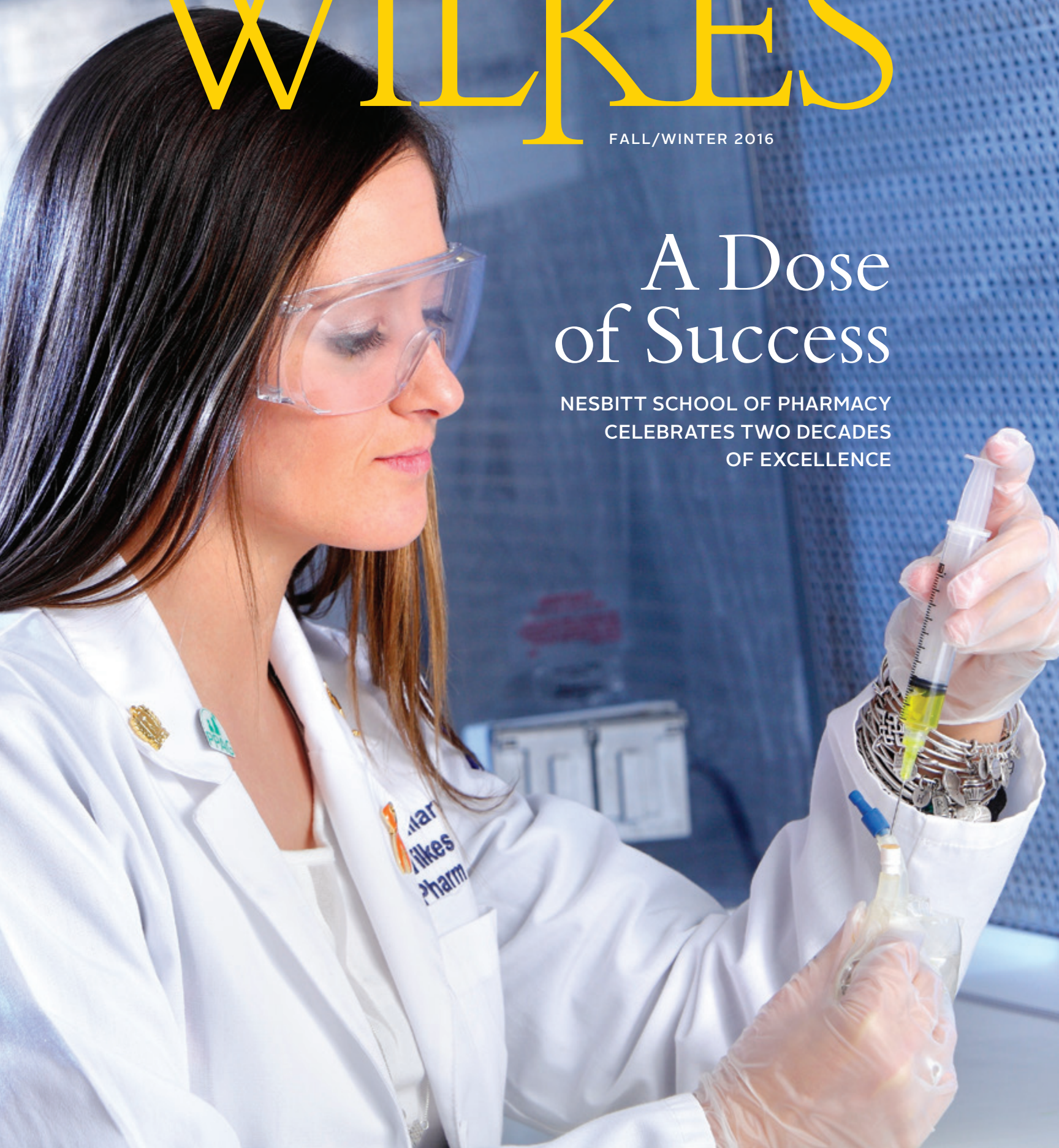


# WILKES

FALL/WINTER 2016

## A Dose of Success

NESBITT SCHOOL OF PHARMACY  
CELEBRATES TWO DECADES  
OF EXCELLENCE





# president's letter

## Wilkes Continues Academic Evolution With New Nursing Doctorate

**T**hursday, November 4, 2016, was yet another seminal moment in the storied history of Wilkes University.

On that day, the faculty held its monthly meeting to discuss matters important to our institution. During the meeting, the faculty as a whole overwhelmingly endorsed the development of the University's first Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree—the Ph.D. in nursing. Why is this so important? It marks the beginning of the next phase of the University's evolution. Let me explain.

In 1933, our institution was founded as Bucknell University Junior College, a two-year school to prepare local students for transfer to Bucknell's main campus in Lewisburg. In 1947, we became Wilkes College, a four-year bachelor's degree granting institution. In 1961, we offered our first master's degree. And, in 1990, we became Wilkes University, a name change which much more

adequately reflected our commitment to undergraduate and graduate education.

In 1996, we offered the University's first doctoral degree, when we started the Nesbitt School of Pharmacy and offered the Doctor of Pharmacy degree.

Today, we at Wilkes University serve as many graduate students as undergraduate students. In fact, over the past few years, we are one of only a handful of universities across the country to confer at least 400 bachelor's degrees, 800 master's degrees, and 100 doctoral degrees in the same year. Our Ph.D. Program in

Nursing continues our dedication to serving students to solve societal challenges. There is a significant shortage of qualified academics to teach the next generation of nurses, and our Passan School of Nursing wants to be part of the solution. We have always been the institution that offers academic opportunity, and the creation of our first Ph.D. program is further proof of this enduring commitment.

As we continue to expand the scope and scale of our graduate programs, Wilkes University will likely for the sixth time in our history change our Carnegie Classification to a "Doctoral Research University – Modest Research." This new designation, made possible in large part due to the expansion of our programming, will provide a fresh opportunity to position this relatively small university among the greatest universities in the nation, while still preserving the mentoring, tight-knit culture that has been our heritage.

There has never been a more exciting time to be part of Wilkes University. Thank you for all the ways you continue to support your alma mater!



President Patrick F. Leahy shares plans for the South Campus Gateway at a campus news conference.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick F. Leahy".

**Dr. Patrick F. Leahy**  
*Wilkes University President*

# WILKES

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### WILKES MAGAZINE

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Wilkes University is an independent institution of higher education dedicated to academic and intellectual excellence in the liberal arts, sciences and professional programs. The university provides its students with the experience and education necessary for career and intellectual development as well as for personal growth, engenders a sense of values and civic responsibility, and encourages its students to welcome the opportunities and challenges of a diverse and continually changing world. The university enhances the tradition of strong student-faculty interactions in all its programs, attracts and retains outstanding people in every segment of the university, and fosters a spirit of cooperation, community involvement, and individual respect within the entire university.



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Student pharmacist Hillary Harris works in the Care Lab.  
PHOTO BY EARL AND SEDOR PHOTOGRAPHIC

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Have a story idea to share?

Contact us at [wilkesmagazine@wilkes.edu](mailto:wilkesmagazine@wilkes.edu) or *Wilkes* magazine, 84 W. South St., Wilkes-Barre, Pa. 18766.

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## Transformational South Campus Gateway Projects Announced

A \$3.5 million South Campus Gateway initiative will transform Wilkes and the streets bordering it into a parklike campus in the heart of the City of Wilkes-Barre.

President Patrick F. Leahy says the South Campus Gateway will make the campus safer and more attractive, increasing Wilkes' unique appeal as a University that offers programs comparable to a large, research university in the mentoring culture of a small, liberal arts college.

"This is another step in our vision of creating a residential campus in an urban environment," Leahy says. "This space will be enjoyed by our students, faculty and staff and by people who live and work in Wilkes-Barre."

Dan Cardell '79, chairman of the University's board of trustees, said that the project embodies priorities outlined in the institution's strategic plan, Gateway to the Future.

"The strategic plan calls for us to develop and strengthen our campus facilities and infrastructure. It also emphasizes supporting our host city," Cardell says. "This project marries those two strategic priorities. These campus enhancements have the added benefit of helping us recruit more students and improving the neighborhood surrounding Wilkes. It is a win-win-win for Wilkes, our students and for the City of Wilkes-Barre."

The project combines University resources with Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and Department of Community and Economic Development funds to improve pedestrian safety, alleviate traffic congestion and beautify the campus and surrounding neighborhood.

The three parts making up the South Campus Gateway are:

- \$1 million project to create new entrances to the Henry Student Center parking lot from South River Street and South Franklin Street. It will also create an expanded south entrance plaza to the student center and landscape open space on South Franklin Street that will serve as a pedestrian connector to the Henry Student Center. The project is funded by the Multimodal Transportation Fund program, which provides grants for transportation-related projects. Wilkes received a \$650,000 grant and is matching it with \$350,000.
- \$1.35 million project to create a new pedestrian walkway in front of the Henry Student Center. It also will fund streetscape improvements, including new sidewalks and lighting, on West South Street from South River to South Franklin Street and also on South Franklin from West South to Northampton Street. Funding for these improvements came via the PennDOT Transportation Alternatives Program, which provided a \$1 million grant that is being matched by \$350,000 from Wilkes.
- \$1.15 million project to create a gateway from the Henry Student Center to Stark Learning Center. The project, which will be entirely funded by Wilkes, will create a Gateway on south campus similar to the one which the University opened in 2015 on South Main Street. The two Gateways will beautify the campus and support renovations to the engineering labs in Stark Learning Center.

Work is expected to begin in May 2017 with completion expected by fall 2018.

MORE  
ON THE  
WEB

For more information on the project, please visit [www.wilkes.edu/SouthCampusGateway](http://www.wilkes.edu/SouthCampusGateway).



The South Campus Gateway project will create a plaza behind the Henry Student Center, above. Right, a gateway also will be created from the Student Center across West South Street to the Stark Learning Center.





Senior Jillian Ehret gained international experience while interning at the United Nations.  
PHOTO BY DAN Z. JOHNSON



## United Nations Internship Yields Worldly Wisdom for Wilkes Senior

Wilkes senior Jillian Ehret didn't need a passport for her summer internship. But the Sugarloaf, Pa., native met people from around the globe every day during her internship with the United Nations. An international affairs and political science double major, Ehret interned with the Permanent Mission of Jamaica to the United Nations. Based in New York City, Ehret researched and attended briefings related to social and economic development issues. The internship is made possible through Wilkes' partnership with the Humpty Dumpty Institute, which brings a United Nations speakers' series to campus.

## New Research and Scholarship Fund Awards \$1 Million to Faculty

Faculty research and scholarship have long been an integral part of the student experience at Wilkes. Undergraduates begin to work in research with their faculty mentors as early as their freshman year in fields as diverse as biology, pharmacy, psychology, business and communications. Now a new faculty research and scholarship fund established by the University will encourage and support faculty with a particular emphasis on projects involving undergraduates.

The University awarded 12 grants in spring 2016, ranging from \$10,000 for a one-year project to \$30,000 for a three-year project. A committee made up of representatives from all of Wilkes' academic colleges and schools reviewed 18 applications to make the awards, which were judged on a set of criteria that included plans for sharing research results and how students would be involved in the projects. A second set of 9 proposals was funded in fall 2016. The funded projects will be highlighted at the Wilkes Scholarship Symposium each spring.

Terese Wignot, associate provost, says the grants are meant to provide a starting point for faculty research and scholarship. "This gives faculty the opportunity to get research going. We want it to be sustainable so that they can leverage this grant to get external funding," Wignot explains.

A diverse group of research and scholarship topics were awarded funding. They include:

- A project exploring factors contributing to entrepreneurial environments spearheaded by Morgan Clevenger, assistant professor of entrepreneurship.
- Research involving the analysis of protein dynamics by Del Lucent '03, assistant professor of physics.
- A project examining the role American lawyers have played in shaping international law in the twentieth century, led by John Hepp, professor of history.

## University Offers First Research Doctorate in Nursing, Adds Family Nurse Practitioner Program

The Passan School of Nursing continues its leadership role in nursing education with the introduction of a doctor of philosophy degree in nursing in summer 2017. The Ph.D. in nursing, which is a research-focused degree, meets a critical need in nursing education for Ph.D.-prepared nursing faculty.

The school also announced the addition of a low-residency family nurse practitioner degree. Wilkes is the only school in the region offering a family nurse practitioner degree online.

Deborah Zbegner, dean of the Passan School, says it is the first research nursing doctorate in northeast Pennsylvania and one of only seven nationally that will be offered online. "The addition of this degree further enhances the Passan School's position as a comprehensive school of nursing," Zbegner says, noting the school now offers nursing education from the undergraduate through doctoral levels.

*For an explanation of the significance of the doctor of philosophy in nursing degree and its impact on the University's future, please see President Patrick F. Leahy's letter on the inside front cover of the magazine.*



## Ice Hockey Added to NCAA Sports Offerings

President Patrick F. Leahy announced the addition of men's and women's ice hockey to its list of NCAA Division III varsity sports. The ice hockey teams are affiliated with the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins, allowing Wilkes to practice and compete at the Toyota SportsPlex at Coal Street Park in Wilkes-Barre. The women's team will debut in 2017-2018, with the men's team expected to begin the following year. The addition of the two ice hockey programs increases the number of intercollegiate sport offerings at Wilkes to 23. Wilkes will field one of only four NCAA Division III men's ice hockey programs and one of five women's programs in Pennsylvania.

Stephanie Newmark was appointed head coach of the women's ice hockey program.

The announcement of Wilkes' new men's and women's ice hockey teams took place at the Toyota SportsPlex, home of the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins. From left, President Patrick F. Leahy, the Colonel, Penguins mascot Tux and Jeff Barrett, chief executive officer for the Penguins, try out the ice. PHOTO BY LISA REYNOLDS

## New Members Welcomed to University Board of Trustees

Wilkes welcomed new members to its board of trustees in 2016.



**Carolann (Gusgekofski) Besler '76** has enjoyed a long career as an entrepreneur in the child care industry, owning centers and serving as a consultant to people opening daycare facilities. She has served as past president of the N.J. Child Care Association, a past validator for accreditation for existing child care centers and past member of the New Jersey governor's advisory council to set standards for child care centers receiving funds from the state government.



**Gerard McHale '67** is a certified public accountant in Florida and New York and is certified in financial forensics. His firm specializes in bankruptcies, insolvencies, receiverships, litigation support and mass consumer frauds. McHale has been a court-appointed Chapter 11 bankruptcy trustee on complex cases in Florida, Virginia, California and New York. He has had substantial success in recoveries under Ponzi schemes and mass consumer frauds.



**Eugene Roth '57** is a partner at the law firm Rosenn, Jenkins & Greenwald. In June 2016, Roth became the first emeritus member of the board to be re-nominated to the Board of Trustees. He previously served on the board of trustees, serving from 1979 through 2008. In 2008 he was recognized with emeritus status.



**William J. Grant MBA '86** is the founder of Hildebrandt Learning Centers LLC, based in Dallas, Pa. The company is a provider of employer related early learning programs for colleges and universities, state and federal governments and corporations in the Middle Atlantic region.

## Sidhu School Dean Brings International Experiences



Abel Adekola is the new dean of the Jay S. Sidhu School of Business and Leadership. Adekola will lead faculty and oversee academic programs in the Sidhu School. He also will facilitate programs and

partnerships with the Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship and the Family Business Alliance.

Adekola says his first priorities as dean are to raise the Sidhu School's profile from a regional business school to a national business school. He also plans to lead efforts to gain accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business—a seven-year process that he hopes to complete in 4 years.

A native of Nigeria, Adekola comes to Wilkes from the the University of Wisconsin-Stout in Menomonie, Wis., where he was dean of the College of Management, overseeing eight bachelor's degree programs, five master's degree programs and an ROTC program.

He was a Fulbright Scholar to ISM University of Management and Economics, Vilnius, Lithuania. He also received a Vietnam Faculty Development in International Business Program Fellowship in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Adekola earned the doctor of business degree from Nova Southeastern University, his MBA from Barry University and a bachelor's degree from Florida International University.



# LEADERSHIP LESSONS

**Field Hockey Captain  
Taylor Ryan Scores in  
Multiple Campus Roles**

by James Jaskolka '16

Field hockey captain Taylor Ryan practices at Schmidt Stadium.  
PHOTO BY CURTIS SALONICK

Watching Wilkes field hockey captain Taylor Ryan in action, she seems to be a natural leader. The senior communication studies major feels differently, however, crediting her experiences on and off the field with developing her ability.

"I definitely think that it came with time and experience.... It came with people, coaches and professors really pushing me to get where I am," she says.

Ryan, a Fredericksburg, Va., native who also has minors in marketing and women's and gender studies, has played field hockey since she was 7. Recruited to play for Wilkes, she was voted captain at the beginning of the fall 2016 season.

Ryan has led the team through a strong season that ended in the Middle Atlantic Conference Semifinals, but she's interested in more than just winning. As captain, she strives to make sure the team has chemistry, and that the younger players feel comfortable, included and valued. Her reasoning? She wants new teammates to have the experience she did as a first-year student athlete.

"If I was to designate one thing that's given me more than anything else, I would say it's field hockey," she explains. "It's really shaped me as a student and a person, but also as a leader, and it's set me up really well for my leadership roles now."

Ryan's leadership positions outside of athletics include serving as sports co-editor of *The Beacon*, Wilkes University's student-run newspaper, and as co-chair of Zebra Communications, the student public relations agency. She also was chosen to be a Kirby Scholar at the Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship. As a scholar, she assists local businesses—and the center itself—with everything from pitching press releases to establishing brand cohesion.

Ryan also is committed to giving back to the community. All sports teams complete community service projects. Leading Zebra, Ryan and the other co-chairs made it a point to take on clients that actively make a difference, such as the Special Olympics and the Children's Miracle Network.

To an outsider, it may seem like athletics and academics compete for Ryan's attention, but she doesn't see it that way. At Wilkes, she says, she never had to pick one facet of her identity over the other. She attributes this to the faculty and staff—from coaches to administrators—who encourage students to get involved and reach their potential.

"Coming to college is when I was able to break out of my shell," she says. "I evolved and gained that confidence because of the people I surrounded myself with, and I think that's the most important thing."



# A DOSE OF SUCCESS

## NESBITT SCHOOL OF PHARMACY CELEBRATES TWO DECADES OF EXCELLENCE

By Patty Pologruto

**You won't find the drugs produced by Lanier Evans PharmD '04 in your local pharmacy. That's because they include low doses of radioactivity used by hospitals for high-tech scans that help diagnose a variety of medical conditions, from cancer to heart problems.**

It's a career Evans never dreamed of when he first entered Wilkes' Nesbitt School of Pharmacy in 2000. He learned about being a nuclear pharmacist from Bernard Graham, founding dean of the Nesbitt School, who had once worked in the field himself.

"If it wasn't for him, I wouldn't be where I am today," says Evans, who is manager of a nuclear pharmacy in Atlanta, Ga., for PETNET Solutions, a division of Siemens Medical Solutions Inc. "He introduced this world to me."

At the time, only two pharmacy schools in the United States offered classes leading to nuclear certification. Because Graham and other faculty tailored classes to help prepare Evans for his field of interest, he didn't need to invest more time and money after graduation. "When I came out of

school, I had all of the requirements for the nuclear medicine certification. I was offered a position with PETNET, the company I'm still with," Evans says.

Evans' experience in the pharmacy school reflects its strengths: close relationships with faculty, a personal approach to pharmacy education and—perhaps most importantly—a school that continues to adapt its curriculum to meet the rapidly changing field of pharmacy. As Nesbitt celebrates the 20th anniversary of its first entering class, it continues to evolve.

The Nesbitt School of Pharmacy was first imagined by the late Umid R. Nejib, then dean of Wilkes' College of Science and Engineering. Nejib saw the need for pharmacy school in northeastern Pennsylvania, advanced the idea at Wilkes and hired Graham from Idaho State University to serve as dean.





The first student pharmacists entered Wilkes in fall 1994, and the professional pharmacy program commenced in fall 1996. It became the Nesbitt School of Pharmacy in 1999, when Geraldine Nesbitt Orr made a gift to the University to name it in honor of her late husband, Abram Nesbitt II. Then as now, two years of pre-pharmacy education lead to guaranteed seating for the four years of study toward the doctor of pharmacy degree. The program has tracks in pharmacy practice or pharmaceutical sciences.

The introduction of the pharmacy program also was a milestone for the University, becoming the first academic program offering a terminal degree—the highest degree in a field of study. It was a turning point in Wilkes’ academic history, says University President Patrick F. Leahy.

“Our goal is to create one of the great small universities, with all of the programs, activities and opportunities of a major research university in the caring, mentoring

environment of a liberal arts college. Nowhere is that goal more fully realized than in the Nesbitt School of Pharmacy,” Leahy says. “Our student pharmacists study in an outstanding program leading to a doctoral degree, mentored by excellent faculty. At the same time, they are able to enjoy a typical college experience, playing varsity sports, leading student government and participating in clubs and organizations.”

Pharmacists are the **third largest group of clinicians in the U.S.**, behind doctors and nurses.



Daniel Longyore, associate professor of pharmacy practice, standing center, works with students in the CVS Pharmacy Care Lab. The Care Lab, an integral part of education in the Nesbitt School of Pharmacy, was renovated and rededicated to mark the school’s 20th anniversary.

PHOTOS BY EARL AND SEDOR PHOTOGRAPHIC, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED





## DEVELOPING LEADERS

A pharmacist's role is more than filling prescriptions. That's been Graham's mantra since he became dean of the school in 1994.

"Pharmacists are in a more value-added role in health care today," Graham says. "The profession has moved from product-focused to patient-focused. There is a lot of responsibility today for pharmacists regarding medication therapy compliance." Pharmacists are expected to improve medication safety and prevent medication-related problems, contributing to positive

patient health outcomes and reducing hospital admissions.

To support these industry expectations, Nesbitt's curriculum now focuses on preparing its graduates for the reality of a value-based health-care environment. The school's integrated curriculum takes the students beyond the classroom and lab, with 30 percent of the program devoted to out-of-classroom externship programs. Shelli Holt Macey, director of experiential programs for pharmacy practice, has been a member of the faculty since the school's founding, and coordinates

opportunities for this critical piece of hands-on experience.

Knowing how to engage with patients and with other clinicians is essential to the growing number of pharmacists who are part of care teams seeing patients on hospital rounds or in outpatient facilities. Graham says that due to a primary care physician shortage, more pharmacists will act as physician extenders in doctors' offices, working with patients on medication management and compliance. To better prepare for these changing roles, many Nesbitt graduates go on to receive

## Lanier Evans PharmD '04 Focuses on Aiding Diagnoses

Lanier Evans PharmD '04 almost didn't become a pharmacist. He had long considered a career in dentistry. A stint working in a community pharmacy and time spent observing his brother juggle the challenges of opening a dental practice convinced him to consider a different career.

After graduating from Augusta State University in his native Georgia with a degree in biology and psychology, he applied to both dental and pharmacy schools. A visit to Wilkes with his mother convinced him, especially after he met Dean Bernie Graham.

"Never would you meet the dean at other places as part of the interview process," Evans says. "That impressed me and impressed my mom. Actually the decision was already made for me by my mom; she loves Dr. Graham and Dr. (Harvey) Jacobs." Assured that he would get personal attention, he enrolled in the Nesbitt School of Pharmacy. During his four years in the school, he not only earned a degree but also honed a career path. Encouraged by Graham, he sought a specialty in nuclear pharmacy.

Twelve years later, he serves as nuclear pharmacy manager for PETNET Solutions, a division of Siemens Inc. based in Atlanta. Evans and his team prepare drugs that include doses of radioactive isotopes. They are used by hospitals and clinics for diagnosing conditions using high-quality imaging tests, such as PET and CT scans.

About five batches of drugs are made each day at his lab. "Then we have to figure out how to get the drug to the patient. Our back is always up against time in this facility." Because the nuclear drugs can be used for only a limited time before losing their effectiveness, Evans and his crew have to calculate shipping time to a hospital to determine where and when the drugs can be used.

Despite the challenges, Evans is proud of the advances being made by nuclear pharmacists and researchers. "Nuclear is having a major impact on health care," he states. "In the last four years, two new drugs the FDA has approved are nuclear. One is a new drug for diagnosing Alzheimer's. The other is a new drug for diagnosing prostate cancer. Alzheimer's disease has been around for 100 years, but until now it could only be officially diagnosed postmortem. With this drug, people can be diagnosed earlier, while they are still alive."



Evans demonstrates a robotic device in handling the radioactive materials that nuclear pharmacists use to create medicines. PHOTO COURTESY PETNET SOLUTIONS



advanced education in specialty areas such as cardiology, oncology, pediatrics and emergency medicine.

The shift in the pharmacist's role may have started in the early 2000s, when Pennsylvania approved specially trained pharmacists to immunize patients in community locations like Walgreens. Nesbitt was the first pharmacy school in the state to put the American Pharmacy Association's Pharmacy-Based Immunization Delivery Certificate into its curriculum, requiring every student to earn it.

More recently, the school adapted its curriculum in response to the opioid addiction issue. "We are training students to identify people who abuse medications, including opioids," says Ed Foote, professor and chair, pharmacy practice. "We are teaching our students to identify risk factors and when to make an appropriate intervention. They also are being trained on how to administer the opioid overdose reversal drug naloxone."

New diseases also mean pharmacists need more information.

"Infectious disease lectures are continually being updated for topics like the Zika virus," says Zbigniew Witczak, professor and chair, pharmaceutical sciences. "A new trend in pharma teaching is putting more core science into the curriculum because pharmacists need that understanding," explains Witczak, who taught an elective course this fall on how marijuana impacts the body.

About 30 percent of Nesbitt students are involved in research. Witczak reminds his students that they cannot separate pharmacy from

## Eli Phillips PharmD '06 Forges Career Combining Law and Pharmacy

Not many people would choose to follow four years of rigorous study in pharmacy school with another three years of schooling to earn a law degree. Eli Phillips is one of them. When he completed his pharmacy degree at Wilkes, he was admitted to Drexel University's new law school, where he earned the juris doctor degree in 2010.

When he graduated, he became part of a small number of professionals who combine the fields of pharmacy and law. Among members of the American Society of Pharmacy Law, only around half of its members hold degrees in both fields. It was all part of a career plan for Phillips, a Wilkes-Barre native and son of a pharmacist and pharmacy store manager who worked for CVS.

"I always envisioned myself as an executive with one of the large pharmacy chains, so I weighed getting an MBA or a law degree," says Phillips, who worked for CVS in Philadelphia while attending law school. "I realized that the juris doctor would give me more options."

Phillips now works for Cardinal Health, a global healthcare services and products company, providing custom solutions for drug manufacturers as well as hospitals, ambulatory surgery centers, pharmacies, physician offices and clinical laboratories. Based in Dublin, Ohio, Phillips is director of quality and regulatory affairs and pharmacy compliance for the company's specialty businesses. His wife, Vanessa (Velikis) PharmD '05, is a pharmacist with Express Scripts, also in Dublin, Ohio.

Phillips oversees a team of 52 who work with six of Cardinal Health's businesses. They include the Cardinal Health repackaging business—which literally repackages larger quantities of drugs into smaller units for sale at pharmacies, and the Cardinal Health specialty drug distribution arm, which delivers expensive drugs or drugs that require special handling, such as refrigeration. He also works with two specialty pharmacies owned by Cardinal Health in Baltimore, Md., and Nashville, Tenn. These specialty pharmacies dispense high-end drugs used to treat rare conditions impacting small numbers of patients. Other areas of responsibility include the company's private label business, which produces in-store brands such as the Leader brand, used by the Medicine Shoppe chain, and Sonexus, a manufacturer support and third-party logistics provider that handles inventory on behalf of manufacturers.

"My role is to keep the supply chain of pharmaceuticals safe for patients and their families, by making sure that we're meeting FDA and other federal and state regulatory requirements," Phillips says. Frequent changes make keeping track of state and federal regulations challenging. "You have to be nimble to keep up," he says. Technology continues to impact the profession, he explains, citing the introduction of track and trace provisions that will allow companies and regulatory agencies to track every bottle of medication by serial number.

No matter how swiftly regulations change, ensuring quality always means one thing for Phillips and his colleagues. "Keeping patients safe always is the top priority," he says.



Eli Phillips, PharmD '06 combines expertise in pharmacy and law in his position at Cardinal Health. PHOTO COURTESY CARDINAL HEALTH

When the Nesbitt School of Pharmacy opened its doors, it was the **80th school of pharmacy in the country.**



Half of Wilkes pharmacy graduates go into **community pharmacy**, a third go to a **residency or graduate training** and a third go into **other aspects of pharmacy work**, such as academia, sales and research.



science. While Nesbitt's curriculum is built on an interdisciplinary approach involving academic disciplines such as business, nursing and education, Witczak is a proponent for students taking more core science courses. It's a position that makes sense for a research scientist who recently became president of the International Carbohydrate Organization. He is working to establish an anti-cancer drug derived from carbohydrates. He also is working with four students synthesizing carbohydrates as a potential drug for antibacterial agents and anti-diabetes.

Not all pharmacy research is about creating new drugs. Students and faculty members conduct retrospective medical file reviews and analyze data for health-care systems, processes and trends that pharmacy can impact.

Judith Kristeller, professor of pharmacy practice, and Dana Manning PharmD '08, associate professor of pharmacy practice, recently received a \$150,000 grant from Cardinal Health Foundation to expand a system for improving the transition of care and medication use for patients discharged from Commonwealth Health Network hospitals to home. In addition, Kristeller and Manning have also been awarded a \$41,000 grant from the Moses Taylor Foundation that will further support the project, which focuses

on improving medication safety, preventing medication-related problems and preventing hospital readmissions. Students will assist with the research.

Nesbitt students also are participating in the Interprofessional Student Hotspotting Learning Collaborative, an annual program that trains interdisciplinary teams of professional students from schools around the country to learn to work with patients who are high users of emergency services in their own communities.

Under the guidance of Jennifer Malinowski, associate professor of pharmacy practice and assistant dean of academic affairs, three student pharmacists are part of inter-professional teams studying patients who frequent the emergency departments of Geisinger Health System and Wilkes-Barre General Hospital. The student pharmacists are joined by medical, social work and physical therapy students to develop solutions on reducing emergency room visits. They are expected to present their ideas to top administrators at the hospital systems aimed at achieving better health at lower cost through a hands-on approach which includes home visits. Team members are training at local institutions such as The Commonwealth Medical College, University of Scranton and Marywood University.

Julie Olenak, professor of pharmacy practice and assistant dean of student affairs, clarifies a point for students.

## MENTORING MATTERS

**T**hanks to yearly entering class sizes of about 70 students, Nesbitt faculty truly know their students and mentor them for success. The mentoring process starts in the pre-pharmacy first year, when students are placed into a team of 12 that includes a faculty member, an upperclassman and an alumnus as mentors.

Scott Bolesta PharmD '00 says his career was impacted by a culture of mentorship that began with the start of the school. Now a Nesbitt associate professor of pharmacy practice, he was the very first Wilkes student to be handed a doctor of pharmacy degree in 2000. It was while shadowing several former faculty members that Bolesta decided he wanted to specialize in critical care, with an ultimate goal of teaching. After several critical care residencies, Bolesta returned to Wilkes in 2005 to teach. Today, he spends three days a week with students at his clinical site, Regional Hospital of Scranton. He rounds with the care team in the hospital's intensive care unit and regular floors.

All pharmacy practice faculty also work in clinical settings. Most faculty members spend 50 percent of their time managing patients in a doctor's office or clinic, and Nesbitt students then have the opportunity for introductory or advanced practice experiences with those faculty members.

"I shadowed a pharmacist at the Geisinger Care Site Pharmacy in Scranton and found the patient interaction and the role of controlling the patient's blood thinners intriguing," says second year student pharmacist Nikko Bonavoglia. That experience helped Bonavoglia decide he wants to be a pharmacist in the ambulatory care setting.



## EXPERIENTIAL PROGRAMS PROVIDE DIRECTION

A lot goes on for Nesbitt students outside the classroom. Experiential programs and community service are requirements that help guide career decisions.

Sarah Fillman, fourth-year student, said her internship at Geisinger Health System definitely will impact her career. While at Geisinger, she piloted a program to establish public awareness to promote proper drug disposal. Fillman received the U.S. Public Health Service

Award last spring for that work. She is the third Nesbitt student in four years to win the prestigious award.

Geisinger is one of a number of health systems offering experiential learning for student pharmacists. Hospitals in nearby Scranton and Wilkes-Barre, as well as others in Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley, Hershey, Pa., and New York state provide opportunities for Nesbitt students. Pharmacies and drug companies also provide externships.

Third-year student pharmacist James Steigerwalt participated in a summer 2016 internship at Baltimore's Johns Hopkins Hospital with 24 other students from pharmacy schools across the nation. "I was a little apprehensive that the students from the larger schools would be more experienced and prepared for the program, but I learned that the Nesbitt School offers the same high-level education and experiences as other schools. In fact,

## Solidifying Roots in the Crestwood Community

### Sonya Mylet PharmD '07 and Jessica Ashford Orloski PharmD '10 Co-own Crestwood Pharmacy

Sonya Mylet PharmD '07 and Jessica Ashford Orloski PharmD '10 didn't know each other well as students, but their experience as student pharmacists took them both to Crestwood Pharmacy, which they now co-own.

Mylet worked at the pharmacy during high school and throughout her time at Wilkes. She also completed pharmacy rotations that included Indian Health Services in New Mexico, veterinary medicine at Cornell University and in neonatal intensive care. She credits the Wilkes pharmacy program's rotation options for helping her discover what she wanted to do professionally. After graduation she worked for The Medicine Shoppe in Wilkes-Barre and Dallas, Pa.

The year Mylet left Crestwood Pharmacy, Orloski became its student intern. After graduation, she completed a one-year

community pharmacy residency, splitting her time between researching, teaching classes at Wilkes and working at The Medicine Shoppe in Dallas, Pa. Jim and Mark Hanlon, brothers who co-owned Crestwood Pharmacy for over 30 years, hired Orloski after her residency. One year later, they hired Mylet and began cutting back their own hours. That's when Mylet and Orloski approached them about buying the business.

"In the beginning they weren't ready to retire because they liked to come to work every once in a while," Orloski says. "Then after about a year or two they decided to sell."

Mylet and Orloski became owners on Jan. 30, 2015. Owning a pharmacy comes with myriad challenges, from dealing with insurance companies to fixing toilets and shoveling snow. However, the patients remain Mylet's and Orloski's main focus. Owning a community pharmacy gives them the freedom to make every interaction personal. "I like knowing that we're helping our neighbors, family and friends," Mylet says.

They also maintain their ties to Wilkes, taking student interns year-round. Orloski still teaches part-time at the University and fills in for professors.

They plan to continue expanding their services and continue to promote Crestwood as a family pharmacy. "I like to bring my kids here, I like to see Jess' daughter, Eva, here," Mylet says. "We're more of a family business. We want our families to be here too."

– By Francisco Tutella MFA'16

Sonya Mylet PharmD '07, left, and Jessica Ashford Orloski PharmD '10 chose community pharmacy for their career path when they became co-owners of Crestwood Pharmacy in Mountain Top, Pa.  
PHOTO BY CURTIS SALONICK



## Nesbitt School of Pharmacy's Founding Dean Bernard Graham Sets Tone for Excellence

An appointment to take Bernie Graham's photo to mark the 20th anniversary of the Nesbitt School of Pharmacy starts with a joke. Getting ready to pose for his portrait as the school's founding dean, Graham dons a pair of fake glasses, complete with false nose, mustache and eyebrows. Pressing a miniscule button, the mustache and eyebrows flutter up and down.

"How's that?" Graham asks, his blue eyes twinkling before he doffs the joke eyewear and assumes a serious pose.

Graham's sense of humor is legendary—just as is his 100 percent dedication to the Nesbitt School of Pharmacy.

When he retires at the end of the 2016-2017 academic year, Graham will be honored for leading a successful pharmacy school that continually evolved since its inception more than two decades ago. The faculty, students and more than 1,000 alumni of the Nesbitt School know they owe a lot to Graham. In spring 2017, faculty, staff, alumni and students will have the opportunity celebrate the dean's vast accomplishments as he prepares to retire.

"I cannot say enough about Bernie," says Harvey Jacobs, associate professor. "He led us through the initial accreditation and through three subsequent evaluations. He has met the changing climate of pharmacy and allowed Wilkes' School of Pharmacy to remain competitive in the ever-growing market. He recruits and retains highly qualified faculty and staff."

Graham likes to point out that the currently enrolled pre-pharmacy students were not born when the school started more than 20 years ago. He says Nesbitt is "old" now, but in reality it is a highly regarded, competitive doctoral program thanks to Graham's leadership.

"I am proud of what Dean Graham has accomplished," says Nesbitt alumnus and assistant dean of student affairs Julie



Bernard Graham, the founding dean of the Nesbitt School of Pharmacy, will retire at the end of the 2016-2017 academic year. PHOTO BY CURTIS SALONICK

Olenak PharmD '03. "The passion we have now is the same as when it was back when the school started. Dean Graham has provided consistent leadership and has stayed true to the school's mission and vision."

One example of Graham's visionary leadership is a commitment to engaging Nesbitt alumni by recently naming Jon Ference PharmD '03 as the assistant dean of assessment and alumni affairs. Ference says he will develop a program to engage alumni in mentoring roles, and he plans to form a Dean's Advisory Council made up of alumni who will provide input on the school, curriculum, industry trends and education and training needs.

Current students also value Graham's experience and vision. James Steigerwalt, third-year student, is serving as the president of the Pharmacy Student Senate. "Dean Graham encourages me to find ways to better represent and act upon the needs and concerns of the student body," says Steigerwalt. "He offers great insight when challenges arise, and I feel I am learning a lot about my leadership potential by having the opportunity to work closely with him."

The Nesbitt School of Pharmacy has a **98 percent graduation rate.**



I think our school provides more leadership and research opportunities than many other schools, and we receive more one-on-one attention from our faculty and professors that allows us to excel outside the classroom."

Opportunities also exist in countries far from the Wyoming Valley. Some students have traveled with Graham to Guatemala on medical mission

trips. Others take part in five-week externship opportunities in Uganda and the United Kingdom.

In the Amazon jungle in Peru, Fillman studied pharmacology, physical chemistry and ethnobotany of medicinal plants. "This was an irreplaceable experience that extended far beyond the classroom, broadening my social, environmental and global perspectives," she says.



## EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS, EXCEPTIONAL ALUMNI

William's list of college accomplishments and activities is long: cross-country runner, minors in neuroscience and psychology, first-year student mentor, biology teaching assistant, bystander intervention student trainer, a member and leader of numerous clubs and organizations. Her involvement is not unusual.

Steigerwalt is executive president of the Pharmacy Student Senate and a member of Phi Lambda Sigma and Rho Chi Society. He's a musician who plays in the University's Civic Band and Chamber Orchestra. Bonavoglia is the policy vice president-elect for the American Pharmacists Association chapter at Wilkes and advocates for Pennsylvania legislation that impacts pharmacists.

The three students reflect the level of engagement for most Nesbitt School students. Upward of 20 percent of student pharmacists play Division III Athletics. Six out of the seven past student body presidents were student pharmacists. Many participate in activities like band and dance. More than 95 percent of Nesbitt students participate in professional organizations, and about 40 percent go off-site to professional meetings and conferences.


"Nesbitt students excel, and they are motivated, dedicated and highly professional," says Jon Ference PharmD '03, associate professor of pharmacy practice and assistant dean of assessment and alumni affairs.


Great students start with a great admissions screening process. Julie Olenak PharmD '03, associate professor of pharmacy practice, and assistant dean of student affairs, says Nesbitt takes a "holistic approach" when selecting students that includes assessing leadership and communication skills as well as academic ability.

Those are skills that will remain important as future student pharmacists specialize in areas like public health, medicine/genomics, hospital pharmaceutical management and independent pharmacy ownership—all programs being considered for the Nesbitt School of Pharmacy.

Nesbitt alumni confirm the variety of opportunities in the field. Pharmacy graduates work locally, in places such as community pharmacies. Others have roles where they may have impact on a national level, such as Susan (Pellock) Polifko PharmD '05 and Stephanie

(Victor) Begansky PharmD '08, who both work for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Others, such as William Eggleston PharmD '14, literally make national news. Eggleston, a clinical toxicologist at SUNY Upstate Medical Center, was quoted in the May 10, 2016, *New York Times* about a report he authored detailing new abuses of the over-the-counter anti-diarrheal drug loperamide.

"You will never be bored in pharmacy," states Olenak. "We will always be learning and teaching something new." 

Wilkes remains above state and national pass rates for the North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination, with a **97.9 percent three-year average first-time pass rate**. School graduates have a **99 percent pass rate on the Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Exam**. 



Edward Foote, professor and chair of pharmacy practice, center, discusses preparation of injectables with student pharmacists Abby Stevens, left, and Erika Zarfoss.

# Head of the Class

## Melanie Wiscount EdD '15 Earns Presidential Teaching Award

By Kelly Clisham MFA '16

**One glance at Melanie Wiscount EdD '15's résumé and you understand why she won a Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics and Science. She's snagged major honors ever since she switched careers to teach computer science at the middle- and high-school levels. During her 13-year teaching career, Microsoft selected her as a Partners in Learning U.S. and Global Educator. Siemens honored Wiscount as a STEM Institute fellow. Now there's the presidential honor, a national prize that comes with \$10,000 from the National Science Foundation.**

Still, when Wiscount talks about her work with the District of Columbia Public Schools, she doesn't highlight her expertise or honors. She brags about her students, who team up to develop award-winning mobile apps and land prestigious internships with the likes of Microsoft, Lockheed-Martin, Accenture, World Bank and NASA.

Working with a generation of kids who seem to be born with mobile devices in hand, does Wiscount worry about these young computer whizzes outpacing her? Not a chance. She relishes it. "I want them to question me. I want them to beat me out," she says. "They're going to find something they're experts about, and that's where the confidence comes in. Throw in a little bit of innovation and we've got tomorrow's change-makers."

Change has been a constant in Wiscount's career, and she proudly embraces it. She majored in accounting at Bloomsburg University, taking math and computer science courses for fun and graduated summa cum laude. She worked as an accountant for years but found she kept asking herself, "How can I serve other people in a better capacity?" Her answer: "Teaching is perfect for that."

She earned a master's in business education and started teaching at her alma mater, Pine Grove Area High School in Pine Grove, Pa. She enrolled in the doctor of education program at Wilkes in 2007. Wiscount quickly developed an interest in educational reform, and while Pennsylvania was cutting school budgets, Washington, D.C., was putting money into education. Wiscount took a year off from the doctoral program and made the move to the District of Columbia schools. "It was completely different than anything I've ever done."





Melanie Wiscount  
works in a new  
high school in  
Washington, D.C.

She completed her Wilkes doctor of education in educational leadership with a concentration in educational technology in 2015. Her dissertation examined the effects of kinesthetic learning, or learning through movement. Wiscourt wanted to learn if students who learned about math kinesthetically would perform better on standardized tests. As part of her research, students kinesthetically manipulated the coefficients of the quadratic function using body movements and gestures using Microsoft Xbox Kinect camera.

Wiscourt loves the challenges, and the rewards, of teaching in an urban setting. For some of her students, the nation's capital is not about museums or cherry blossoms. "A lot of my students live in neighborhoods surrounded by violence. They think they're destined for that kind of future," Wiscourt says. "They're not used to people believing in them and their potential."

Wiscourt does, but more importantly, she teaches them how to believe in themselves. "I teach hope," she says. "I teach hope every single day." Wiscourt tells the story of a former student who always showed up late for school. When she told him that he wouldn't secure an internship if he couldn't make it on time, he explained that his mother was seriously

**"The name of the award says it all. She's an excellent teacher in the STEM arena. She works incredibly hard. She's dedicated to the students. She cares about them as people."**

– Anthony Priest, District of Columbia schools' career and technical education program manager



Wiscourt encourages Elijah, one of her students, during an afterschool meeting of the technology club.



ill and he was responsible for getting his 2-year-old sister to daycare using public transportation. On her recommendation and the strength of his work, the student persevered and landed a top internship. “That’s what I mean about hope.”

Wiscount’s colleagues can’t help but notice her commitment to her students—and fellow teachers. Emmanuel Schanzer of Bootstrap World nominated Wiscount for the Presidential Award. The two first crossed paths years ago at a conference, then again at a workshop. Bootstrap is an open-source framework for building website and web applications.

According to Schanzer, “Bootstrap teaches students to program their own videogames in a way that has been shown to reinforce, rather than undermine, key concepts in mathematics.” Wiscount has used Bootstrap content with her own students, and has shared the work with other teachers and administrators. “She’s a veteran Bootstrap teacher and has had wonderful success with her students. She’s been an incredible advocate,” says Schanzer.

Anthony Priest, District of Columbia schools’ career and technical education program manager, worked with Wiscount when she taught at McKinley Technology High School in Washington. Priest is not at all surprised that she’s been recognized for excellence. “The name of the award says it all. She’s an excellent teacher in the STEM arena,” says Priest. “She works incredibly hard. She’s dedicated to the students. She cares about them as people.”

Since June 2016, Wiscount has put her dedication to student success to use as the educational technology instructional coach at Ron Brown College Preparatory High School. The all-male high school focused on young men in the District of Columbia, especially young men of color. It opened in August with a class of 104 ninth-grade students, with plans to add another grade each year and graduate its first class in 2020.

The high school is a one-to-one school, providing one device—a laptop computer—to each student. The school refers to this policy as one-to-world, meaning they teach students to use technology responsibly to connect with a global community. Wiscount’s teaching philosophy encourages students to be creators rather than consumers. Why download an app when you can develop one? Why buy a video game when you can design your own? Her dedication gives her students confidence to try new things, make mistakes and figure out how to fix them. “They become the experts. That empowers them. It’s really magical.”



Melanie Wiscount works with the tech leaders of the future. Pictured seated are Nashad, Wiscount and Christian. Standing, left to right, are Jelani, Amir, Elijah, Anthony, Kai and Adrian.

**Melanie Wiscount EdD '15, Alexandria, Va.**

**Doctor of Education, Wilkes**

**Master of Science, Business Education, Bloomsburg University**

**Bachelor of Science, Accounting, Bloomsburg University**

**Career:** Accountant turned computer science teacher and educational technology coach at middle and high schools in Pennsylvania and Washington D.C. Now teaching at Ron Brown College Preparatory High School in Washington, D.C.

**Notable:** Winner of a 2016 Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics and Science. The award was established to recognize and encourage outstanding teaching in the STEM fields.

**Favorite Wilkes memory:** Dr. Gina Morrison’s “Leadership, Diversity, & Societal Change” class in her first week in the doctor of education program. “She asked us to write down our full name on a piece of paper and then to add ‘Dr.’ in front of our name. She asked us to look at our name with the title and know it’s our vision. It is up to us to create our path to it. I thought of that moment many times during the doctoral program...”

# Storyteller

## Wilkes' Oldest Graduate Anna Arnett MA'16 has Tales to Tell

By Geoff Gehman



Bonnie Culver, director of Wilkes' graduate creative writing program, prepares to recognize Anna Arnett as the University's oldest graduate.  
PHOTOS BY LINH LAM

Kathleen “Kat” Ethington issued a gentle ultimatum in December 2013 to her then 89-year-old mother, Anna Arnett MA '16. It was high time, she told her mom, to write a book about her late Mormon parents, a pair of potato-farming school principals with a pioneer zest. She needed to preserve her tales on paper for her seven children, 28 grandchildren and 49 great-grandchildren.

That day at her Mormon church in Chandler, Ariz., Arnett learned about the Wilkes weekender program in creative writing at the nearby Mesa Center for Higher Education. For

once, Arnett—who describes herself as a “procrastinator from the word go”—defied her tendency to dillydally, driving that same day to the center. The program would allow her to pursue a degree by attending class on weekends and writing at home the rest of the time. Learning that her late husband’s military benefits would pay for the degree, she enrolled. Two years and many written pages later, she became the oldest graduate in Wilkes history, earning her master’s degree in creative writing at 92. In the process she completed a memoir of her parents’ early lives called *Forever Endeavor*.



Arnett's family story could be the basis for an epic novel. Her mother grew up on a cattle ranch in a log cabin with a dirt floor, a dirt roof and a "nice" fireplace. It was a hardscrabble start for a salt-of-the-earth mom of five who taught kindergarten. Her father was an innovative math teacher who let students proceed at their own pace and tested them without written exams. A shrewd psychologist, he awarded a 1916 silver dollar to the first pupil who finished a book's exercises. "And that was back when a silver dollar would buy something," says Arnett, who playfully adds that her dad didn't scold her for hating math. "Numbers play hide and seek in my brain," she says.

Arnett's husband, Charles, was an Air Force pilot imprisoned in an abandoned German concentration camp during World War II. She married him 10 days after he proposed, eager to erase the discomfort of two years of separation. "It's what you call a whirlwind courtship," she says. It was so whirlwind, she adds merrily, that she flunked all her college finals.

Like many military wives, she followed her husband to assignments in Australia, Japan and 16 states, moving her family 29 times. After completing a year-long hitch alone in Vietnam, Charles urged Arnett to resume her college education. At age 45, with her oldest child in high school and her youngest child entering kindergarten, she enrolled at Arizona State University. At night she studied in the bathroom, the only place with a light that wouldn't wake her sleeping loved ones.

She earned a bachelor's degree in secondary education, followed by a master's in teaching secondary English. She put the disciplines to work by co-founding, teaching at and directing a school for pregnant teens and leading an association of women who wrote at night.

Returning to school many years later at Wilkes, Arnett still fit in well with her much younger classmates, who dubbed her "Miss Anna." She impressed poet Spencer Aubrey MA '16 with her wit, wisdom and keenly rendered stories about her parents. Aubrey, a part-time surveyor of new subdivisions, says "Miss Anna" is inspiring his poems about single mothers, including his sister.

She charmed Darcy Breault MA '16 with her positive attitude, strict attention to good grammar and stylish outfits of pink T-shirt, yoga pants and "cute" boots. Breault, a supervisor of college-credit programs for five high schools, says she's more likely to weave fiction into nonfiction thanks to Arnett. "She would tell us: 'You never get to an age when you can't focus on writing and you can't be publishing,'" says Breault. "You can always be following your dream."

Arnett also found an ally in her Wilkes faculty advisor, J. Michael Lennon, professor emeritus of English and co-founder of the creative writing program. Lennon praises Arnett's panoramic, probing portrait of Mormon migration. "She is a superb writer with an eye like a pair of tweezers for the telling detail. Through her mother's journals, and her own memories, she has put us in close touch with that golden time in American history when Mormon families walked across a continent to build lives in the West," Lennon says.

Arnett thanks Lennon for instilling a dedication to deadlines, easing her procrastination. She thanks her Wilkes classmates for easing the loneliness she's felt since the 2008 death of her husband Charles. "He was the most perfect man I could have stood to live with," Arnett says fondly. According to daughter Kat Ethington, with whom she lives, "Wilkes' program made (my mother) feel more productive and more important. It definitely enhanced her life."

Arnett continues to enhance her life by pursuing a master of fine arts in creative writing at Wilkes. Lennon is guiding her research paper on great teachers in literature. As far as she's concerned there's still a lot she wants to do.

"It's a fascinating, wonderful world, and I'm not eager to leave it. I sometimes wonder at people who say they can hardly wait to get beyond this life to eternal peace and rest and praising God," Arnett says. "That would be good for me for a week, but after that, you want something you have to do.... But life is good, life is great. When I'm down, I think how good it is and then I'm feeling up."



**Anna Arnett MA'16, Chandler, Ariz.**

**Master of Arts, Creative Writing, Wilkes**

**Master of Arts, Secondary Education, English,  
Arizona State University**

**Bachelor of Arts, Secondary Education,  
Arizona State University**

**Career:** Self-published poet and memoirist. Founder and director of the first school for pregnant teens in Mesa, Ariz.

**Noteworthy:** Oldest graduate in Wilkes history at age 92.



Anna Arnett is interviewed by Arizona news media about life-long learning.

## TAKE THE COLONEL TO YOUR CLASSROOM!

The Colonel has traveled all over the world, thanks to our adventurous alumni. Just look at our Facebook album to see all the places he's been! Now we're asking education alumni to teach the Colonel a thing or two by taking him to your classrooms. Email [alumni@wilkes.edu](mailto:alumni@wilkes.edu) to get your flat Colonel. Then, take him to your classroom and snap a photo to send us!



Kevin Sickle '03 MS '09 taught the Colonel a thing or two about science in his classroom at Heights-Murray Elementary School, Wilkes-Barre.



Alumni honored at A Celebration of Education event are pictured with Rhonda Rabbitt, left, dean of the School of Education. Honorees were Kevin Sickle, second from left, Jillian Mullen and Dawn Sutton. PHOTO BY JACQUELINE LUKAS

## Alumni Honored at A Celebration of Education Event

A Celebration of Education was held on Nov. 9 at Wilkes in honor of American Education Week. Wilkes education alumni, faculty members and educators enjoyed time with friends while honoring Wilkes education alumni for their contributions to the field of education and the Wilkes community. Proceeds from the event benefit education scholarships for Wilkes students.

Kevin Sickle '03 MS '09 received the Educator of the Year Award. Sickle earned his bachelor's degree in psychology and elementary education and a master's degree in educational development and strategies, both from Wilkes. He has been a fifth-grade math and science teacher at Heights-Murray Elementary School in the Wilkes-Barre Area School District for 12 years. Outside the classroom, he has served as second vice president of the Wilkes-Barre Area Education Association for four years. In addition, he has been the director of the Heights-Murray Elementary School spelling bee for 12 years and the director of their science fair for 10 years.

Jillian Mullen EdD '16 and Dawn Sutton '74, EdD '16 received the Diane Place Doctoral Dissertation Award for their outstanding dissertations in the University's doctor of education program.

Mullen's research dissertation was, *A Comparative Analysis of Nontraditional Students' Perceptions of Mattering in Small Private Catholic Four-Year Academic Institutions*. Mullen has been the executive director of the Schuylkill Community Education Council in Mahanoy City, Pa., for 14 years. The council is a state-funded nonprofit organization promoting higher education and workforce development.

Sutton, who also received her undergraduate degree from Wilkes, was honored for her dissertation, *A Phenomenological Study: Understanding the Experiences of Emotional and Behavioral Disorder Students in the Use of Virtual Reality Environments*. Sutton is a math and special education teacher for high school students at Vision Quest Academy.



## Borzell Family Creates Legacy in Memory of John 'Beno' Borzell '11

Seventeen may be just another number to the average person, but to Jack, Mary Claire and Julianna Borzell, it evokes the memory of a son and brother. Number 17 was worn by the late John 'Beno' Borzell '11 throughout his athletic career.

The number 17 appears everywhere in the Borzell family's efforts to create a legacy in John's honor. In 2017, the family will make the last payment on the environmental chemistry lab in the Cohen Science Center that bears his name. The payment will be made on Earth Day 2017 as a tribute to John's love of the outdoors and the environment. Seventeen high school students at John's high school, Wyoming Area in Exeter, Pa., also have received scholarships due to the Borzells' generosity.

John passed away on Sept. 3, 2011, at age 22 from serious injuries sustained from a motorcycle accident. He had received his bachelor of science degree in earth and environmental science from Wilkes just four months before. John was a skilled athlete, determined student, devoted family man, avid outdoorsman and so much more to those who knew him.

Before entering Wilkes, John graduated from Wyoming Area High School in 2007. He was scouted by many schools to play football and baseball, and could have received scholarships, but he chose to focus his studies on the environment. He first chose Penn State University, but before formally committing there John had a change of heart.

"He came to me and said, 'Dad, you know as well as I do that I want to go to Wilkes,'" says Jack, a retired boilermaker. Jack remembers that the small class sizes and personal attention from the professors were extremely important to his son.

After John passed away, Jack, Mary Claire and Julianna decided that they wanted to keep his memory alive through philanthropy and embracing the things that John loved the most: Wyoming Area High School, Wilkes University and the environment.

"The month after John passed, I saw in the newspaper that Wilkes would be building a new science building," says Mary Claire. "I looked at my husband and said, 'We need to get a room for John.'"

The family had to decide between endowing a scholarship or naming a room in John's memory in the Cohen Science Center.

"We decided on the room in the science center because he always wanted to help other students," says John's sister, Julianna. "By having this lab named after him, this was one way he could continue to do that, even after he's gone."

Each year since 2012, the family has raised money through the John 'Beno' Borzell Golf Tournament. This year, 144 golfers participated in the tournament on Sept. 17, 2016. Donations from family, friends and boilermakers were received. More than 70 baskets and multiple prizes also were donated.

"The support is truly overwhelming. Since we moved our tournament to Emanon Country Club, it has been sold out for the past two years. It's already sold out for next year," says Jack. "Beno had a ton of friends, who all participate in the tournament."

The family says that their donations to Wilkes keep John's memory alive and it helps the family cope with the loss. One of John's life goals was to make a name for himself and the Borzell family continues their tireless work with that in mind.

"Every time a student walks by his room, he's making a name for himself," says Jack.

In addition to their generosity to Wilkes, the Borzell family also awards scholarships to Wyoming Area West High School students—\$1,700 per student to represent number 17 that John wore during his athletic career at Wyoming Area.

The family has more plans for their future giving to Wilkes University. They are considering a scholarship and investing in other campus improvements such as the Stark Learning Center and South Campus Gateway.

"Any money we make, we give it back. I think that's what John would want," says Mary Claire. "We want to give back to Wilkes—always."

**"We decided on the room in the science center because he always wanted to help other students."**

— Julianna Borzell

The Borzell family work together on the golf tournament honoring the late John "Beno" Borzell '11. Pictured from left are Mary Claire, Julianna and Jack Borzell.  
PHOTO COURTESY BORZELL FAMILY



## Kelly Pleva '14 Launches Opera Career on the Right Note

Kelly Pleva '14 came to Wilkes as a musical theatre major. But thanks to the guidance she received at the University, the Schuylkill Haven, Pa., native is on a new path, working toward a career in opera.



She's already achieving success. In summer 2016, Pleva attended the prestigious Franco-American Vocal Academy in Salzburg, Austria. While there, she performed the role of Madame Herz in Mozart's comic opera *Der Schauspieldirektor*. The training program at the academy included daily classes in German language, diction, voice, weekly master classes and performing a recital.

"My experience with the Franco-American Vocal Academy was wonderful," says Pleva, who is a coloratura soprano. "I came to work very closely with some of opera's best voices, take master classes with opera professionals, and coach new music with world-class musicians."

Pleva met her new voice teacher, John Fowler, while in Salzburg. During a 30-year career as an operatic tenor, voice teacher and opera director, Fowler has performed title roles on many of the world's premier stages, including the Metropolitan Opera, winning an Emmy for his performance as Rodolfo in the "Live at Lincoln Center" production of *La Bohème*. Pleva and Fowler realized they had worked with some of the same companies back in the States, including OperaLancaster.

"Since returning from Austria, John has continued to train me, and I have now had four professional performances thanks to him, as well as many new connections that will only aid in getting my career off the ground," she says. "I am so incredibly grateful for everything he has done for me and am very excited to see where else this will lead us."

Pleva also credits Wilkes with starting her successful pursuit of her dream. As an undergraduate, she sang in many musicals and concerts, including roles as Mrs. Walker in *Tommy* and Gertrude McFuzz in *Seussical*. It was not until she came to

Wilkes that she was exposed to opera for the first time by her music teacher Susan Minsavage.

Minsavage suggested Pleva try singing opera, and she found her true voice. Although there was no major in classical voice, many on the Wilkes faculty went beyond their appointed roles to train her in classical music. "I owe so much to the theatre community. The Wilkes resources allowed me to springboard into opera," says Pleva.

After graduating, she entered New York University's Steinhardt School and earned her master's degree in classical voice in December 2015. While in graduate school, she made her debut at Carnegie Hall in 2014 with the New York Lyric Opera singing Juliette in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*.

Currently Pleva is singing in concerts throughout the South, and auditioning for professional companies here and in Europe. She is looking forward to returning to northeast Pennsylvania during the holiday season to perform for the Arcadia Chorale's annual Messiah Sing-Along, directed by another one of her mentors, Steven Thomas, Wilkes professor of music and chair of performing arts at the University.

– By Jennifer Jenkins MA'16

"I came to work very closely with some of opera's best voices, take master classes with opera professionals, and coach new music with world-class musicians."



Pleva studied opera in Salzburg, Austria, in summer 2016. PHOTO COURTESY KELLY PLEVA



## Undergraduate Degrees

**1969**

**Robert S. Wallace II** of North East, Md., retired after 41 years as a high school choral/instrumental director with the Cecil County, Md., public schools. He is dean-elect of the Delaware Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and director of music at St. Mary Anne Episcopal Church. He is a published composer.

**1972**

**REUNION: OCT 6-8**

**Ronald Rittenmeyer** of Plano, Texas, was named chairman and chief executive officer of Millennium Health in April. He was named chairman earlier in 2016.

**1977**

**REUNION: OCT 6-8**

**Karen Line** of Wilkes-Barre and her company, Strategic Sports Alliance, hold the rights to "Snowflex," a synthetic system that would create conditions for year-round skiing in the area.

**1978**

**Barry Niziolek** of Wilmington, Del., was named executive vice president and chief financial officer of Trinseo on June 13, 2016. Niziolek was most recently vice president and controller at DuPont for 34 years.



**1978**

**John Lack** has released two works of fiction, *The Other Side of the Kneeler* and *Tempest's Arc*. They are available through Amazon.

**1979**

**Daniel Cardell** of Palatine, Ill., purchased The Windsor Inn in Jermyn, Pa., putting the establishment under new management.

**1982**

**REUNION: OCT 6-8**

**Ed Eppler** of Bethlehem, Pa., joined Discover Lehigh Valley as vice president of finance and operations. Eppler has been with Discover Lehigh Valley as director of finance since April 2012. Previously, he worked at Concannon Miller, CPAs, and Fling Vacations. Eppler founded and ran his own accounting and tax firm, Eppler & Company, for 17 years.

**1983**

**Gautam Yadama** of St. Louis, Mo., was named dean of the Boston College School of Social Work. Prior, Yadama was assistant vice chancellor for international affairs and professor in the George

Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis.

**1984**

**Douglas Evans** of Wilkes-Barre is the director of collections for the Westmoreland Museum of Art.

**Steven P. Roth** of Shavertown, Pa., was named managing partner of the Law Firm of Rosenn Jenkins & Greenwald LLP in January 2016. He represents a number of the region's leading businesses.

**1985**

**Mark Mrozinski** of Arlington Heights, Ill., is among the inaugural class of the Aspen Presidential Fellowship for Community College Excellence based in Washington, D.C. Mrozinski also serves as assistant to the president for special projects at Harper College in Palatine, Ill., and is the lone fellow from Illinois.

**Nancy (Pardy) Cabot** of West Tisbury, Mass., was recognized for her work in spearheading the Art Club at Windemere Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. The residents' artwork was displayed at the Martha's Vineyard Museum.

**1989**

**Linda McAndrew** of Clarks Summit, Pa., presented a paper, "Pain Management of the Substance-Using Trauma

Patients and the Impact on Nurses: A Systematic Review," at the 28th annual Eastern Nursing Research Society Scientific Sessions in Pittsburgh.

**Maggie Lipperini** has been awarded a fellowship in the American College of Healthcare Executives. Lipperini is the executive director of orthopedics and neurosciences at Regional Hospital of Scranton.

**1990**

**Marc Palanchi** of Ledgewood, N.J., was named the Roxbury, N.J., police chief in March 2016. He began working for the police department in 1994.

**1991**

**Mary Gould**, of St. Petersburg, Fla., retired from active duty in the Air Force in May. Gould served from September 1991 through May 2015. Prior to her retirement, she served as political/military Afghanistan and Pakistan adviser and legislative affairs officer of U.S. Central Command.

**1993**

**Margaret Fiscus** of Scranton, Pa., was named director of vocational services at Allied Services. In her new role, her responsibilities include oversight of all facets of the community employment program, the William Warren work services facility and the adult day program.

## Three Alumni Help Pay It Forward With SmartSwapp

Jordan Semar '10, Kevin Gerhart '11 and Anthony Griseto '12 are hoping to turn the concept of paying it forward into a successful online business with the creation of their website SmartSwapp. It is a site they believe will make a significant contribution to the “sharing economy” revolution brought about by services like Airbnb, where users pay minimal prices to stay in homes of people in different parts of the world.

SmartSwapp is a web-based and soon-to-be smart phone application used to connect people in order to exchange tasks and services. To explain the SmartSwapp concept, Semar uses moving into a new home or apartment as an example.

“Whenever anyone helps somebody else move, afterwards they always say, ‘Hey I owe you one,’ ” Semar says. They have created a site where that hypothetical moving helper can be paid back—not in money—but in a credit toward another task. The mover can use his or her credits to fix a burst pipe, receive an oil change, or even have someone take notes for a particularly dull lecture.

Griseto explains that unlike most “sharing economy” apps such as Airbnb, Spinlister, and others, SmartSwapp offers something unique. Users may have to pay a small, \$1 connection fee or \$3.99 for an unlimited month of connections, but they won't have to pay individual costs for specific tasks. In this sense, people are really only paying with their time. Griseto



Kevin Gerhart, Anthony Griseto and Jordan Semar celebrate at the launch party for their online business, SmartSwapp.  
PHOTO COURTESY SMARTSWAPP

says, “People can save a lot of expendable income and will have more money to spend on doing more things but also improve productivity.”

Semar, who majored in integrative media, lives in Wilkes-Barre, where he does graphic design for Ebay. Griseto and Gerhart both graduated with business degrees and work for Pella Windows And Doors in the Boston area.

Griseto and Semar came up with the idea for the site after discussing a similar application geared toward homeowners. The pair felt they needed to broaden the user demographic. Griseto proposed the idea of exchanging services. Gerhart was contacted to help finish turning the idea into a reality.

– By Hillary Transue MA '15

### 1994

Nicole Cooper of Mountain Top, Pa., married Marc Cefalo on Sept. 19, 2015, at the First Presbyterian Church, Wilkes-Barre. She is employed as finance director by Morgan Advanced Materials.

### 1996

Karen Bednarczyk Cowan and her husband, Scott, celebrated the birth of their third child, Shepherd Michael Cowan, on Dec. 29, 2015.

### 2003

Matthew Beck of Fredon, N.J., was selected as superintendent of the Andover Regional School District. Beck began his career in education teaching social studies in East Orange. Prior to becoming the superintendent, he served as the assistant superintendent at Sussex County Technical School.

### 2005

Daniel P. Cook of Pottsville, Pa., graduated from Villanova University in 2016 with a master's degree in water resources and environmental engineering. He is employed as a project engineer at Alfred Benesch and Company.

### 2008

Lisa Dreier and Jared Clossen, celebrated the birth of their son, Dean Anthony Clossen, on Nov. 2, 2015. They live in Wilkes-Barre.



2010

Jason Woloski, of Plains, Pa., was elected to the Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians Board of Directors. He is currently chief family medicine resident physician at Penn State Hershey Medical Center. He has accepted a position with Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center beginning in 2017.



Daniel DiMaria of Forty Fort, Pa., married Adrienne Trego, in North Carolina, where they now reside, on May 28, 2016. The two were married at the North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher and spent their honeymoon in Ireland.

## 2009

Jared Nothstein of Dallas, Pa., joined St. Luke's Medical Associates of Monroe County in East Stroudsburg, Pa. Nothstein specializes in internal medicine and recently completed a three-year internal medicine residency at St. Luke's University Hospital in Bethlehem, Pa.

Michele Garrison MBA '12, of Wilkes-Barre is the regional education specialist on the south campus in Wilkes-Barre for The Commonwealth Medical College.

## 2010

Christopher Gulla, of Berlin, N.J., accepted a new position as an associate attorney with Zeller and Wieliczko, LLP.

## Graduate Degrees

### 1973

Jay Sidhu MBA, of Mohnton, Pa., served as the keynote speaker at Entrepreneurship Week at Kutztown University. Sidhu also received an honorary degree from Albright College during its 157th Commencement on May 22, 2016.

## Alan Hack MS'10 EdD'14 Becomes State's Youngest School District Superintendent

When Alan Hack completed his doctor of education degree at Wilkes in 2014, he never guessed that two years later he'd be putting it to work as Pennsylvania's youngest school district superintendent. In July, Hack was selected to lead the Warrior Run School District at age 30.

Hack started his career as a middle school math teacher, teaching first in the Northwestern Lehigh School District and later at Danville Middle School. While teaching, he earned a master's degree in education in 2010 and his doctor of education in educational administration, both from Wilkes. He'd been serving as assistant principal at Warrior Run Middle School when he learned that the superintendent position was open in the rural district. Warrior Run includes townships in three Pennsylvania counties: Union, Montour and Northumberland.

"I am truly honored and humbled to have the opportunity to serve Warrior Run in this capacity. Regardless of age, the position of superintendent is highly complex and requires support from others both in and outside the organization," Hack says. "There is always something new to learn, and I will continue to learn from those around me—those who are smarter than me. My success as a leader will be dependent on the success of our board, administrative team, teaching staff, and support staff all the way down to the individual students at Warrior Run."

In addition to his Wilkes degrees, Hack says he gained valuable insights when he was named a fellow with the Pennsylvania Educational Policy Fellowship Program in 2015-2016. While maintaining full-time positions, fellows develop a deeper knowledge of education policy and increase their professional network in child development and human services. "The EPFP was an invaluable experience and is among the best professional development for any educator," Hack says. "Political advocacy is our responsibility as an educator to ensure our



students receive the highest quality education possible. Whether the advocacy occurs at the local and state levels or at the national level, we have a responsibility to our constituents, but more importantly our students."

– Jennifer Jenkins MA'16



Alan Hack, pictured outside Warrior Run High School, went from assistant principal to superintendent in the district. PHOTO COURTESY THE DAILY ITEM

**2010**

Megan Brady PharmD, of Swoyersville, Pa., married Luke Ruseskas on Oct. 15, 2015, at Friedman Farms in Dallas, Pa. She is employed by CVS as a pharmacist.

**2013**

George Tyler Behlke PharmD and Michelle Marie Choate PharmD of Palmyra, Pa., married on May 9, 2015. Choate is a staff pharmacist at Rite Aid in Lebanon. Behlke is a staff pharmacist at Rite Aid in Harrisburg.

**2015**

Doreen Rasp MS joined Advanced Behavioral Counseling providing pharmacological management for a variety of mental health disorders. Rasp has been a registered nurse since 1995.

## Sara Crolick '12 Finds Writing Career at Startup MeetMindful.com

English graduate Sara Crolick '12 is writing her life's current chapter working as the managing editor for MeetMindful.com. Crolick began working with the online dating website focused on mindful living two and a half years ago.

With the startup based in Denver, Colo., Crolick works from her home in Kingston, Pa., staying in touch through virtual meetings. She is in charge of 15 to 30 writers as well as providing content, creating a weekly newsletter, publishing and managing day-to-day needs. Crolick finds herself submerged in a world she never anticipated working in.

"I handle the publication part of the site, but it's also a dating site. The fact that I'm working with a dating website to this day still blows my mind," she says. "Being involved in a startup has been something I never anticipated for myself either. There's this whole entrepreneurial world that I had no idea even existed."

Crolick creates relationship-based content on MeetMindful, using her own experiences as inspiration.

"The umbrella the whole website sits under is mindful living; some people call it conscious living. That embodies more than people even expect it to," she explains. "Whether it's meditation, eating healthy, shopping locally, whatever it is... It's [for] people who identify with that lifestyle and the content is meant to support people on that mindfulness journey."

She says her Wilkes experience helped her to develop the managerial skills she uses on the job. She credits supportive faculty such as Lawrence Kuhar and Thomas Hamill, both associate professors in the English department. Crolick also says that it is the English department community in Kirby Hall that she misses.

"Kirby Hall is just like this safe haven for ideas and how you express yourself, and it's such a safe space to grow and learn," she says.

She continues with her own writing, which includes the 1000 Moments Project, which was inspired by a Facebook challenge called 100 Happy Days. She also publishes her own work on her blog, [www.conversationswithahumanheart.wordpress.com](http://www.conversationswithahumanheart.wordpress.com).

"My love has always been literature and creative writing," she says.

– By Sarah Bedford

**2006**

**John Bednarz M.A.** of Shavertown, Pa., has been selected as a Pennsylvania Super Lawyer for 2016. Since 1991 he has been a board-certified civil trial attorney and is the only claims attorney practicing in Wilkes-Barre named a Super Lawyer in the practice area of workers compensation. He has been a member of the Board of Governors of the Pennsylvania Association for Justice since 1988. The Pennsylvania Association also honored him in 2011 with the George F. Douglas Amicus Curiae Award for his outstanding appellate advocacy as an amicus brief writer on worker compensation topics before the Commonwealth Court and Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. He has been practicing law in Wilkes-Barre since 1978.



Crolick returns to her favorite Wilkes place, Kirby Hall, home of the English department.

**2011**

**Erin Hardiman MBA**, of Ocean City, N.J., returned to the University of Miami in March 2016 as the assistant director for business operations. She oversees all aspects of athletics department purchasing and accounts payable.



# In Memoriam

## 1948

**Shirley (Phillips) Passeri**, of Sun City Center, Fla., died on April 23, 2016.

## 1949

**John W. Edwards Jr.**, of Plymouth, Pa., died on May 13, 2016. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He also worked in the Department of Public Welfare.

**Louis Pezzner**, of Ashley, Pa., died June 25, 2016. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He worked for Pezzner Brothers Inc. briefly prior to working as an accountant with the Internal Revenue Service.

**Mary Jule McCarthy**, of Dallas, Pa., died on Aug. 8, 2016. McCarthy taught high school English in Havre de Grace, Md., and Doylestown, Pa. She also taught disadvantaged students at Red Rock Job Corps Center. She established the Christmas Shopping Fund at the center, enabling her students to buy presents for their families.

## 1951

**Robert J. Shemo**, of Wyoming, Pa., died on March 26, 2016. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1945. He was a dentist for 57 years and also taught radiology at Luzerne County Community College. He was a member of the board of directors of the Pennsylvania Academy of General Dentistry.

## 1953

**Joseph P. Hirko**, of Chico, Calif., died on March 26, 2016. He joined the U.S. Air Force in 1953 and served for 20 years. He worked for PG&E in Chico for 20 years.

## 1955

**Eugene V. Snee**, of Patchogue, N.Y., died in March 2016.

**Leo Kane**, of Clair, Pa., died on March 6, 2015. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He was the former owner and president of Credit Management Co.

## 1956

**Joseph Modla**, of Nanticoke, Pa., died on July 8, 2016. Working as an FDIC bank examiner, he was instrumental in the investigation and subsequent conviction of the Wall Street ponzi scheme led by E.F. Hutton.

## 1957

**Bess (Proferes) Efsathiou**, of Swarthmore, Pa., died on Feb. 25, 2016. She taught science in the Belleville (N.J.) Public School system, working at School Number 5, the junior high, and the high school as teacher and department head. She retired in 1994 as the district's science supervisor.

**Lena M. (Misson) Baur**, of Shavertown, Pa., died on June 9, 2016. She was a teacher for 36 years, teaching mathematics, chemistry, physics and geography. She also owned and operated the Treat Drive-Ins.

## 1958

**Thelma Januskiewicz**, of Edwardsville, Pa., died on June 6, 2016. She began her career teaching obstetrics at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital, working there for more than four decades.

**Wayne Pugh**, of Tunkhannock, Pa., died on June 18, 2016. He was a fifth- and sixth-grade social studies teacher for 36 years in the Tunkhannock Area School District. He also served as a wrestling coach.

## 1959

**Charles Dominick**, of Duryea, Pa., died on May 11, 2016. He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. He was a member of the U.S. Army Band. He became a professional musician and was also employed by the Hagerstown Area School District in Maryland teaching music. He retired from the Yurish Music Store in Kingston and continued to perform with the Starfires.

**James O. Thomas**, of Laporte, Pa., died on Jan. 25, 2016. He was the sole practitioner for 47 years at the Eagle Veterinary Clinic in Havertown, Pa., and member of state and national veterinary associations.

**Robert John Slabinski Sr.**, of Unionville, Conn., died Aug. 25, 2015. He worked for Royal Typewriter in Elmwood, Conn., and for UTC - Hamilton Standard. He was awarded several patents.

## 1960

**Donald Barovich**, of Gwynedd, Pa., died on Jan. 28, 2016.

**Donald Sabatino**, of Jenkins Township, Pa., died on May 3, 2016. He was a U.S. Army veteran of the Korean Conflict. He served as an elementary school teacher and principal in the Wilkes-Barre Area School District. He retired after 33 years of service. After retirement, he joined the faculty of the education departments at Wilkes University and King's College.

## 1961

**Leonard Gonchar**, of Kingston, Pa., died on May 25, 2016. He served in the Pennsylvania National Guard. He was co-owner of Carter Footwear and served as the executive in charge of sales.

## 1962

**Edmund J. Resperski**, of Pittston, Pa., died on July 25, 2016. Resperski was employed by Akzo Nobel, Clarks Summit, Pa., where he served as chief inventory controller. He also worked for Garwood Industries, Exeter, Pa., and Thomson Education Direct, Scranton, Pa., from which he retired.

## 1966

**Forrest Eichmann**, of Woodstown, N.J., died on Dec. 31, 2014. He taught music education for more than 20 years in various school districts. He also served as the

high school band director at Kingsway and Schalick high schools, both in New Jersey. He also was the director of emergency services in Salem County, N.J., retiring in 2002.

**John D. Wisloski Jr.**, of Doylestown, Pa., died Sept. 24, 2015. He taught elementary school at Abington Elementary for 38 years.

### 1966

**Michael D. Elias Sr.**, of Wilkes-Barre died on May 7, 2016. He retired from Penn State University Wilkes-Barre campus after 15 years as an instructor. He also worked for Wilkes University teaching computer science for several years prior to his retirement in 2014.

### 1969

**Dorothy “Dottie” (Bisher) Craig**, of Forty Fort, Pa., died on June 23, 2016. She was a professor at Luzerne County Community College. She was also active in the Forty Fort Borough Council.

### 1970

**Stanley Lewis Perry**, of Nanticoke, Pa., died on Feb. 3, 2016. He was employed by Luzerne County for more than 30 years.

### 1971

**Richard C. Mark**, of Leola, Pa., died Aug. 24, 2015. He was a retired United Methodist pastor.

### 1972

**Eugene “Gene” Pappas Jr.**, of Kingston, Pa., died on

May 26, 2016. He worked for McKinsey & Co. as a banking consultant and was a senior partner in the firm. He continued to work as a senior advisor until his death.

### 1973

**Leonard J. Zaikoski** of Wilkes-Barre died on May 29, 2016. He was an accountant for the Leslie Fay Co. for many years prior to retirement.

### 1974

**Francis A. Singer**, of Hughestown, Pa., died on Aug. 4, 2016. He was employed for 37 years as a paralegal and office manager at various legal firms including Fish and Neave PC, Arthur Young PC, Slade Pellman, Proskauer LLP and Akin Gump, Strauss, Hauer and Feld LLP, from which he retired in December 2015.

### 1975

**Bernard “B.J.” Ford**, of Nanticoke, Pa., died on April 6, 2016. His early career included teaching, coaching and retail management. After retirement from TechnaGlas, he worked at the Farley Library at Wilkes and for Geisinger Wyoming Valley Hospital as a patient sitter. He is survived by his family of Colonels, including his wife Joan '75, and children James '03, Jillian '05 and Jeffrey '12.

### 1977

**Frederick A. Petrini**, of Nanticoke, Pa., died on April 24, 2016. He served in the U.S. Army for two years. He was the owner and general manager of Brunozzi Chevrolet, Buick,

Oldsmobile & Pontiac Inc. in Hanover Township for more than 30 years.

### 1979

**Diane (Castrignano) Jones**, of West Wyoming, Pa., died on July 8, 2016. Jones taught biology from 1974 to 2007 at Bishop Hoban High School, Wilkes-Barre, and from 2007 until her retirement in 2012 at Holy Redeemer High School, Wilkes-Barre.

### 1982

**Ronald W. Labatch**, of Kingston, Pa., died on March 8, 2016. He worked in many drug stores over the years as a clerk then as assistant manager. He read the newspaper as a volunteer for more than a decade on King's College Radio as part of the Radio Home Visitor Show.

### 1987

**David L. Beaver**, of Allentown, Pa., died Dec. 15, 2015. He retired as a financial controller.

**Mary Jo Meyers**, of Wapwallopen, Pa., died on June 13, 2016. She served on the faculty of Wyoming Seminary Day School.

### 1994

**Janice Bullock**, of Swoyersville, Pa., died on April 7, 2016. She was a registered nurse, working first at Nesbitt Memorial Hospital and then at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital.

### 1995

**Jody Palmer**, of Shrewsbury, Mass., died on March 18,

2014. She was a principal global program manager at EMC Corp. in Hopkinton, Mass., where she had been employed for the last 15 years.

### Charles R. “Charlie”

**Hepplewhite**, of Fort Myers, Fla., died July 4, 2015. He was a business manager for Haystack Digital Marketing.

## Graduate Degrees

### 2007

**Barbara Snyder MS** of Fairfield, Pa., died on April 10, 2016. She was an art teacher at Delone Catholic High School since 2001.

### 2010

**James Craig MA** of Lancaster, Pa., died on July 30, 2016. Craig was a middle school teacher in the Ephrata School District for 14 years until his retirement. He was the author of the mystery novel *Blue Lines Up In Arms*.

### 2014

**Diane Place EdD**, of Towanda, Pa., died on March 1, 2016. Place taught Spanish at the Athens Area High School and Towanda Area High School. She was elementary school principal for the Towanda Area School District from 1997–2006, Towanda Area School District superintendent from 2006–2012 and Athens Area School District superintendent from 2012 until the time of her passing. She was honored by Wilkes for outstanding dissertation in the doctor of education program.





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- SAVE THE DATE -

6 p.m. • Saturday, June 3, 2017

*Westmoreland Club, Wilkes-Barre*

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For sponsorships, advertisements, or ticket information, please  
contact Jennifer Ciarimboli at 570-408-4953 or [Jennifer.Ciarimboli@wilkes.edu](mailto:Jennifer.Ciarimboli@wilkes.edu)  
or visit [www.wilkes.edu/foundersgala](http://www.wilkes.edu/foundersgala).



## calendar of events



### December

- 1-18 Ying Li: "Geographies" Sordoni Art Gallery
- 4 "Dances and Dreams," Wilkes Flute Ensemble, 7:30 p.m., Dorothy Dickson Dart Center
- 5 Music From Britain and America, Wilkes University Chamber Orchestra, 8 p.m., Dorothy Dickson Dart Center
- 11 Holiday Pops Concert, Wilkes Civic Band and the Marching Colonels, 3 p.m., Dorothy Dickson Dart Center
- 12 Fall classes end.

### January 2017

- 3-13 Intersession 2017
- 6-14 Wilkes Graduate Creative Writing Residency
- 8-12 Maslow Reading Series, 7 to 9 p.m., Jan. 8, Barnes & Noble, Public Square, Dorothy Dickson Dart Center
- 16 Spring Classes Begin
- 20-March 3 Lydia Panas: "After Sargent," Sordoni Art Gallery
- 21 Instant Decision Open House for Prospective Students
- 22 Winter Commencement, 1 p.m., Arnaud C. Marts Center
- 25 Snow Date for the January 23 Instant Decision Open House

### February

- 3 Wrestling Alumni Night
- 4 Athletic Hall of Fame
- 17-19 "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown," Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m., Sunday, 2 p.m., Dorothy Dickson Dart Center
- 24-26 "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown," Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m., Sunday, 2 p.m., Dorothy Dickson Dart Center
- 28 Rivka Galchen, author of *Atmospheric Disturbances*, Allan Hamilton Dickson Fund Writers Series, 7 p.m., Kirby Hall

### April

- 29 Softball Alumni Day

### May

- 6 Wrestling Reunion & Coach John Reese's 90th Birthday Celebration

### June

- 3 Founders Gala