places where the Union lines and Confederate lines were,” she said. “We took the time to notice how the Union almost lost and then eventually won the battle. We took the time as well during the day to visit the National Cemetery and reflect on all those who have lost their lives serving their country. It was a powerful feeling, especially with the number of unknown soldiers that have been buried in the cemetery since the war.”



SRU's Old Stone House provides opportunities for Civil War, Colonial and other historical re-enactments.



Cheryl Norton

takes the helm



Spring blossoms were in full bloom when Cheryl Norton, newly named president of Slippery Rock University, came to campus for a get-acquainted visit. Some students might have wondered who the smartly dressed educator was as she ate a breakfast of oatmeal in Boozel Dining Hall, toured the Robert M. Smith Student Center and smiled at passer-bys.

No one will mistake her identity anymore.

Norton, a nationally prominent educator, author and researcher in physical education and physiology, started June 4 as 16th president of SRU. She replaced Robert Smith.

"I am thrilled to be here," Norton said. "The buzz and excitement is in me and in my husband as well. We look forward to really becoming a part of this community. One of the attractions was not just the University's academic excellence, but its sense of community and willingness to work together in a collaborative way."

"Historic" is an apt description of her presidency. Norton broke the presidential gender barrier and will surely bond with students due to her quick smile, passion for their success and common-American background.

Like 40 percent of SRU students, Norton was a first-generation college student. Raised in the Cleveland suburb of Middleburg Heights, her parents were high school graduates who instilled an early commitment to education as the pathway to success.

"There was an emphasis in our family on becoming educated," Norton said. "My parents felt very much that it was the way you could control your future and your destiny, and that education gave you options. The real key was access."

Norton is the antithesis of the hard-to-approach executive. If a student wanted to speak to the college president a generation ago, he or she would make an appointment weeks in advance. Yet Norton goes out of her way to chat with students, staff and professors, displaying a magnanimous spirit and offering abundant praise for the University.

"Slippery Rock is not only a caring community of scholars, but also an educational leader that provides academic programs of excellence supporting the growth and development of its students and the region," she said. "I am extremely proud to be associated with a faculty and staff committed to this educational vision."

Norton described the SRU welcome as warm and said she won't forget her first impressions of meeting folks and seeing

the campus, especially a spring drive by the football stadium and environmental center.

"My first trip coming down Harmony Road in a van on a beautiful, gorgeous April day looking at the campus, it was just beautiful," she said. "It was impressive, and it gave me a sense of pride to know that I was going to be a part of it."

Norton, a lifelong athlete and former marathoner, added she appreciates the fitness friendly layout of campus.

"I like the fact that they placed buildings so that they are not crunched up next to each other," she said. "This provides a lot of green space and adds a sense of peace to the campus, and warmth. I also like the fact that people have to walk to get where they're going because I think the most important thing people can do for their health is to keep moving."

No detail about SRU is too small for Norton's inquisitive nature. When Charles Curry, former acting president, gave Norton a tour of the soon-to-open Smith Center, Norton asked numerous questions about the layout, cost, function and appearance of the new building.

Facilities are important, Norton said, but her foundational mission as an educator is providing access to higher education for everyone who wants it, regardless of abil-

ity to pay. Again, the family background and her work ethic paved the way. "I was fortunate enough to have a scholarship to Denison University because I graduated valedictorian of my high school class," Norton said. "There can only be one of these in a class, and so my interest as an educator became providing access and opportunity for other people, because I could see the difference it made for me."

Norton said college shouldn't be available only to high achievers and the elite. "It should be for people who are the first in their family to go to college, as my brother and I were," she said. "My brother became an educator and both of his daughters became educators. So there was a very strong educational focus and interest in the family."

Norton, who is married to Henry Norton, a certified public accountant, has two grown sons, Joel, an attorney; and Aaron, a nurse. Both inherited a passion for education.

"The gateway to those professions was an education," Norton said.

The couple has two grandchildren, one of whom was born the same day Norton received word that she would be the next president of SRU.

"I am thrilled to be here. The buzz and excitement is in me and in my husband as well. We look forward to really becoming a part of this community."

After graduating from Denison, Norton earned two master's degrees and a doctorate in applied physiology from Columbia University. She has published two books and numerous articles and made more than 130 national, regional and state presentations in the areas of physical education and applied physiology.

For her contributions to the field of sports medicine, Norton was elected a Fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine.

Norton joined SRU after serving as the first woman president of Southern Connecticut University from 2004-2010. Her accomplishments there were many. She oversaw a \$260-million construction program and revision of the master plan. She presided over building projects, including the completion of a new residence hall, student center, library addition and academic information technology building.

Norton formed partnerships with the arts community and led development of the on-campus Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders. Philanthropic support for scholarships and academic programs increased 67 percent, with \$10.8 million raised during her six years. Norton also signed the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment calling for the reduction of greenhouse gases. SRU signed it as well.

Norton credited her husband with pushing her to pursue the presidency at Southern Connecticut.

"My husband said, 'You need to be a president,' so he was really the one that influenced that transition for me," Norton said. "I had been following him around the country as he changed jobs and developed his career. But then he said, 'It's your turn.' He has been foursquare behind my career."

Prior to Southern Connecticut, Norton was provost at

Facilities are important, Norton said, but her foundational mission as an educator is providing access to higher education for everyone who wants it, regardless of ability to pay.

Metropolitan State College of Denver, the nation's largest urban public baccalaureate college with an enrollment of more than 20,000. At MSC she devised strategies leading to a 20 percent increase in enrollment. She also led the effort to develop the largest online educational program in Colorado.

Over the years, the Nortons have lived in Virginia, New York, Colorado and Connecticut.

The Nortons join the SRU family with eclectic interests. They have two German shepherds and two cats. Both are fitness buffs.

Norton has been a nationally ranked marathon runner, earned a black belt in Taekwondo, played intercollegiate basketball and refereed soccer games. The couple raised sled dogs and raced a dog sled team for 10 years, "before the kids decided they

didn't want to spend every weekend with their Mom and Dad on the race circuit," she said.

Norton's interest in martial arts began when her son decided to take lessons.

"Our older son when he was 7, for whatever reason, and I think it was because of the Ninja Turtles that were out at the time, he decided that he wanted to take martial arts lessons. So we looked around, and he ended up at this Taekwondo school," she said.

"The first lesson he had, watching him do this, I was thinking what a waste of time it was for me to sit there watching my son take the lesson," she said. "Since I had to drive him to the lesson and wait for him, I thought I should take lessons too, so I started taking lessons."

She said her husband, a former accounting professor at Metropolitan State College, got involved with the sport as well. "We continued on. Our son, however, dropped out," Norton said with a laugh.



Cheryl Norton begins her get-acquainted day on campus with breakfast at SRU's award-winning Boozel Dining Hall.





Cheryl Norton meets with Michael Thornhill, a May graduate, and smiles as she checks out the new Quaker Steak & Lube restaurant in the Smith Student Center.



Their interest in dog racing began two weeks after their wedding. The Nortons first job was as “dorm parents,” at Choate Rosemary Hall, a coeducational boarding school in Wallingford, Conn., that U.S. President John F. Kennedy attended as a teenager.

A student had arrived on campus with a husky, which was not allowed.

“One of the ‘Choates’ had come from Canada and brought this stately Husky puppy. He didn’t know you couldn’t have a puppy,” Norton recalled. “They needed a home for the puppy. We adopted him. Miles was our first husky.”

They began racing Miles in Central Park in New York City after her husband accepted a job there and later continued with the interest in Colorado. Norton said she misses the sport.

Like all people, Norton said she feels the stress at times. Her solution: Exercise. Even when she had a full agenda during her April campus visit, Norton began her day with a three-mile workout on the hotel treadmill.

Norton has moved into the President’s House and said Henry would join her later this summer after recovering from a double knee replacement.

Norton said what keeps her up at night is concern over the state budget, tuition increases and the possibility that qualified students won’t have access to higher education. “The budget is an obvious issue of concern,” she said.

Every Friday during the school year, SRU’s online newsletter rockpride

includes a mini profile of a professor or staff member. One of the get-to-know you questions asks respondents to cite who they would most like to have dinner with. Asked the same question, Norton immediately said Jesus.

“I’d like to ask him. ‘Is this what you thought things would be like?’ and ‘How are we doing?’ Wouldn’t that be interesting?” she said.

Despite the challenges of the state budget and the psychological adjustment of becoming a university president again, Norton said she has observed a great spirit on campus and is optimistic about her tenure.

“Slippery Rock University is warm. It is welcoming. People like being here, so do I,” she said.



“Slippery Rock University is warm. It is welcoming. People like being here, so do I.”

Physical education
program

reaches
new
heights



High in the trees behind the Ski Lodge, Jocelyn Cochran is walking a tightrope. She moves from one swing to the next, reaches the end of the high ropes course element and is lowered 40 feet to the ground.

Welcome to the “new P.E.” at Slippery Rock University.

“The first time I did it I was definitely scared,” said Cochran, a physical education major from Duke Center. “It’s a different experience, and it’s more thrilling than anything. You climb up the tree, and you have to have a lot of strength and balance. Once those swings are in motion, you really have to concentrate.”

SRU is leading a transformation in physical education. The old focus on competitive sports that gave stars a chance to shine has moved to a model that promotes individual skills and prepares all students to be fit for life. Today’s students participate in classes their parents wouldn’t recognize, such as “Outdoor Pursuits,” where Cochran and other physical education majors test their mettle on the high ropes element “Silva Swings.”

SRU has always been a leader in physical education teacher preparation, but the University is broadening the delivery of career options by launching a new Leadership in Physical Activity Program this fall. The program will enable students to focus in two of four areas: adapted physical activity, outdoor fitness and adventure, coaching and aquatics.

“The new track is for someone who doesn’t necessarily want to be a physical education teacher but wants to work in the world of physical activity,” said Randy Nichols, associate professor of physical education and department chair. “We’ve done a lot of research. Because our society is moving so much less, there is going to be a need for graduates to teach all these adults in these areas.”



Jeffrey Smith, instructor of physical education, readies physical education majors for the high ropes course behind the Ski Lodge.

“You’re completely safe, but you don’t look down, that’s for sure,” Cochran said. “Honestly, you set a goal, and you just want to accomplish your goal and make it to the last swing. That’s what you’re thinking about, making it to the last swing.”

Cochran, who said she has been involved in sports since age 4, said the course is a good example of the new P.E. “You only do what you’re comfortable with. That is what I want to teach my students someday,” she said.

Smith said students in “Outdoor Pursuits” participate in a progression of activities that address the cognitive and psychomotor aspects leading up to participation on the high ropes element. One of the key components of this teaching approach, Smith said, is the use of a “value contact.” This is a tool for setting a safety, behavior and goal-setting framework for students.

“The ‘challenge by choice’ approach is used to allow students to participate within their individual comfort zone,” he said. “This is also known as the ‘stretch zone,’ because a participant’s comfort zone generally expands throughout the learning progression.”

Smith said he also uses two goal-setting paradigms – the Specific, Trackable, Achievable and Relevant (STAR) and the Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Timely (SMART) – to help students set individual goals and build momentum.

“In this way, the student is able to set a goal that takes into consideration the individual’s physical and emotional abilities,” Smith said. “Students often express that the high ropes course experience is empowering and confidence building. A familiar statement often made by the students after being lowered from the element is ‘Wow, I never thought I could do something like that, but I did it.’”

SRU’s physical education program for future teachers is being revised to address the lack of physical activity in society and teach the science of healthy living.

The adapted physical activity tract prepares graduates to manage physical activity programs for people with disabilities. Classes include “Strength/Resistance Training,” “Gymnastics Fundamentals,” “Motor Development and Learning” and a “Coaching Practicum.” The aquatics program offers “Lifeguarding,” “Aquatic Leadership” and “Water Safety Instruction.”

Jeffrey Smith, instructor of physical education, teaches “Outdoor Pursuits,” which falls within the outdoor fitness track.

Cochran, who said she chose SRU because of its reputation for physical education, said the class focuses on goal setting, communication, and confidence building. For the Silva Swings, students wear helmets and use a belay system to prevent injuries.

Nichols said SRU's physical education program for future teachers is being revised to address the lack of physical activity in society and teach the science of healthy living. Nichols said the University's approach to PE is dramatically different from the era of dodge ball and calisthenics.

"Physical education came from a very team sport, very athletic-oriented history of being for those who were athletically inclined – either you can perform or you can't perform and if you can't perform, you're not going to make it through the pro-

"We would like to see physical education in the schools delivered as a public health tool, as part of our society's wellness. What better prevention could there be than to teach people how to take care of themselves and give them the skills to be able to help others take care of themselves? That is what we are doing for our students."

gram," Nichols said. "What we're moving to now is more of an individualized approach for that individual student, trying to meet the student where they're comfortable."

For instance, it no longer matters only that students can climb

a rope. What matters, Nichols said, is acquiring an understanding of the movement patterns required for climbing a rope and other activities such as skiing, running, mountain bicycling, kayaking, tennis, Zumba and ping pong. Physical education teachers call it "play."

"We want to get our society back to a level of play," Nichols said. "The lack of physical activity in our society is mounting, and the consequence is mounting. We would like to see physical education in the schools delivered as a public health tool, as part of our society's wellness. What better prevention could there be than to teach people how to take care of themselves and give them the skills to be able to help others take care of themselves? That is what we are doing for our students."

Students study the science of healthy living, which shows that physical activity benefits people in many ways. Nichols said regular exercise improves cognition and test scores, controls weight, lessens the likelihood of depression and improves overall health, thus minimizing sick days and saving money in medical costs from inactivity-related illnesses such as high blood pressure.

These concepts were implemented into part of the program over the past year, with a soft launch, and will be codified in the curriculum this fall, Nichols said.

"SRU is extremely forward thinking," he said. "We'll be one of the first programs that will take this approach to study the science of healthy living. We will be gearing our graduates to be ready to meet the new needs in our society."

Nichols cited Google as a company that promotes the



Students arrive at the obstacle course for another outdoor training exercise.



Joanne Leight, associate professor of physical education, uses a new iPad in one of her classes.

benefits of regular activity. Google has Ping Pong tables in its office buildings, Nichols said, because Ping Pong engages and electrifies your brain and promotes alertness and improved hand-eye coordination.

“Why does Google have Ping Pong Tables in its offices? They know the benefits,” Nichols said.

The physical education classroom has also changed since students donned sweatshirts for what was typically called gym class. Today’s classroom is a modern learning center utilizing the latest technology, including Wiis and iPads.

Professors use heart rate monitors, video cameras to videotape biomechanics of swimmers and Global Positioning Systems for hikes, runs and Geocaching – an outdoor activity in which participants use GPS to hide and seek “caches” anywhere in the world.

Joanne Leight, associate professor of physical education, said the iPad has replaced the traditional clipboard and offers a number of resources. The smart pad enables educators to take pictures and videos of students performing skills and then permit feedback when played back on the device.

iPads permit the storage of songs for use in fitness activities, station work, dance lessons and other applications, Leight said. Emergency contacts, medical information, grade books, attendance, lesson plans and rubrics can also be stored on the iPad.

“There are also thousands of applications, many of which are free, that can be downloaded and used in health and physical education classes,” Leight said.



WORLD WAR II VETERANS

continued from page 12

when a “shot from a German plane hit my engine. There was oil all over the windshield. I turned and headed for home base, wondering if I could make it in time.”

After the war, Cottrell taught at West Chester University, eventually serving as the associate dean of the department of physical education and was the golf coach from 1954 to 1980. Ten years earlier, Cottrell had married his college sweetheart, Millie.

At SRU, Cottrell was a four-sport star, excelling in football, basketball, baseball and tennis. In 2003, he was inducted into Slippery Rock’s Athletic Hall of Fame.

“SRU gave me a great education,” he said. “We had wonderful professors. They were dedicated; they made you work, and we had to concentrate but it was fun, too. They taught us that if we worked hard, we could succeed.”

So, does Cottrell consider his generation the greatest?

“We were not any better or different than today’s generation,” he said. “Our country was facing very serious problems back then, and our country is facing very serious problems now. And our youth are doing now what we did back then—whatever is best for the good of the country. I have the utmost respect for the men and women who served in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.”

“I think every generation has served with greatness.”



Edwin Cottrell, '43

“I think every generation has served with greatness.”
— Edwin Cottrell, '43



OUR DEBT TO THE HEROIC MEN AND VALIANT WOMEN IN THE SERVICE OF OUR COUNTRY CAN NEVER BE REPAYED. THEY HAVE EARNED OUR UNDYING GRATITUDE. AMERICA WILL NEVER FORGET THEIR SACRIFICES.



UNSUNG HEROES

TRIO OF DENNYS

ANCHOR CAMPUS MAINTENANCE

Denny Colosimo and his colleague Denny Hemphill and his other colleague Denny Johnston might not be as famous as the television trio of Larry, Daryl and Daryl that once roamed the Stratford Inn, but the work they do is far more important.

Denny, Denny and Denny are the men behind keeping University facilities and grounds in top shape – which is no small task on Slippery Rock University’s 650-acre campus.

Theirs is largely a race against time and nature – cut this field of grass, pave that walkway, spray that beehive. They show selfless determination despite challenges from pests, flocks of birds and 90-plus temperatures in summer and single digits in winter.

“A misconception about custodial work would be that it is easy work,” Hemphill

said. “But if you see any of the custodians sweating in the summer you would think twice. In the winter, you see them out there in the blistering cold shoveling snow and putting down anti-skid materials so that the walkways are safe.”

The trio anchors the often-unsung department of facilities and planning. They understand that an aesthetically pleasing campus is an important factor in creating a positive first impression for student recruitment, and they take that challenge to heart. The department’s 155 staffers clean and repair 54 campus buildings. They maintain fields and roads, landscapes, fix electrical systems and water mains, participate in emergency response and set up for small and large-scale events such as graduation.

Their work is more sophisticated than convention assumes. Their “tools” include a “Bird Detractor System” to prevent bird infestation, a “Scary Eyes” balloon and an “Advance Advenger” floor scrubber.

“One thing about my job is no two days are the same,” said Hemphill, a pest control technician who specializes in preventing birds from nesting at Jack Critchfield baseball stadium. Johnston, a former Marine, traps groundhogs and other animals for safe relocation and helps maintain the grounds. Denny Colosimo supervises grounds work.

Groundhogs, coyotes, foxes, possums, raccoons, skunks and innumerable bird-life, including several types of hawks and owls, frequent the campus grounds. The Robert N. Macoskey Center for Sustainable Systems Education and Research provides

a home for native songbirds such as the American goldfinch and eastern bluebird and the more rare red-headed woodpecker. Toads, bullfrogs and northern spring peepers sing like the dickens near campus ponds.

“When capturing animals on campus, we use humane cages,” said Johnston. “Groundhogs especially love marshmallows. After we capture them, we take them to the off-campus Miller Tract of property and set them free. We do not kill any of them.”

When possible, they let nature take its course. The dense vegetation in the back end of campus provides a natural habitat for turtles. “We leave them alone,” Colosimo said. “Many have laid eggs between the football stadium and Building F and also around the pond in that area.” SRU, a sustainable campus, even has a bat house on campus.

Johnson said he also cuts down dead trees, cuts grass, digs, fertilizes fields, plows snow, collects garbage and sprays bugs. When not plowing snow or using mowing equipment, he said he works on the equipment to make sure it is ready for the next season.

“It sends out sound waves both audible and ultrasonic that broadcast a variety of naturally recorded bird distress signals that frightens, confuses and disorients birds within the effective range,” Hemphill said. “These high definition, digital recordings are played on loudspeakers to ensure that the message gets across to the birds to stay away out of instinctual fear. This saves us money on cleanup and helps reduce health and injury risk.”

Hemphill also hangs decoys that resemble great horned owls, the most-feared aerial predator of smaller birds. “It prevents smaller birds from coming in. They fly in, see the owls hanging there and that scares them,” he said.

The University recently added a “Scary Eyes” balloon to the mix, which looks like a target to the human eye but scares geese and other birds. “To a bird, it looks like a predator with the reflective eyeball in the middle,” he said. “When they fly up to it, they can seem themselves in the reflective part of the eyeball and that scares them off.”

Hemphill said he schedules and assigns

Colosimo remembers ‘storm of the century’

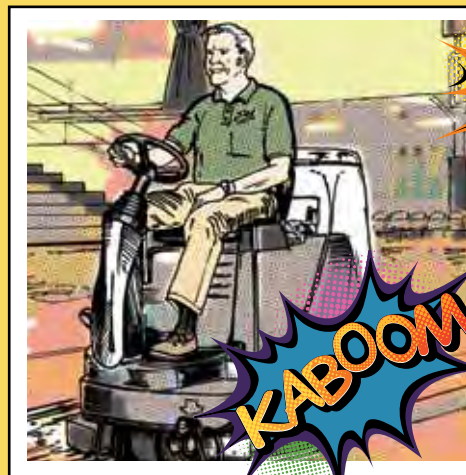
Colosimo, who joined SRU in 1986, is like a jack of all maintenance trades. He coordinates grounds work, snow removal and cleanup after storms. He keeps the grass, shrubs, trees and flowerbeds maintained, sprays weeds, kills bees, puts up signage and sweeps streets.

Colosimo said he has worked and issued reports at every hour you could imagine on every day of the week. He described the blizzard of ’93 as a standout memory. That was the year more than 26 inches of snow fell March 12-13, 1993, bringing western Pennsylvania to a standstill. Colosimo said he worked around the clock plowing and removing snow, salting walkways and checking for icy conditions. It was an outstanding example of how facilities and planning worked to get the job done.

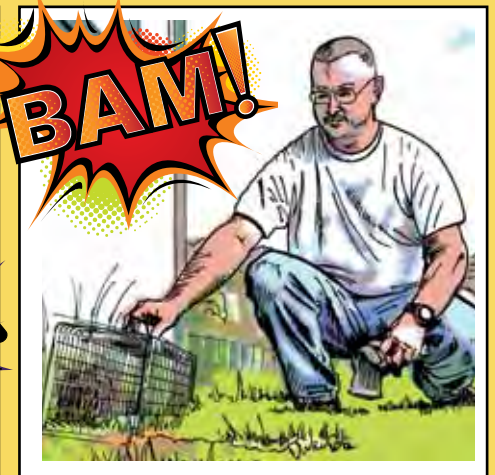
“During the super storm of ’93, I arrived on campus at 8:30 a.m. on a Saturday and after spending the night on campus finally left Sunday at 5 p.m. – 26 inches of snow



Denny Colosimo



Denny Hemphill



Denny Johnson

“We try to keep the campus as clean as possible,” he said, “but it is very hard. It’s the nature of the beast. There are always events and people coming daily as well as all the construction that is going on. It is a very big task, but I am proud of my work and the people I work with. We do an amazing job on this campus.”

Hemphill to the rescue

Recognizing that SRU needed a way to keep birds from nesting in the seating areas and rafters of the baseball stadium, Hemphill recently began deploying a Bird Detractor System.

work and makes sure personnel meet deadlines. His number one priority is to make sure the custodial staff is providing a clean and safe environment that is aesthetically pleasing for visitors, students, faculty and staff.

“Depending on what day it is, I have numerous things to do during the day: meetings, work orders, making schedules, ordering supplies, pest control problems, checking on problems, checking on projects, shifting work around for others who have called off, writing evaluations and training staff on new equipment,” he said.

later,” Colosimo said. “Our goal is always to keep a safe and attractive campus.”

Alumni wouldn’t recognize some of the equipment the trio deploys, such as the Advance Advenger rider-scrubber. The scrubber, used to clean the basketball court inside Morrow Field House, reaches three miles per hour and can clean 47,872 square feet per hour.

“As we all know, we have an aging workforce on campus, including me,” Hemphill said. “And it is great to find ways to be more efficient at cleaning without wearing down the workforce.”



Income tax assistance program provides million-dollar boost

It's a simple concept – put more disposable income in consumers' pockets and they will spend more, boosting the local economy. Slippery Rock University's inaugural Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program helped more than 1,000 Butler County residents obtain \$1.3 million in federal tax refunds.

"These refunds are infused into our local economy," said John Golden, SRU instructor of business. "Plus, there is the 'multiplier effect.' When you get a refund, you might save part of it or pay down some debt. But much of it is spent locally."

The tax program, offered by SRU's School of Business and Sustainable Enterprise Accelerator in conjunction with the Internal Revenue Service, provided free income tax assistance to individuals and families earning less than \$50,000 a year.

Program offices in Slippery Rock and Butler completed 1,016 tax returns for \$484,624 in Earned Income Credit and \$1,350,182 in refunds, Golden said.

"The success was amplified by the satisfied taxpayers who quickly spread the news about the program by word of mouth," he said.

The IRS reports that many tax credits and refunds go unclaimed each year; up to 25 percent of those eligible do not claim Earned Income Tax Credits.

Not only did the program help taxpayers, Golden said, refund money will help local businesses through the multiplier effect principle.

"If I take \$300 of my refund and buy a lawnmower from the local hardware store, the hardware store owner later spends part

of the \$300 at the grocery store. The grocery store owner takes it and goes to eat at a local restaurant, etc. So the initial \$300 is 'multiplied' in terms of its local stimulus. Of course local governments and schools benefit from the growing tax base."

Golden said several SRU students served internships in the tax assistance offices, gaining valuable experience for their careers.

"The interns worked really hard, first at getting the required IRS certifications and training, and then putting in the hours meeting with taxpayers and helping them complete their returns," Golden said.

The goal was to reach people who do not file because they can't afford to pay a tax preparer or they don't know they qualify for tax credits and refunds, said Rhonda Clark, instructor in the SRU School of Business, who helped manage the Slippery Rock tax office. Like Golden, she said, students benefited.

"Not only is this a wonderful community service for economic development, but it's a great opportunity and experience for the accounting interns," Clark said. "Although this is the first year for the Slippery Rock office, the interns prepared more than 100 tax returns. This is a very good start for a new location."

From the Dean:

This is an excellent example of experiential learning in the School of Business at Slippery Rock University. I would like to commend the faculty of the School of Business for their efforts to make the program such a success. Both the students and community gained from the experience. The students gained work experience. The families received free tax assistance and the community gained income with the refund dollars back in circulation. We look to expand this program for next year.

– Kurt Schimmel



New education dean appreciates Rock welcome

It didn't take long for Keith Dils, new dean of the College of Education, to learn how much alumni care about their alma mater. "Since it was announced that I would be the new dean, I have had many SRU alumni approach me to express their pride in Slippery Rock University and to let me know what a great place it is," he said.

Dils replaces Kathleen Strickland, who retired as dean of the college in May. Before joining SRU, Dils served as interim dean for the College of Education and Educational Technology at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

"Dr. Dils clearly stood out as a near-perfect fit for our College of Education programs," said William Williams, SRU provost and vice president for academic affairs. "I am confident Dr. Dils will take many of Dr. Strickland's successful programs and build on them to continue to provide an excellent teacher education program for our students."

Dils said SRU, a leader in teacher preparation education since its 1889 founding, sold itself.

"I am very excited to join the Slippery Rock academic community," he said. "I am so impressed with the students, faculty, staff and administration. The College of Education has a strong

tradition and an excellent reputation. I am looking forward to having one-on-one meetings with all interested faculty and staff in the College of Education to start to establish a shared vision for how we will move forward."

Dils earned his bachelor of arts in social science with a minor in secondary education at Lebanon Valley College, his master's of arts degree in public administration at Shippensburg University and his doctor of education degree in teacher education with a minor in education administration at West Virginia University.

At IUP, he was involved in maintaining IUP's National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation and certification with the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

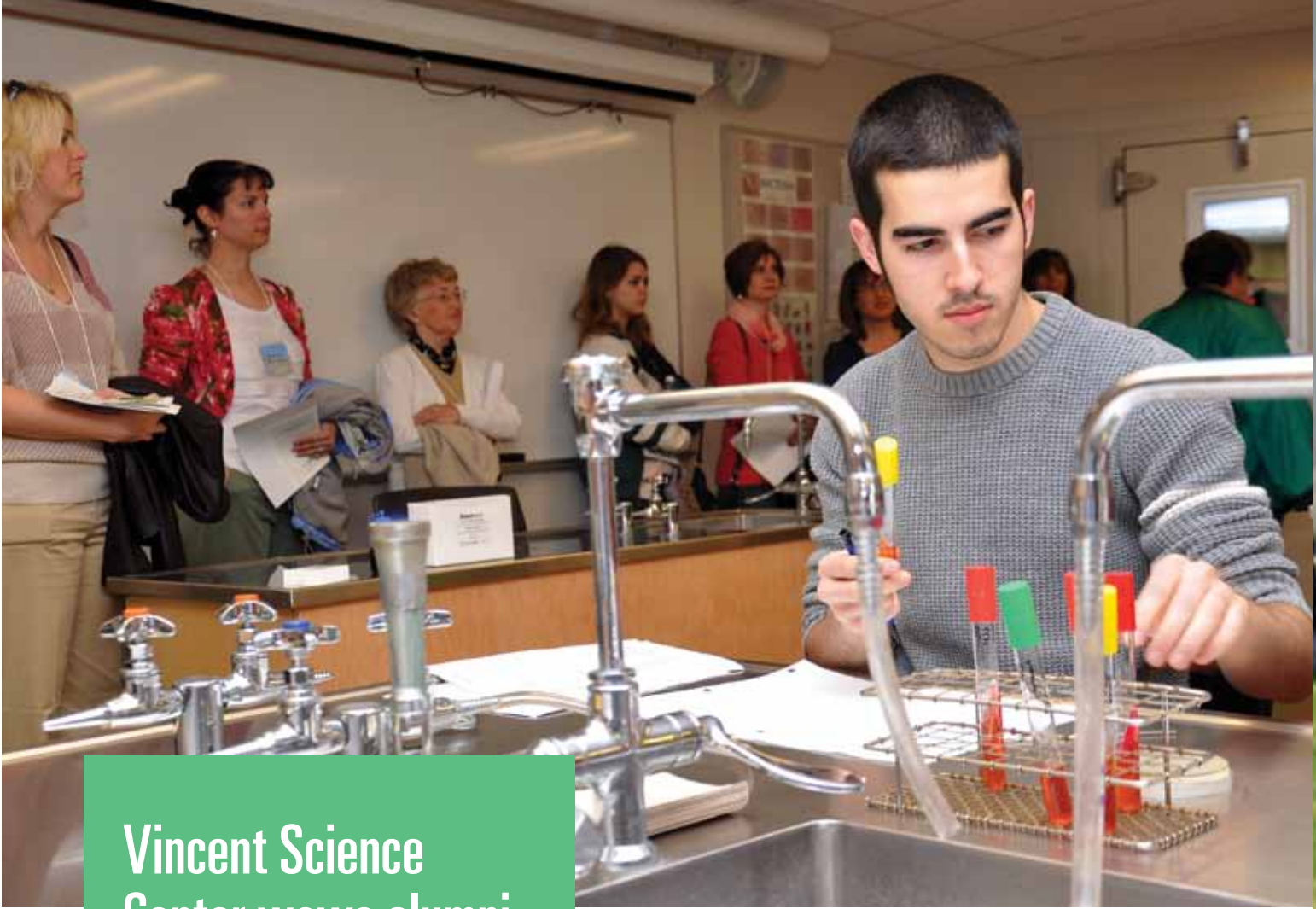
Dils has authored numerous publications in referred journals, including *Educational Considerations* and the *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*. He has also written a number of successful grant proposals, including a \$172,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Education for an online Praxis preparation course.

He was elected to the board of directors of the Pennsylvania Association of Teacher Education and has been invited to conduct "Classroom Management for Diverse Students" for Pittsburgh School District Student Teacher Training at the Greenway Professional Development Center. He is treasurer of the Pennsylvania Dean's Forum and a member of the National Middle School Association, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education and PACTE.

From the Dean:

I am excited to head a college with such an excellent faculty and strong alumni. I have worked with SRU College of Education faculty and administration in the past at state and regional education organizations, and I have always been impressed with their leadership and service to the discipline. I am pleased to work with such strong group of people on a daily basis.

– Keith Dils



Vincent Science Center wows alumni

The old adage about positive first impressions is true. Slippery Rock University's \$14-million renovation to Vincent Science Center wowed alumni and former faculty and staff when they visited for a "family reunion" open house.

"They did a great job. The rooms are geared toward the current student's needs and feature aspects I wish we had such as book bag slots," said Becky Bosko Marino, a 2003 biology graduate. "The new and improved lecture halls are a huge improvement in comparison to the two-story ones. They are set up just perfectly so that students can see the board, and they offer the perfect accommodations for tech-savvy students."

Thomas Gaither, professor emeritus of biology, marveled that the interior "is totally different."

A three-year renovation equipped Vincent with new furniture, technology, advanced laboratories with prep rooms and wireless throughout to allow for real-time data acquisition between labs, equipment and individuals. The new Vincent has 16 classrooms, 16 labs, two lecture halls and a new planetarium dome, as well as suite-style offices for faculty.

Also new are department-specific student study areas adjacent to faculty offices. The academic departments of nursing, biology, mathematics, physics and psychology occupy Vincent.

Susan Hannam, dean, Stacy Booth and Sharon Isaaco organized the open house to give alumni the chance to see the improvements. "Stacy and Sharon were the folks who said 'We were like a family,

so let's have a family reunion' to celebrate," Hannam said. More than 200 alumni attended. They saw the greenhouse, new classrooms and labs. They learned about microbiological techniques, saw student-faculty research posters, experienced the planetarium and examined old photographs of Vincent on display.

Ben Addison, a 1987 computer science graduate, said the "new" building made him wish he were taking classes now.

"I remember the old Vincent Science Center from 1983-1987. Professors' offices were small. Classrooms were just OK, not much room to do anything. Wow, what a difference now in 2012. Even the outside is incredible with the remodel."

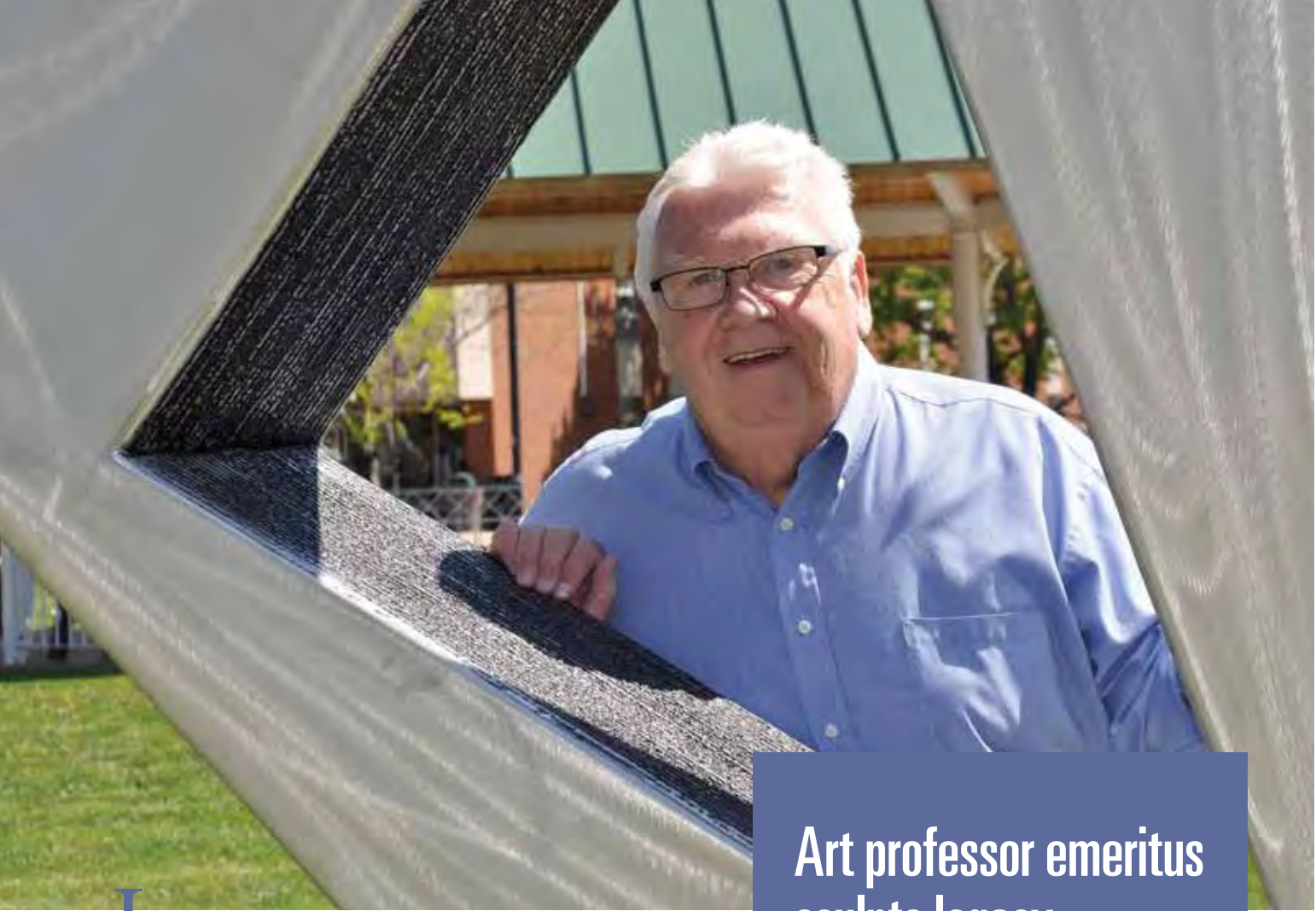
Science majors led the tours, wearing bright green T-shirts.

"I was willing to serve as a guide because I thought it was a great way to make connections from the past and to see how former students and professors enjoyed and reminisced," said Kortnee Koziara, a biology/pre-med major from Clarion. "As president of the biology honorary, I thought it was a great involvement activity to create relationships with other faculty and students even if they were no longer here."

From the Dean:

It was very exciting to have so many alumni and former science faculty and administrators visit Vincent and share their stories/memories. They also toured the Advanced Technology and Science Hall. Their SRU pride, enthusiasm for the changes, interaction with current students and faculty and willingness to offer things like internship opportunities to our students was much appreciated. It was indeed a special 'family' day.

— Susan Hannam



Art professor emeritus sculpts legacy

It's not that he doesn't like paintings, fiber or ceramics – he does. It's just that James Myford, Slippery Rock University professor emeritus of art, has a different passion – aluminum sculpture. “I just really fell in love with that particular metal,” he said.

Myford, who taught at SRU from 1968-1997, is an internationally known sculptor. SRU recently renamed the Art Sculpture Building the James C. Myford Art Sculpture Building in recognition of his contributions as an artist and educator.

Myford, along with Robert Smith, president emeritus, was also responsible for helping to launch the University's inaugural Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition. The Exhibition featured sculptures by 10 national artists, including Myford's “Triangle Form” as part of the University's 10th Annual Kaleidoscope Arts Festival.

“The idea for the Exhibition was to introduce the public to outdoor sculptures,” Myford said. “I just think it brings another dimension to the University in the sense of beauty and outdoor spaces.”

Myford, who specializes in cast and fabricated aluminum sculptures, said the building renaming provoked feelings of pride and nostalgia for his teaching career. A specialist in small and

large-scale aluminum works, Myford said he involved students in his own art and exhibitions because of the educational value.

“What I was always interested in was expanding the classroom at Slippery Rock University,” he said. “Students helped me with bigger commissions, such as ALCOA, and they would go with me to set up shows in Chicago, Florida and Toronto.”

Over the years, Myford said he has created and sold many sculptures to both private and corporate collections in the U.S. and Japan, Sweden, Venezuela, Australia and Brazil. He said he creates about 15 sculptures a year and can be working on as many as six at a time. Larger sculptures take up to 10 months to complete.

At SRU, he started as an instructor and moved up to professor. He also served as art department chairperson from 1987-1993. He has statues permanently displayed in front of SRU's Swope Music Hall and in downtown Slippery Rock.

Myford said his work, while abstract, is linked to nature and reality. “Materials become humanized when rearranged by my ideas, feelings and hands,” he said. “This concept has been the root system, the inspiration and the energy source for my sculpture.”

He has received numerous awards for his work including the Environmental Award of Excellence from ALCOA, First Place Sculpture Award from the Bruce Museum in Connecticut and Outstanding Educators Award from the Pennsylvania Art Education Association.

From the Dean:

The James Myford Sculpture Invitational was a great success and a valuable initiative legated to us by former President Robert M. Smith. It fits his vision of enhancing the nature of the University as a premier residential institution where all students can have access to innovative artistic expressions as a crucial part of their liberal arts education.

– Eva Tsuquiashi-Daddesio

Class Notes

Editorial Information

Please note that "Class Notes" lists the year alumni received their undergraduate degree from Slippery Rock University. To submit "Class Notes," simply email us at alumni@sru.edu or go to <http://rockalumnicafe.com> with your information. You can also call 1.800.GET.ROCK or fax us at 724.738.4784. We do not publish engagements or pregnancies, but we do publish marriages and births.

(M) – Denotes master's degree, (F) – Denotes faculty member, (FR) – Denotes friend of Slippery Rock University

Please note that the editorial staff makes every effort to publish the information given to us by alumni as it is received. Due to space restrictions in the magazine we sometimes have to edit the information. We are proud of all our alumni and regret having to make any revisions.

1950s

Bob Bell, '58, is proud to announce that there are now three generations of SRU graduates in his family. His son **William Bell, '12**, graduated this May and his mother **Mary Gentile Bell, '26**, was the first of the family to graduate from SRU.

1960s

Sharron Sachs Schaefer, '67, was named "Woman of the Year" for the town of Sewickley, Pa. She was the director of music for 22 years at Sewickley United Methodist and for the past five years has been associate director of music at St. James Church in Sewickley, where she is also a member. She is a board member of Chatham Baroque, which is a nationally known string ensemble based in Pittsburgh. The "Woman of the Year" Award recognizes her many accomplishments, including the work she has done with children musically, the community choral and hand bell festivals she has planned, and the free concert series she began for the community.

1970s

William Sontagg, '70, has been awarded the Robert L. Payton Award for Voluntary Service in the CASE District 2 awards program. Sontagg has been an active alumnus. He received the alumni association's 2000



Distinguished Service Award. He has been a member of the President's Advisory Committee and serves as the foundation board secretary and chair of its finance committee.

C. Vivian Stringer, '70, '73, current Rutgers University head women's basketball coach, is was one of five individuals selected to receive a Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference Award of Merit. Stringer, a student-athlete at The Rock and later head women's coach at PSAC-member Cheyney University, was joined on this year's list of Award of Merit recipients by John Chaney, who served as head men's basketball coach at Cheyney while Stringer was the women's coach there and later coached at Temple University in Philadelphia.

Marjorie Hughes, '74, has been appointed executive director of the Citizens' Advisory Council to the Department of Environmental Protection. Hughes, who most recently served as chief of DEP's Conservation District Support Division in the Bureau of Waterways and Wetlands, started her new position this spring.

1980s

William French, '87, is responsible for emerging technologies and enterprise architecture initiatives for the Pennsylvania Office of Administration,



where he works as director of innovation. He received a bachelor's degree in physics from SRU and an electrical engineering degree from Pennsylvania State University through SRU's 3 plus 2 program. French continued his education by obtaining a master's degree in information systems from Shippensburg University in '96 and an MBA from Mount Saint Mary's University in '02.

1990s

Kelly Austin, '98, '01, has been appointed chancellor of Penn State Schuylkill. "It is an honor and a privilege to join the Penn State community, a nationally recognized institution of higher learning, as chancellor of the Schuylkill campus," Austin said. Austin had been the chief business and administration officer for the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown since 2008.

Nicole "Niki" Campbell, '96, has been selected as a member of the McDonald's National PR Agency Roundtable. Campbell will serve during the 2012-2014 term. Members of the group of professional communicators and marketers represent key leaders, including agency and company staff from across McDonald's nationwide system. Campbell is the east division communications manager for McDonald's. The roundtable was created in 2006 to help inform the company's thinking on national public relations initiatives, share best practices for the broadest possible field application and help identify challenges and seek solutions to issues facing local agencies and markets across the U.S. system.

2000s

Andrew Ryan, '11, has co-authored an article published by Science. The article looks at evidence for past volcanic processes on Mars. "Coils and Polygonal Crust in the Athabasca Valles Region, Mars, as Evidence for a Volcanic History" examines spiral patterns on Mars. The article was published in the April 27 Science, co-authored by Philip Christensen, a professor and Ryan's adviser at Arizona State. "These spirals are very similar to lava coils that form on the surface of lava flows on Earth in places such as Hawaii, indicating that the terrain in Athabasca Valles is of volcanic origin," Ryan said. Ryan is a first-year student in the geological sciences doctoral program in the School of Earth and Space Exploration at Arizona State University.

Tim Donovan, '09, an athletic trainer at North Carolina Wesleyan College, has been credited with helping minimize injuries a police officer received following a high-speed, car-motorcycle accident in Rocky Mount, N.C. Donovan was among those publicly commended during the college's Founders' Day ceremonies for his actions.

Devon Gallagher, '05, has co-directed an original film, "Married in Spandex." It tells the story of a young lesbian couple, Rachel and Amanda, who travel from West Philadelphia to Ames, Iowa, to be married by their favorite spandex-clad artist, Leslie Hall. He has also produced a documentary about Kandahar, Afghanistan. The documentary is aimed for a 2013 release.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION HONORS 'YOUNG ALUMNI'



Rebecca Conway



Kirk Sander



Nicole Steele



Michelle Maruska

Four Slippery Rock University graduates have been honored with Young Alumni Awards for their outstanding contributions in the workplace and community. They are **Rebecca Conway, '02**, dance; **Kirk Sander, '03**, environmental geoscience; **Nicole**

Steele, '05, music therapy and **Capt. Michelle Maruska, '06**, health services administration.

Conway has performed with the nationally recognized Dance Allow of Pittsburgh and founded the Blair Dance Academy. Sander is special adviser to NASA. Steele is a board certified music therapist for Children's Hospital, Pittsburgh. Maruska is a registered nurse with the U.S. Army stationed at Womack Army Hospital in North Carolina.

The Young Alumni Awards program was created in 2005 to recognize alumni who have demonstrated professional and personal accomplishments. Alumni, faculty and staff nominate individuals for the award.

Births and Adoptions

2000s

Dana Kelly Kindelberger, '05, and **David Kindelberger, '05,**

welcomed Addison Jane Kindelberger Oct. 21, 2012. She is their second child and joins big brother Noah David. Dana Kindelberger is a special education teacher in Raleigh, N.C. David Kindelberger is a real estate broker.



Danielle Suhoski Onuffer, '06, and **Wade Onuffer**

announce the birth of their son Brayden Edward, born Jan. 1, 2012. He was the first baby born in 2012 at Mercy Hospital in Pittsburgh. He weighed 8 pounds, 1 ounce and was 21.25 inches long. The family lives in Whitehall.



Stephen Schrader, '06, and **Michelle (Muik) Schrader, '04,**

are thrilled to announce the birth of their first child. It's a girl, Summer Lee Schrader. She was born Jan. 24, 2012. The Schraders live in Catasauqua.



Jennifer Ginosky Meyer, '04, and **Peter Meyer, '04,**

announce the birth of their first child Nolan Jay Meyer. He was born Aug. 8, 2011 at Sewickley Valley Hospital. He weighed 8 pounds, 11 ounces. The family lives in McKees Rocks.



Todd Winter, '02, '03, and his wife, Tiffany, welcomed their first child, Mark Anthony Winter, into the world March 29, 2012. He was 7 pounds, 14 ounces and 21.5 inches long.



Kristin Phillipi Minkus, '05, announces the birth of her daughter Sophia Lee Minkus. She was born Dec. 7, 2011.

1990s

Andrew Seder, '98, and **Marissa Seder** announce the birth of their daughter Makenna Caroline Seder. She was born Sept. 15, 2011. She weighed 6

pounds, 4 ounces and was 18.5 inches long. She joins big brother Adam Paul Seder. The family resides in the Pocono Mountain Village of Gouldsboro.



Nicole Banner Tremel, '08, and **John Tremel** announce the birth of Andrew John Tremel. He was born Feb. 13, 2012, and weighed 7 pounds, 12 ounces. The family lives in Pittsburgh.



Weddings

Susan Balzer, '06, married Jason Collins, June 1, 2012. Balzer works as a vision therapist at Wexford Academy

in Wexford, and Collins works as a Yardsman at Bettis Laboratories in West Mifflin.

In Memory

Michael Slease, '64
Joseph "Fuzz" Fiore, '79
Gustav (Gus) Roess III, '55



Homecoming 2012 Celebrating SRU through the Decades

Friday, Oct. 19

- 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Rock the ARC, (Aebersold Student Recreation Center)
- 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. SGA Bookstore – 20% off all SRU merchandise
- 8 – 9:30 a.m. On Campus Alumni Breakfast
- 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Registration – Golden Graduate Class of 1962, Alumni House
- 2:30 p.m. Campus tours. Depart from the Alumni House
- 5 p.m. Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner, Alumni House
- 7 p.m. Radio Station reunion, Smith Student Center
- 7 p.m. Women's Volleyball vs. Edinboro, Morrow Field House
- 7 – 8:30 p.m. Homecoming Pep Rally, Quad (Rain location – ARC)
- 8:45 p.m. Homecoming Fireworks Display, Quad
- 8:45 p.m. Homecoming Bonfire, Old Thompson Field
- 9 p.m. Homecoming Concert, TBA

Saturday, Oct. 20

- 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Rock the ARC, (Aebersold Student Recreation Center)
- 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. SGA Bookstore – 20% off all SRU merchandise
- 10 a.m. Homecoming Parade – Main Street, Slippery Rock
- 11 a.m. Annual Pre-Game Alumni Tailgate Tent, Scarnati Field
- 1 p.m. Blue & White Homecoming BBQ, University Union patio
- 2 p.m. Women's Volleyball vs. Gannon, Morrow Field House
- 2 p.m. SRU Football vs. Edinboro, Mihalik-Thompson Stadium
- Post game The Fifth Quarter, Radio Station Reunion, Alumni Tent, Scarnati Band Field
- 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Class of '62 Reception, TBA
- 6 p.m. Golden Graduate Club Dinner, Alumni House
- 7 p.m. Class of '62 Dinner, Smith Student Center
- 10 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. BAS Homecoming Party, TBA

Sunday, Oct. 21

- Noon to 7 p.m. Rock the ARC, (Aebersold Student Recreation Center)
- 1 p.m. Polish the Rock. Campus / community clean up. Main Street, Slippery Rock
- 8 p.m. Movie: TBA, ATS Auditorium

HOMECOMING 2012 SCHEDULE

A (BIRTHDAY)

gift THAT KEEPS ON giving

Merle Crawford, a 1979 Slippery Rock University special education graduate, admits it can be difficult for loved ones to shop for her on special occasions. “I am not one who wants a lot of ‘things,’” she said. Around the time of her birthday 12 years ago, Crawford’s husband Greg Crawford came up with the perfect solution to the birthday gift dilemma. He surprised his wife with the Merle Jan Moses Crawford Scholarship at Slippery Rock University.

Greg Crawford, a Davidson College graduate and director of the Penn State Harrisburg library, knows his wife and her propensity for helping others. “I want others to have the benefit of a Slippery Rock education, and I want individuals with disabilities to have the benefit of working with a professional who received his or her training at Slippery Rock,” Merle Crawford said. “After Greg’s parents died, he wanted to use some of the relatively small inheritance to help both of our alma maters. He established an endowed book fund for the library at Davidson College and surprised me by contacting Slippery Rock about setting up a scholarship in my honor. I always said what a good experience I had at Slippery Rock State College, its name at the time.”

Crawford started her college career at another institution, but quickly realized that Slippery Rock State College, with its renowned special education program, would be a better fit for her.

“I went through college catalogs and found Slippery Rock,” she said. “I was so excited to read the description of the special education program. It seemed to be just what I was looking for.”

Crawford said she quickly got involved with the special education department and has great memories of her days on campus.

“I loved the classes in the special education department,” she said. “I have very fond memories of times spent with good friends, two of whom have since passed away (Patty Hinkley Oglesbee, ’78, and Andy Clever, ’80).” Crawford would love to see donations given to Slippery Rock in their honor.

At that time, special education majors were required to amass 100 hours of volunteer work by the time they finished their freshman year. Crawford completed those hours before transferring but wanted to do more.

“I volunteered in recreation programs for individuals with various disabilities,” she said. “In addition, as part of my class work, I worked in the special education department’s lab school and taught swimming to a child who attended that school.”

Upon graduation, Crawford received the Twyla Hord Memorial Award as the outstanding senior in special education. The monetary award was given to a special education student who was beginning a teaching career and had demonstrated achievement as an undergraduate.

“After graduation, I taught in special education in Virginia for three years,” Crawford said. “My education at Slippery Rock prepared me well for this, and I felt I had a better background than some of the other special education graduates who were teaching at the time.”

Crawford received her master’s degree in occupational therapy from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and graduate certificates in behavior analysis and autism from Penn State University. Today, she has her own occupational therapy practice in the Harrisburg area. Occupational therapists treat patients with injuries, illnesses or disabilities through the therapeutic use of everyday activities. Crawford specializes in early intervention with infants and toddlers.

“Although I am an occupational therapist and a board certified behavior analyst, I also consider myself a special educator,” she said.


Crawford said she would like to see more alumni get involved with giving back.

“I would love to see others step up and give,” she said. “In these difficult economic times, I imagine there are many students who are struggling financially. Even small donations help defray costs. Being able to help and honor others is very gratifying, and we hope to continue to add to the scholarship.”

“Often for my birthday or our anniversary, Greg will put more money into our scholarship fund to honor the occasion since there really isn’t anything material I want,” she added.

The Crawfords have grown the principal of the Merle Jan Moses Endowed Scholarship account to \$25,000. Each year, investment income is used for the scholarship recipient’s award.

The Merle Jan Moses Crawford Scholarship provides an annual award to a junior majoring in special education. The department chooses a student who has demonstrated financial need and maintained a grade point average of 3.3 or higher. The scholarship is renewable for the student’s senior year.



“...Even small donations help defray costs. Being able to help and honor others is very gratifying, and we hope to continue to add to the scholarship.”

Merle and Greg Crawford are frequent travelers. They recently visited “The Lost City of the Incas” in Peru.



Annuity

provides couple 'give and receive' solution

Joette Miller, '73, and Michael Steele are retired educators who wanted to make a gift to Slippery Rock University but were also concerned about their retirement nest egg. Their solution: investing in a deferred charitable gift annuity, a perfect way to achieve their philanthropic and financial goals.

"Although our gift annuity is part of our long-term financial income planning, that is only part of why we chose to get involved," Michael Steele said. "Universities can only be as strong as the ongoing commitment of employees,

alumni and friends. A charitable gift annuity was the right thing to do both as a financial resource for income for us and long-term philanthropy for the Slippery Rock University Foundation and the University."

Annuities are a good choice for donors who want to create a steady income stream for the future, including retirement. "A charitable gift annuity is a contract between the donor and the University Foundation. In exchange for an irrevocable gift of cash or securities, the Foundation agrees to pay the donors a

fixed income each year for the annuitant's lifetime," said Samantha Swift, director of development for the SRU Foundation.

Steele said it is even more critical for alumni and friends of the University to consider an annuity because of diminishing financial support from state and federal sources.

"This involvement is even more important now that a war is being waged on public universities and school districts," Steele said. "Since we were looking for a means of providing a secured source of income through our retirement

years and as a means of continuing our scholarship commitment for future students, the deferred charitable gift annuity was the logical vehicle that met our long-term goals.”

Miller said the annuity is mutually beneficial. “We’re giving to the University, which we believe in, and are getting income in return,” she said.

Miller joined SRU as a freshman in 1970 and graduated three and a half years later. Steele received his bachelor’s degree from Duquesne University. In 1986, both received master’s degrees from Duquesne in secondary administration. They are retired educators with the Pittsburgh School District and live in suburban Pittsburgh.

Miller recalls her student days with affection. She lived in Bard Hall, attended

“Additionally, we feel it is most important that anyone with ties to SRU step up to the plate and financially show their support for public education in these extraordinarily difficult times of draconian funding.”

Both encourage others to take a look at the advantages of a gift annuity.

“Annuitants must be age 55 or older and an annuity requires a gift of \$10,000 or more – part of which you can take as a charitable tax deduction,” Swift said.

Steele said SRU has also provided them opportunities to expand their social network by participating in University events while making a difference in the lives of students.

“We see our support of Slippery Rock University as a way to make good on our commitment to support public education

Norma Laughner, ’48, said she established a charitable gift annuity because SRU is “close to my heart.” Laughner taught English at SRU from 1959-1969 and served as secretary of the alumni association from 1960-1989. Her late husband Carl Laughner, ’49, taught English at SRU from 1955-1970 and served as alumni association director from 1970-1978.

Several years ago, they launched the Carl and Norma Watson Laughner Scholarship, which provides up to \$1,000 a year to a student who is related to an alumni association member.

The annuity is another way to give back, Laughner said.

“When we sold our house I had extra income,” she said. “SRU is close to my heart. It’s the place I grew up, I went to school, and it’s the place where I taught. The annuity is a good way to invest. You’re allowing your feelings for a place and your confidence in a place to be backed up, and it provides you with income. It’s a win-win.”

Interested in learning more about a charitable gift annuity? Contact Samantha Swift at the SRU Foundation, 724.738.2191.

“A charitable gift annuity was the right thing to do both as a financial resource for income for us and long-term philanthropy for the Slippery Rock University Foundation and the University.”

– Michael Steele

classes in buildings that had no official name at the time, such as “Classroom Building 1” and “Classroom Building II,” and liked to hang out at “The Hut,” which is the current Art Building.

Claire Settlemyer, a retired history professor, and the late William McKay, education professor, were her academic mentors.

“Slippery Rock gave me so much,” Miller said. “If it hadn’t been for Dr. Settlemyer and Bill McKay, I don’t think I would have been a success in teaching.”

Steele worked at SRU from 2005-2011 supervising student teachers. The annuity was a chance to give back.

“I felt it was appropriate for me as a former employee to financially support the University’s mission,” he said.

and the important role the University plays in providing educational opportunities to students of the commonwealth,” he said.

Miller said Slippery Rock changed her life and will remain with her always. “The genes of SRSC have embedded themselves into my DNA,” she said. “She will always be a part of my goals for future students.”





Olsen's labors produce bountiful results

Rooted in a lifelong desire to see the world and nourished by the seeds of service sown by a Slippery Rock University professor, Todd Olsen's life has borne an abundance of fruit over the last 20-plus years.

Recognition of Olsen's lifetime commitment to helping others came in late June when he became the first Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference student-athlete inducted into the Capital One Academic All-America® Hall of Fame.

Induction into the Hall is reserved only for a select group of individuals who attained Academic All-America® status during their collegiate careers and then



went on to achieve success in their personal and professional life.

The Academic All-America® program is coordinated by the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA).

"I was very proud to have been selected as an Academic All-American during my playing days," Olsen said.

"I wasn't a great athlete but I worked hard at my academics, so it was nice to be honored for those efforts."

"To be elected to the Academic All-America® Hall of Fame is extremely humbling," he said. "It is an amazing honor. I am proud and privileged to represent Slippery Rock, Lynchburg and my family on this national stage."

Olsen achieved national notoriety

for his role as the ultra-successful Head Women's Soccer Coach at Lynchburg College in Virginia.

But in the eyes of the Hall's selection committee, the wins and losses and championships pale in comparison to Olsen's humanitarian efforts.

Partnering with Sports Outreach Institute as a community public health epidemiologist, Olsen has worked in several underdeveloped areas to assist residents attain clean drinking water and fight the spread of malaria and other diseases.

Former Rock men's soccer student-athlete Todd Olsen, kneeling far right, has coached Lynchburg College women's soccer teams to 12 NCAA Division III postseason tournament appearances in the last 15 seasons.

... 'If you can't feed a hundred people, feed just one.' That's become my mantra. We just try to help one person at a time have a better life and, in the long run, we are helping many.

Olsen has led Lynchburg students, including student-athletes, and members of his family to lend a helping hand in Argentina, Costa Rica, Kenya, and Uganda. "Countries where wars and politics have left the society in shambles," Olsen said.

"The people we serve are very appreciative of what we bring to them, the help we lend them," Olsen said. "They know us as people who are there to help them and they welcome us with open arms."

Each trip is a life-changing experience, Olsen said.

"When our group first arrives in these countries, they are overwhelmed by the helplessness they find. Then they quickly realize what we can do to help them and we get to work."

Olsen himself was a bit overwhelmed when he began his overseas treks. "But eventually I came to appreciate what Mother Teresa once said: 'If you can't feed

a hundred people, feed just one.' That's become my mantra. We just try to help one person at a time have a better life and, in the long run, we are helping many."

Looking back at the many trips overseas he and his groups have made, the most rewarding part is "the seeds we've sown over the years are now reaching fruition. We can see the fruits of our labors when we go back to areas we had previously visited."

The roots to Olsen's caring for others can be traced back to his undergraduate days at The Rock and a special education course taught by the late David Auxter.

"Dr. Auxter was a terrific teacher and very involved in the Special Olympics," Olsen recalled, "so I decided that was something I wanted to do, too. Looking back, I have to say, that was what got me thinking about helping people who were less fortunate than I am."



Todd Olsen watches as residents of an African village put into practice his instructions on improving the quality of their lives.



Todd Olsen has partnered with the Sports Outreach Institute to take several trips to Argentina, Costa Rica, Kenya and Uganda to help residents learn safe health practices.



Join us this fall for these exciting events

AUG. 10

SRU Alumni and Friends
GOLF OUTING
at Oakview



AUG. 25-26

WEEK OF WELCOME
Hall move-in. Last weekend before classes begin Aug. 27

SEPT. 15 **VILLAGE FEST**
Slippery Rock's Annual Festival featuring crafts, food and lots of entertainment.
Also Friends and Family Weekend

Sunset Serenade

Fundraiser for Storm Harbor featuring entertainment, food, drinks and lots of raffles.

OCT. 6

OCT. 20

Homecoming

Celebrate SRU through the years. Class reunions. Picnic. Parade. ROCK football vs. Edinboro



Todd Olsen and members of the Lynchburg women's soccer program dedicated a deep bore fresh water well constructed in Uganda in memory of former LCWS student-athlete Anna Wright, who was killed in an automobile accident in the summer of 2010.

Olsen also paid tribute to the late Jim Egli.

"Coach Egli was a major influence in my life," Olsen said of the former SRU men's soccer coach who passed away in August 2011. "He took a chance on a player who wasn't that great of an athlete and allowed me to be part of his program and learn the finer points of the game."

"I have tried to model myself after Coach Egli in everything I do as a coach and as a person," Olsen said.

"I am so thankful and God-blessed," Olsen said. "I have an excellent job, I am around great kids everyday here at Lynchburg, I get to coach a sport I love and I get to do the things I love, which are helping others."

In the process, he's creating a legacy.

"I am so happy I have been able to take my family and members of my team along with me when I've gone overseas," Olsen said. "This has given me the chance to show them I'm not just 'Dad' or 'Coach.' I'm able to be a model of service for them to follow as they mature."

Serving others is an ongoing thing with Olsen and his groups. In April, his group collected 1,000 cans of food for Parkview

Mission, the local food bank. In May, he led a group of 10 students back to Uganda.

The travel bug bit Olsen early on in life through family vacations. The lust for the road was nurtured by the nine months of "down time" he had between graduation from SRU in 1986 and the start of a Rotary International Fellowship at Loughborough University in England, as

I have an excellent job, I am around great kids everyday here at Lynchburg, I get to coach a sport I love and I get to do the things I love, which are helping others.

well as his time in the United Kingdom.

"I went a lot of places, saw a lot of different kinds of people and experienced different cultures during that time," he recalled. "It was a great time in my life."

As Lynchburg's head coach, the great times have truly blossomed, as evidenced by the 275 wins recorded by the Hornets in Olsen's 18 seasons as head coach. Olsen has only experienced one losing season and has taken 12 teams to NCAA Division III tournaments in the last 15 seasons. Since 2000, his squads have earned five Sweet 16, three Elite Eight berths and one Final Four berth.

KALEIDOSCOPE

Kaleidoscope Arts Festival • April 15-29, 2012



The 11th annual Kaleidoscope Arts Festival boosted Slippery Rock University's presence as a regional provider of arts entertainment and education. Hundreds of alumni and friends of the University attended concerts, lecture series, theatre shows and children's day. The final events were the dedication of the newly named James C. Myford Art Sculpture Building and the inaugural Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition.

I am The **ROCK**

Linda Derk, '87, education/ health and physical education

DAY JOB: I am the owner and president of LDI Sports Consulting in St. Petersburg, Fl. For the past 11 years, my company has provided quality fast pitch softball instruction to youth and coaches worldwide. LDI also offers motivational speakers and professional consulting to build positive community programs.

BACKGROUND: I grew up in Ligonier. Sports were always my passion. But growing up before great awareness of Title IX, there were not many options for girls and organized sports in my small town. Thankfully, my parents, Ronald and Veronica, were instrumental in getting Little League boy's baseball to allow me to play. The rest, as they say, is history. After coaching many years at the college level and playing elite level fast pitch softball, I was hired as the first full-time head coach of the Tampa Bay FireStix women's professional softball team.

INFLUENCE OF SRU: I found my way through Slippery Rock University sports. I was a two-sport athlete in high school and had the opportunity to pick between Penn State and Slippery Rock. I was able to play two sports at The Rock. Because of that and the smaller college environment, I chose Slippery Rock. I look at my time at Slippery Rock as my door to opportunity. I received a great education, had a wonderful sports career and made many friends. As an alumna of The Rock, I believe it is important to give back. I have been active in donating directly to the softball and basketball programs. Giving back, to me, is more than financial contributions. It is educating youth on where we were in the past and how we can make a better future. I always say, 'Success is a journey not a destination.' I'm glad SRU was part of my journey.