

# WILKES

FALL 2018

## On the Edge of Knowledge

WILKES RESEARCH CULTURE PUTS STUDENTS AT ITS CENTER

INSIDE: WILKES LAUNCHES \$55 MILLION GATEWAY TO THE FUTURE CAMPAIGN

## Gateway to the Future Campaign Will Transform Wilkes

Six years ago, the University's Gateway to the Future Strategic Plan was created with the bold goal of developing Wilkes into one of the finest small universities in the nation. Significant funds would need to be raised in order to meet the ambitions outlined in the plan, so work began on the Gateway to the Future Campaign.

The largest and most comprehensive fundraising effort in University history, the Gateway to the Future Campaign aspires to raise \$55 million dollars in support of transformative campus enhancements, endowments for research and scholarships, and annual resources.

In the four years since the start of the Campaign, we have raised more than \$45 million to advance Wilkes University. To see evidence of this progress, all you need to do is step foot on campus. The Campus Gateway Project has reshaped the Fenner Quadrangle and areas surrounding the Henry Student Center. Investments in Stark Learning Center, including the new Mark Engineering Center, have transformed an aging academic building into a showpiece.

In addition, properties along South Main Street continue to be redeveloped in support of our academic programs. The Sordoni Art Gallery welcomed record numbers during its inaugural year in its new location and students continue to thrive in the Karambelas Media and Communications Center.

Many more less obvious aspects of the Wilkes experience have been improved through the generosity of donors. Programs were established to enable Wilkes students to study abroad. Naming gifts have provided lasting support for our Passan School of Nursing and Maslow Family Graduate Program in Creative Writing, and dozens of deserving students have received tuition relief from newly endowed scholarships.

Last month, I had the pleasure of celebrating these achievements with the Wilkes community at the public

kick-off for the Gateway to the Future Campaign. While much has been achieved since 2012, there is more work to be done. During this final and most critical stage of the Campaign, we will need the support of all of our alumni to ensure success.

This fundraising effort allows you to direct your funds to the area of Wilkes that means the most to you. Your contribution is more than just a financial commitment—it is also a display of your pride in Wilkes. You see, the percentage of alumni who give to their alma mater is the only way third-party rankings measure alumni satisfaction.

So I urge you to reflect on your Wilkes experience and make a gift of any amount in support of the Gateway to the Future Campaign. I hope that you will consider the ways in which you can help us build the Gateway to the Future here at Wilkes.



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



Wilkes President Patrick F. Leahy shares his vision at the kickoff of the Gateway to the Future Campaign.  
PHOTO BY KNOT JUST ANY DAY

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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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Holly Frederick, left, associate professor of earth and environmental science, helps to assess water quality at North Lake in Sweet Valley, Pa., assisted by environmental engineering student Scott Heffelfinger. PHOTO BY KNOT JUST ANY DAY

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Have a story idea to share?

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Wilkes magazine is available online at [www.wilkes.edu/wilkesmagazineonline](http://www.wilkes.edu/wilkesmagazineonline)



## Wilkes Dedicates Mark Engineering Center

Wilkes University's newest facility, the Mark Engineering Center, officially opened with a dedication ceremony on Sept. 14. The dedication is the culmination of a 16-month, \$8 million renovation to the engineering facilities in Stark Learning Center, creating flexible lab and learning space in disciplines that include nanotechnology, additive manufacturing and bioengineering. To see photos of the renovated space, please turn to page 20.

The center is named in honor of Randy '81 and Robin Mark, who made a leadership gift to support the project. Randy Mark earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Wilkes. He is the owner and president of Pulverman, a global manufacturer of precision metal components located in Dallas, Pa. He has served on the University's board of trustees since 2013.

"We are humbled to be part of the Wilkes University community. The growth and success of Pulverman is the culmination of a great education, a community that fosters

entrepreneurship and many dedicated and innovative people," Mark said. "It is our hope that the Mark Engineering Center will inspire innovation and encourage success among Wilkes students for years to come."

The center was also funded by a \$3 million Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

**"The growth and success of Pulverman is the culmination of a great education, a community that fosters entrepreneurship and many dedicated and innovative people."**

— Randy Mark '81

Robin and Randy '81 Mark, pictured left, celebrate the unveiling of the sign for the Mark Engineering Center at the Sept. 14 dedication. Joining them in marking the occasion are, from right of the sign, Wilkes President Patrick F. Leahy, state Sen. John Yudichak and state Rep. Eddie "Day" Pashinski '67. PHOTO BY JOSHUA BONNER MS '16





## Legendary Athlete, Author and Activist Kareem Abdul-Jabbar Visits Wilkes

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Basketball Hall of Fame center, author and activist, was interviewed by Wilkes President Patrick F. Leahy for the Max Rosenn Lecture in Law and Humanities. The conversation between Leahy and Abdul-Jabbar encompassed key highlights from the athlete's life. They included reflections on growing up in Harlem, his time playing at UCLA with legendary coach John Wooden and his eventual transition from being the NBA's highest scorer to his current role as writer and humanitarian. Abdul-Jabbar also offered thoughtful comments about issues of race in America. During his Sept. 30 visit, Abdul-Jabbar took time for pictures with Wilkes students and signed books after the lecture. The event was attended by more than 800 people, one of the highest for an on-campus lecture in recent University history.



Top, Wilkes President Patrick F. Leahy, left, interviewed the legendary Kareem Abdul-Jabbar about his career as an athlete, author and activist during the 2018 Rosenn Lecture. Center, stacks of Abdul-Jabbar's memoir, *Becoming Kareem*, are ready to be autographed at the book signing after the lecture. Bottom, the Wilkes men's basketball team had an opportunity to meet the sport's all-time leading scorer.

PHOTOS BY KNOT JUST ANY DAY

## Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Marks 25th Anniversary

The Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship celebrated 25 years as a force for economic development in the region with a Nov. 16 dinner at the Westmoreland Club. The event celebrated the center's successes during a quarter century on the Wilkes campus.

The center and its location on West South Street were established in 1993 through a generous gift from Allan P. Kirby Jr. Working with then-Wilkes President Christopher Breiseth and the University's chief financial officer, Paul O'Hop, Kirby established a center that would promote free enterprise and entrepreneurship as central to American society. The center was named in honor of Kirby's father.

The center's earliest focus was academic, providing the region's first undergraduate major in entrepreneurship at Wilkes. Arlen Lessin served briefly as its first director. In 1996, Jeffrey Alves became director and distinguished professor of entrepreneurship. An established leader in entrepreneurship education, under his leadership the University established majors and minors in entrepreneurship in the Sidhu School of Business as well as a concentration in the Master of Business Administration Program and interdisciplinary programs with other departments on campus.

During the 25-year history of the center, the Allan P. Kirby Lecture Series has been one of its most successful initiatives, bringing to campus leaders in a variety of business-related fields. The day before the anniversary celebration, the Allan P. Kirby Lecture was to be delivered by Jake Wood, founder and CEO of Team Rubicon, a nonprofit organization that trains and deploys military veterans to disaster zones in the U.S. and around the world. Wood spoke about "The One and the Nine: Building Teams and Organizations that Win." Past lectures included Steve Forbes, chairman and editor-in-chief of Forbes Media, Andrew Ross Sorkin, author of *Too Big to Fail*, Jerry Greenfield, co-founder of Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream, and Martin Eberhard, founder and former CEO of Tesla Motors, among others.

With the advent of Rodney Ridley in 2014 as executive director and distinguished professor, the center developed a new focus, providing support and services designed to help start-up businesses to grow. Support provided to businesses includes office space



in the Allan P. Kirby center's business incubator, and a full range of services provided via a network of volunteer business mentors. These services include accounting, marketing, technology and legal services. Twenty-four businesses received support in the 2017-2018 academic year, with 15 started by Wilkes students, faculty and staff.

Wilkes students derive additional benefits from the center via the Kirby Scholars program. This group of students is selected via a rigorous application process among Wilkes' academic departments. They benefit from networking and mentoring opportunities. Most importantly, they add valuable experience to their resumes via the work they do with the businesses associated with the center.

### EDWARD CIARIMBOLI '95 JOINS WILKES BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Edward Ciarimboli '95 has been appointed to the University's Board of Trustees. He graduated from Wilkes with dual degrees in political science and engineering and applied science. A graduate of the Duquesne University School of Law, he was admitted to the Order of Barristers for Excellence in Courtroom Advocacy and was named a national semi-finalist in the American Trial Lawyers Association Moot Court Competition while in law school.

Ciarimboli became a named partner at Fellerman & Ciarimboli in 2005 where his practice focuses on truck and car crash litigation and medical malpractice. He serves on the board of governors for the Pennsylvania Association for Justice, the board of governors of the National College of Advocacy, the board of regents of the Academy of Truck Accident Attorneys and the board of governors for the Northeastern Pennsylvania Trial Lawyers Association.

He has been named a Pennsylvania Super Lawyer since 2005. Ciarimboli was recently named one of the Top Ten Attorneys—Pennsylvania Trucking Trial Lawyers Association, The Nation's Top One Percent, National Association of Distinguished Counsel and The National League of Renowned Attorneys.

## Spring Lectures Bring Luminaries to Campus

Two of the University's annual lecture series will bring thought leaders to campus during spring semester 2019. Both events are free and open to the public.



Author Dave Eggers will speak at Wilkes on Feb. 28.

Award-winning author Dave Eggers will speak in the English Department's Allan Hamilton Dickson Spring Writers Series on Thursday, Feb. 28, 2019. The lecture begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Dorothy Dickson Darte Center for the Performing Arts. Eggers is the founder of McSweeney's, an independent publishing company based in San Francisco that produces books, a quarterly journal of new writing and a monthly magazine. He also is the

founder of 826 National, a network of youth writing and tutoring centers around the United States. Eggers is the author of ten books, including *A Hologram for the King*, which was a finalist for the 2012 National Book Award, and the memoir *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*, which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize.

Bryan Stevenson will be the featured speaker at the spring Max Rosenn Lecture Series in Law and Humanities. Stevenson's lecture, "American Injustice: Mercy, Humanity and Making a Difference," will take place on Sunday, April 14, 2019 at 2 p.m. in the Dorothy Dickson Darte Center for the Performing Arts. Stevenson is an attorney, human rights activist, executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative, and author of *Just Mercy*. The Max Rosenn Lecture Series in Law and Humanities, established at Wilkes University in 1980, recognizes Judge Max Rosenn's exceptional contributions to public service.



Author and activist Bryan Stevenson delivers the Rosenn Lecture on April 4.  
PHOTO BY NINA SUBIN

## Sidhu Student Michelle Lehman Wins 2018 TecBRIDGE Business Plan Competition

Wilkes University student Michelle Lehman '18 graduated in May with more than a diploma. The marketing major in the Jay S. Sidhu School of Business and Leadership earned \$10,000 and \$100,000 in in-kind services as the winner of the collegiate division in the annual TecBRIDGE business plan competition. She beat out students from Marywood, East Stroudsburg, the University of Scranton, Lackawanna College and Penn State Worthington-Scranton to win the collegiate prize.

Lehman began studying for her Master of Business Administration degree at Wilkes in August. She is also preparing for a product launch around the same time.

"Education is extremely important to me," Lehman says. "To ensure that I am managing RAE SLEEVES to the best of my ability, I will be completing my MBA at Wilkes as a graduate assistant for the Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship."

Lehman was awarded the prize based on her business plan for her company, RAE SLEEVES. With the money, Lehman started manufacturing her women's clothing line. Lehman has designed a form-fitting shirt that allows the wearer to transform the look of any outfit by adding one of her garments—which she calls sleeves—to create a long-sleeved look for any dress or top.

"Winning the TecBRIDGE Business Plan competition and gaining \$10,000 and \$100,000 of in-kind-services from generous sponsors, advanced RAE SLEEVES tremendously," she says. "I was able to begin the process of manufacturing the product for retail. I am in the final steps of finalizing a manufacturing agreement, sourcing fabric, and completing all the technical papers associated with making RAE SLEEVES available for women around the globe."

Lehman is the first Wilkes student to take first place in the business plan competition. The TecBRIDGE Business Plan Competition is a regional event that celebrates entrepreneurship, innovation and potential in northeast Pennsylvania. The competition includes collegiate and non-collegiate divisions that allow aspiring entrepreneurs to showcase their business ideas, start-ups, and early stage ventures to compete for cash and in-kind services.



Michelle Lehman '18 became the first Wilkes student to win the TecBRIDGE business plan competition, earning \$10,000 for her business, RAE SLEEVES.  
PHOTO BY PATTY DEVIVA

# Q&A

## Meet Christine Muller

**Director, Honors Program**

**Assistant Professor, American Studies**

### DEGREES

B.A., History, Psychology, Villanova University

M.A., English, Villanova University

Ph.D., American Studies, University of Maryland, College Park



### What positions did you hold before joining Wilkes?

Residential College Dean for Saybrook College and Lecturer, American Studies at Yale University.

### What attracted you to the job at Wilkes?

As a student, then an administrator, in Villanova's honors program, honors education has long figured significantly in my understanding and value of a university education. I welcomed the opportunity to collaborate with campus colleagues to provide Wilkes students with similarly rich and rewarding curricular and co-curricular experiences.

### Can you describe your responsibilities as honors program director?

The role engages students and colleagues from throughout the university, from admissions and marketing to all of the academic departments and disciplines in which our undergraduates are involved. In collaboration with the Honors Advisory Council, a cross-disciplinary faculty body supporting the work of the program, the director administers program operations ranging from curricular planning to grant funding for student's co-curricular opportunities to community events.

### Will you be teaching at Wilkes as well as directing the honors program?

Yes. Through the History Department I am teaching Producing the History of 9/11 and through the First Year Foundations program I am teaching What We Can Learn from the Zombie Apocalypse.

### If you could tell people three things about the benefits of being in the honors program, what would they be?

First, the program is guided by faculty and administrators who truly care about the students. We all share a heartfelt investment in manifesting the potential of this talented community. Second, the program is designed to support students' enhancement of their education, through funding for experiences such as study abroad and research. Third, the students have each other—this highly-motivated, highly-achieving, interdisciplinary group can offer one another camaraderie and collaboration as they each pursue their own unique version of a Wilkes education side-by-side with their peers.

### If I was not teaching, I would be....

writing the great American novel.

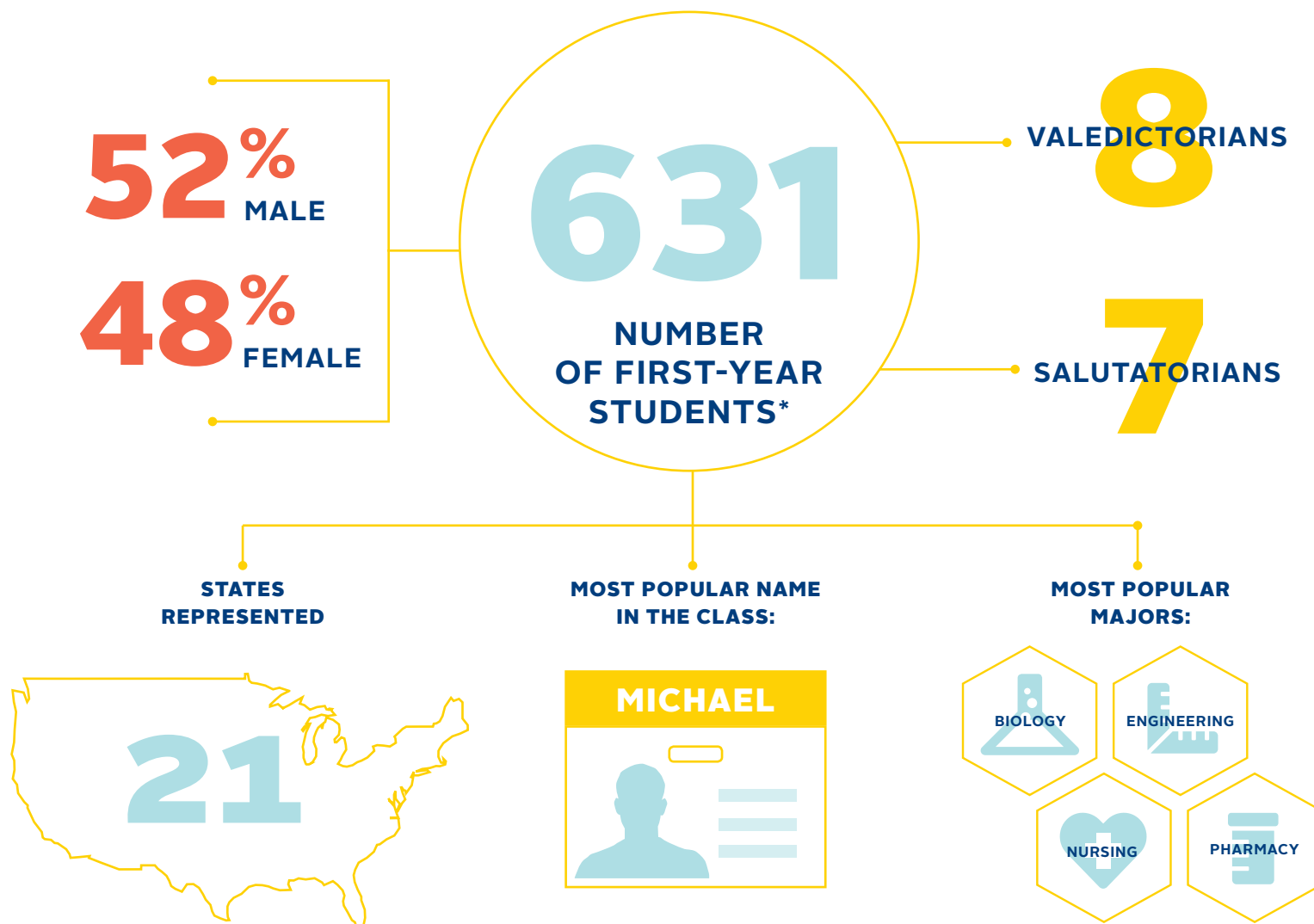
### Right now I'm reading....

Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*

### People would be surprised to learn that I....

hadn't traveled on an airplane until I was 23 years old.

# Meet the Class of 2022



\* The Class of 2022 is the second largest class in University history.

## NEW MAJORS AND MINORS EXPAND STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

Wilkes increased opportunities for its students with new degree programs, majors and minors that expand career options after graduation. They included three programs that allow students to acquire a master of business administration degree in the Jay S. Sidhu School of Business and Leadership while completing degrees in other schools and colleges. A 4+1 bachelor's degree/M.B.A. program gives students the opportunity to earn both a bachelor's degree and M.B.A. in five years. A Pharm.D./M.B.A. program introduced in the Nesbitt School of Pharmacy allows

student pharmacists to earn two advanced degrees in six years. These options join a program in which students can earn a bachelor's degree and M.B.A. in industrial and organizational psychology in five years.

The Sidhu School also added a new undergraduate major in hospitality leadership. Other new programs include a bachelor of fine arts degree in integrative media, art and design, a theatre design and technology major and minors in sport psychology and actuarial sciences, all in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

## Wilkes Names Hall In Honor of Jack Miller '68

Wilkes honored the late John R. (Jack) Miller '68 with the dedication of Miller Hall. The building at 32 West South Street that houses the finance department was named for Miller in recognition of his many years of service to the University. Miller was a member of the University Board of Trustees from 1999 until his death in 2016 and served two terms as board chair. He also served as vice chair and chair of the governance committee. Miller, who earned a bachelor's degree in commerce and finance from Wilkes, retired in 2005 as partner and vice chairman of KPMG LLP. Miller's generosity to Wilkes included naming a geology lab and office suite in the Cohen Science Center, sponsorship of the Miller Conference Room in the Henry Student Center and the establishment of the KPMG/John R. Miller Scholarship, which is awarded to a Wilkes accounting major.



Sarah Wise Miller, center, wife of the late Wilkes alumnus John B. (Jack) Miller '68, attended the dedication of Miller Hall, named in her husband's honor. She is pictured with Dan Cardell '79, left, chair of the University's Board of Trustees, and University President Patrick F. Leahy, right.



### CHECK OUT THE LATEST ON NEWS@WILKES

Alumni and friends of the University can check out the latest about Wilkes on a new web site. News@Wilkes is the official news site of the University. It publishes stories—in print, video and multi-media formats—that reflect the dynamic community that is Wilkes. The site is committed to publishing new, original content that goes beyond news releases to capture the programs, people and events at the University. Check it out any time at <http://news.wilkes.edu>

## Nursing Graduate Student Dana Hatwig Named Tillman Scholar

Wilkes graduate nursing student Dana Hatwig of Jacksonville, Fla., was named a 2018 Tillman Scholar. Hatwig, a lieutenant in the United States Navy Nurse Corps, is among 60 scholars selected from 3,000 applicants nationwide. She is pursuing her master of science in nursing as a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner.

This is the second year a Wilkes student has earned the honor. Jason Homza, who earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Wilkes, was recognized in 2017 as a student at the Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine.

After her father's untimely death, Hatwig began volunteering as a long-term care companion at the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center in Illinois. The mother of five and business executive was given the opportunity to develop and launch "No Veteran Dies Alone," a federally sanctioned veterans affairs initiative designed to provide emotional and spiritual support to actively dying veterans. She went on to earn her nursing degree and was commissioned as a Navy Nurse Corps officer.

Hatwig coached patients and families through their most challenging days as an emergency nurse. Deployed to Afghanistan, her trauma-nursing role was twofold; first to save lives, later to save minds. While stabilizing an injured unit following a VBIED attack, Hatwig experienced patients' overwhelming anguish and knew she could make the most significant impact as a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner. Identifying the acute need for mental health providers, Hatwig will continue her military service after credentialing as a nurse practitioner. Hatwig's goal is to assist service members and their families to live healthier and balanced lives.

"To have two Tillman Scholars from a small university like Wilkes in back-to-back years is humbling, and speaks volumes to the quality of our students. Wilkes University fills an important place in the nation as an institution that prides itself in making a major difference in the lives of our veterans and to those who are still serving our nation like Dana," said retired Lt. Col. Mark A. Kaster, Wilkes veterans counselor.

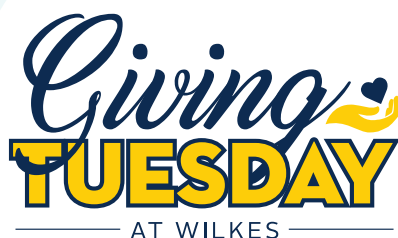
Founded in 2008, the Tillman Scholars program supports our nation's active duty service members, veterans and military spouses by investing in education and professional development. It provides academic scholarships, a national network and professional development opportunities, so Tillman Scholars are empowered to make an impact at home and around the world.



**"Wilkes University fills an important place in the nation as an institution that prides itself in making a major difference in the lives of our veterans and to those who are still serving our nation like Dana."**

— Lt. Col. Mark A. Kaster,  
Wilkes veterans counselor

Wilkes graduate nursing student Dana Hatwig, a lieutenant in the United States Navy Nurse Corps, was named a 2018 Tillman Scholar, selected from 3,000 applicants nationwide.  
PHOTO COURTESY TILLMAN SCHOLARS PROGRAM




## Remember Wilkes on Giving Tuesday

Wilkes University will participate in Giving Tuesday on Nov. 27. Giving Tuesday is observed as a global day of giving fueled by the power of social media and collaboration. We are asking for the support of alumni and friends on this special day to impact the current students of Wilkes. Mark your calendars for the Tuesday after Thanksgiving and help us to make Nov. 27 a great success by contributing to Wilkes on Giving Tuesday! To learn more about contributing to Wilkes, text Wilkes to 565-12. [#GivingTuesday](#)

# On the EDGE of KNOWLEDGE

Wilkes Research  
Culture Puts  
Students at its  
Center

By Vicki Mayk



## When Amanda Schall '17 graduated from Wilkes, she received a present from Jeff Stratford, associate professor of biology.

It was a machete engraved with the Wilkes logo, Schall's name and the words "Stratford Lab Legends." The memento commemorated the four years she spent as a student researcher in his lab. Stratford, who is an ornithologist, is assisted by students as he studies environmental impacts on bird populations, food webs and other ecology-related topics.

"We had used the machetes in our field work for our research projects and it was kind of a funny, thoughtful gift," Schall explains, adding that fellow alumna Chrissy Shonk '17 also received one. The tool routinely is used by Stratford's students as they cut through brush to find birds' nests and other specimens.

Both biology majors worked with Stratford year-round. After graduating, Schall took the machete with her to Penn State College of Medicine in Hershey, Pa. Shonk is now at the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University in North Grafton, Mass., where she is in her second year of veterinary school. Although neither chose a research career, they praise its value in their undergraduate program.

"It definitely gave me a lot more confidence to pursue something that I was interested in and the ability to know that I could do it, that is for sure," Shonk says.

Schall and Shonk's experience reflects opportunities that are integral to undergraduate education at Wilkes. From the time students step on campus, they become part of a University with a research culture. Students assist faculty with grant-funded research. Or they complete their own projects, as many majors require students to complete research to earn their degrees.

Wilkes' research emphasis is unique for a university its size. Institutions who tout a research culture are most often large universities, where research primarily involves graduate students. What's more, student involvement is incidental to the research at those schools. Wilkes faculty are quick to note the difference.

"At Wilkes, it is a research culture with students at its center," states Amjad Nazzal, associate professor of physics. "We are helping young men and women to discover themselves." His research involves two students—junior mechanical engineering and physics major Sam Lizza and sophomore chemistry/premedical major Stephanie Ko. The project involves synthesizing crystals and exploring their optical properties.

Wilkes' commitment to research opportunities attracts prospective students. Leah Thomas, a senior premedical/biology student, says it was a deciding factor when she transferred to Wilkes as a sophomore. "Other schools didn't have the research opportunities that we have at Wilkes," she says.

### AN EVOLVING EMPHASIS

During the past 20 years, there has been an evolution and strengthening of the research culture at Wilkes, says Mike Steele, H. Fenner Chair of Research Biology and head of the biology department.

"We've always been interested in involving students in experimental questions," Steele says. He recalls that Les Turoczi, former chair of the biology department, made a conscious decision to strengthen that focus.

The benefit to students drove those decisions. "Research makes them better critical thinkers," Steele says. As students graduate and pursue advanced degrees, they excel above their peers, he adds.

Several external grants have funded student research. Two—one from the National Science Foundation in 2000 and a second from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute in 2008—were among many that fueled research opportunities in biology. Since then, the University has taken the lead in providing support that encourages student research involvement in all disciplines.

Junior environmental engineering majors Scott Heffelfinger and Jillian Weston collect water samples from North Lake in Sweet Valley, Pa., to measure nitrate and phosphate levels. PHOTO BY KNOT JUST ANY DAY

Anne Skleder, provost and senior vice president, says that Wilkes' commitment to support research is reflected in its Gateway to the Future strategic plan. "One of the major goals of the strategic plan is excellence in academic programs, and it calls for support for undergraduate and graduate students to participate in faculty-sponsored research and scholarly activity," she says.

That support has taken several forms. One was a \$1 million commitment to fund faculty research projects. Preference for funding is given to those involving students. Another source is University Mentoring Grants, which underwrite everything from student stipends in summer to the cost of travel to present

research with faculty at international conferences.

Support also comes from endowed scholarships and funds which underwrite student opportunities on campus, off campus and even abroad. (Please see the accompanying story on page 14 about alumni support for student research.) Other funding comes from myriad places, including the academic deans of Wilkes' seven colleges and schools and from specific academic departments. The results of the increased institutional support are reflected in an annual research and scholarship symposium. Introduced in 2017, the multi-day event features more than 100 presentations by faculty and students.

## SUMMER RESEARCH COMMUNITY

A unique part of Wilkes' institutional support enables students to remain on campus in summer to assist with faculty research. In addition to receiving stipends offsetting the loss of wages they might have earned from summer jobs, students get free campus housing. It is a perk few schools provide for undergraduates. More than 50 students participated in summer 2018. The result is a robust summer research community. It includes weekly meetings for biology students—informally dubbed "pizza Wednesdays"—where the undergraduates take turns presenting their work to their peers.

Biology Professor Kenneth Klemow, center, surrounded by members of his student research team, points out varieties of plant life growing around the Williams Transco Pipeline, a natural gas pipeline. Klemow is researching the impact of pipelines on native plants. PHOTO BY KNOT JUST ANY DAY



# Wilkes Students Shine at International Conferences

Wilkes students present research at international professional conferences in locations as diverse as Singapore, New Orleans and Hawaii on topics covering an array of scientific disciplines. Their experiences at these conferences have one thing in common.

"We couldn't find any other undergraduates presenting at the conference," says senior Leah Thomas, who accompanied Professor Linda Gutierrez to the European Society of Medical Oncology conference in Singapore in 2017.

The fact that Wilkes students frequently emerge as the only undergraduate presenters at these prestigious events further underscores the unique opportunities available at the University. And even more opportunities can emerge as a result of attending the conferences.

Such was the case with the team of students who accompanied biology Professor Kenneth Klemow to the Ecological Society of America's August 2018 conference in New Orleans. Klemow was accompanied by a team of students that included juniors Jillian Weston, Scott Heffelfinger, Amber Gruhosky and Cassidy Hyde. They presented a poster on research that assessed the impact of a natural gas pipeline on native plant species. Using a site where the Williams Transco Pipeline traverses property owned by Wilkes,

student teams monitored plant growth. Using a one-foot-by-one-foot frame, the students viewed plants in 120 plots, monitoring them three or four times a week from May to August.

The poster presented at the ecological conference boasted a clever title: "Natural Revegetation on Natural Gas Pipelines in NEPA (Surprise: Natives Win!)." It explained results showing that plant species native to the area were not impacted by the presence of the pipeline.

Klemow says that the poster drew higher than usual attention in a room with literally hundreds of others. When he checked in with the students manning the table, he learned that they received some surprising feedback. "They said, 'By the way, there was a person from a journal, *Restoration Ecology*, and she said they'd like to see us submit our manuscript,'" Klemow says. A second visitor from a research institute had left her business card, suggesting that they apply for funding to continue the research.

The students seemed matter-of-fact when they shared this news with Klemow—who says it is not typical. What made a bigger impression was the question they received frequently from conference attendees: "When are you going to finish your Ph.D.s?"

"It's one of my favorite summer jobs I've ever had," says junior environmental engineering major Scott Heffelfinger. He worked with biology Professor Ken Klemow in 2017 and returned in summer 2018 to work with Holly Frederick '93, associate professor of earth and environmental science. Frederick's team also included junior environmental engineering majors Kaitlin Sutton and Jillian Weston. The three spent the summer collecting water samples at North Lake in Sweet Valley, Pa., near Wilkes-Barre. They evaluated the samples to assess how nitrate and phosphate levels were affecting algae bloom, which impacted the use of the lake for residents.

"This project was interesting because it had the students out at a site where the residents are interested in what is happening to the lake," Frederick says. "As we would be sampling, the residents would ask questions or offer comments and advice. It was a good experience to know that they were interested in the results of the work."

Summer provides students with an entry to year-round involvement. Such was the case with first-year pharmacy students John Oberlin and Katy Blankenhorn who began working in summer 2018 with Ajay Bommareddy, associate professor of pharmaceutical science. Bommareddy's research is investigating the use of alpha santalol as a treatment for prostate cancer. With four years of pharmacy school still ahead of them, the two students jumped at the chance to get a head start on research. "We are learning a lot of lab techniques in case we want to go on for a fellowship after graduation," Oberlin says.

Bommareddy says he especially enjoys working with students from the beginning of their academic careers. "It gives me great pleasure, especially working with the P1s," he states. "I like the enthusiasm I see in those students. I want to open doors for them and see them grow over the four years."

## STUDENT BENEFITS

Camaraderie among students enhances the research experience. Members of Frederick's student team reminisce about working in the rain, falling in the lake while collecting samples and discovering that leeches had attached to Heffelfinger's legs. In biology professor Linda Gutierrez's lab, where she researches factors influencing tumor growth, senior biology students Isaiah Pinkerton, Jacob Baranski and Leah Thomas rib each other about their work. "I'm the organized one," Baranski says, saying he makes sure specimens are properly labeled. "Organized?" Pinkerton chortles. "You're meticulous."

Gutierrez smiles benevolently, noting that her job is to train them to work independently. "It's like when you are teaching your son or daughter to ride a bicycle: You give them a push and they have to go all the way by

# Endowed Scholarships Support Student Research

External grants and institutional support from the University underwrite many aspects of the student research experience at Wilkes. Support from alumni and friends of the University provides additional funding that enables students to pursue research both on and off campus.

Recent endowed scholarships that support the research experience include:

**The Carolann G. and Philip A. Besler Scholarship** was established to support students conducting summer research overseen by a faculty mentor for the purpose of actively participating in a scholarly research project. To the extent possible, the intention is to financially support each student with a \$3,000 summer stipend. Students from any discipline may apply but are required to obtain faculty documentation confirming their ability to support a full-time summer project in which the student will participate. Preference is given to U.S. citizens identified through the FAFSA application. The scholarship is made possible by a gift from alumni Carolann (Gusgekofski) Besler '76, who is a member of the board of trustees, and her husband, Phillip A. Besler '76.

**The Bierly Fellowship** supports a semester-long experience for a student and may include undergraduate research, study away or study abroad trips and internships. Awards range from \$500 to \$5,000. The fellowship honors George W. Bierly, who left a \$1.7 million bequest to Wilkes in his estate. A Wilkes-Barre native, successful businessman and community leader, Bierly graduated from Bucknell University Junior College, the institution that became Wilkes University. He earned his bachelor's degree at MIT.

themselves," she says. Her student researchers affectionately refer to her as "Dr. G," reflecting another benefit of doing research: developing close faculty relationships.

Of greater significance are skills acquired. For example, working with Nazzal gave chemistry/premed studies major Ko a head start on her organic chemistry class. But perhaps the most important student benefit is exposure to the true nature of scientific inquiry, where answers are not pre-determined. "When we are doing research, we are traveling together on this journey to places where no one has been before," Gutierrez says. Pinkerton concurs, saying

that he's learned as much from mistakes as he has from successes. "In research," he says, "we're sitting on the edge of knowledge."

Skills honed in Wilkes labs also make graduates attractive to future employers and graduate programs. "This is how we make our students more competitive in the market," Nazzal states.

Psychology faculty Ellen Newell and Jennifer Thomas have seen the proof in the students who assist them. Thomas, an associate professor and developmental psychologist, and Newell, an assistant professor and social psychologist, are

studying the physiological responses of women exposed to overt and covert forms of sexism. Their students perform a variety of functions, from monitoring study subjects to painstakingly entering data in spreadsheets. "In order to get into graduate school in psychology, the really competitive ones, you have to have that kind of experience," Newell notes. If students do, it pays off: Newell and Thomas recall one student was admitted into all eight graduate experimental psychology programs to which she applied.



Boats become the laboratory for associate professor of earth and environmental science Holly Frederick '93, far left, and her students, from left, Scott Heffelfinger, Jillian Weston and Kaitlin Sutton. The three environmental engineering majors sampled water at the lake during summer research. PHOTO BY KNOT JUST ANY DAY

## PART OF THE CURRICULUM

Many academic majors require student research projects to fulfill requirements. Biology and biochemistry are just two of many requiring majors to complete senior research projects. In the engineering disciplines, year-long senior projects center around research. Psychology majors can choose to do research-based capstones. Other programs in the social sciences, such as criminology and sociology, require research papers to complete degrees.

The communication studies department has made research an integral part of its curriculum. Beginning with one of their foundation courses, “Principles of Communications,” students are introduced to scholarly research through the review of journal articles. Mark Stine, professor and chair of communication studies, says, “It’s important for graduates to have a working knowledge of that literature. It makes for a much more well-rounded communication studies graduate.”

Seniors complete a major research project via a two-semester class, “Research Methods.” For some students, the projects are examples of applied research, in which findings can help determine strategies for public relations campaigns or social media. One such example was the research study completed by Taylor Ryan ’16, which studied the effect of media campaigns in influencing African-Americans to become organ donors. All communication studies students complete a written research paper and make an oral presentation to faculty. “This supports our desire to graduate students who have outstanding oral and written communications,” Stine says.

In 2017, the Sidhu School of Business launched a research symposium to showcase research



Top, Ajay Bommareddy, right, associate professor of pharmaceutical sciences, demonstrates lab techniques used in research to first-year pharmacy students Katy Blankenhorn and John Oberlin. PHOTO BY KNOT JUST ANY DAY



Bottom, junior Keira D’Agostino, left, a criminology and psychology major, adjusts equipment on senior criminology and psychology major Jess Snyder. The research will measure physiological responses to sexist behavior. PHOTO BY CURTIS SALONICK

being done in both graduate and undergraduate courses. Jennifer Edmonds, associate dean, notes that the research culture is growing in Sidhu. A robust research culture will help to grow the school’s reputation, Edmonds

notes. More importantly, it will drive a culture of innovation.

“How you get to the point of innovation is through research,” Edmonds says. “It’s when you begin to connect the dots.”



# A DREAM

## STARK LEARNING CENTER

### THE BULLDOZERS AND EARTH MOVERS ARRIVED

on campus two days after the May commencement ceremony. They left the Fenner Quadrangle less than a week before first-year students arrived on campus for fall semester. In between their arrival and departure, a series of projects created a green oasis in the center of campus, planted new trees, built walkways and put the finishing touches on a renovation to Stark Learning Center. These campus enhancements, completed during summer and early fall 2018, have achieved Wilkes' goal of creating a traditional residential campus within the City of Wilkes-Barre. Part of a \$100 million plan, the completed projects include an expanded gateway linking the southern part of campus to the Fenner Quadrangle. Other recently completed projects created new green space and a companion gateway at the south entrance to the Henry Student Center. These pages offer a look at a campus transformed.

At the start of the fall 2018 semester, students returned to a dramatically different Wilkes campus. Pictured here, the Fenner Quadrangle has been transformed with an expanded gateway linking it to South Main Street, new walkways and meeting places. ALL PHOTOS EARL & SEDOR PHOTOGRAPHIC UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

COLLEGE OF  
SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

# REALIZED

AMBITIOUS PROJECTS TRANSFORM CAMPUS





**1.** A new façade has transformed the Stark Learning Center and the entrance to the College of Science and Engineering. **2.** An archway across from the Henry Student Center marks the entrance to the Fenner Quadrangle. **3.** A new walkway and a new gathering place have been built behind the student center. **4.** The Stark Learning Center courtyard has been transformed into an inviting area to gather between classes. **5.** An aerial view shows the pedestrian walkway created behind the Henry Student Center. **6.** The archway behind the student center is seen in close up. PHOTO 6 BY KNOT JUST ANY DAY





CAMPUS ENHANCEMENT  
BY THE NUMBERS

**61,610**  
**BRICKS** used to  
create new walkways

**26,884**  
**SQUARE FEET**  
of new concrete walk

**50** NEW LED  
LIGHTS

**40** NEW  
TREES  
added to campus

5

6

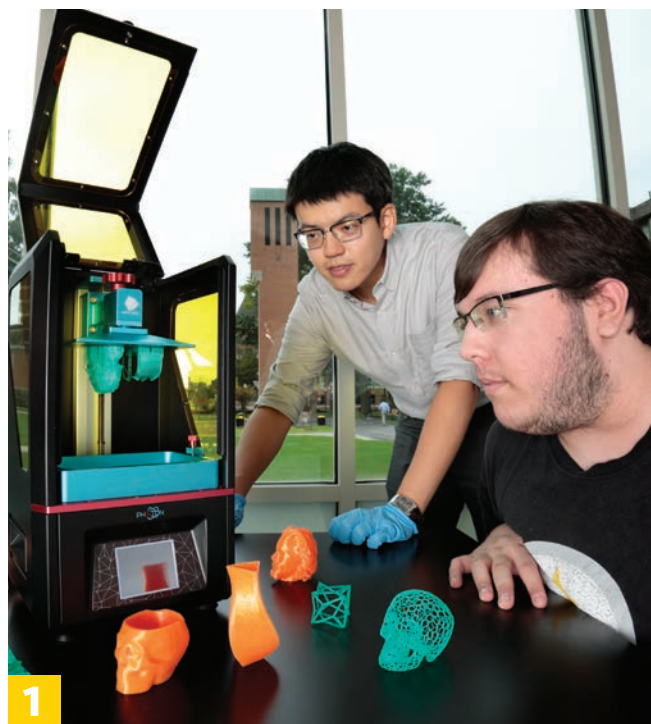


## MARK ENGINEERING CENTER

The dramatic \$8 million renovation of the Stark Learning Center will equip Wilkes engineering students with skills relevant to the 21st Century. Funded by a leadership gift from alumnus Randy Mark '81 and his wife, Robin, and by a \$3 million Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program grant, the center was dedicated on Sept. 14. Please turn to page 2 for a photo from the dedication.

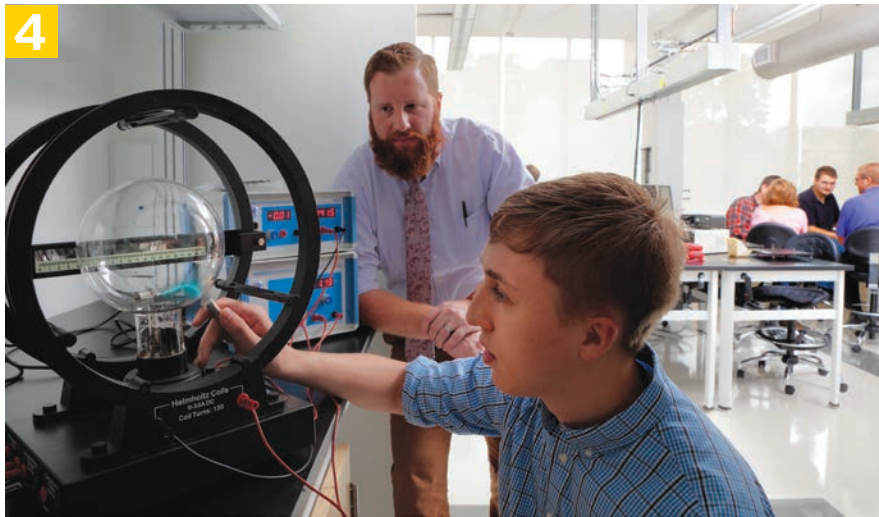
### ABOUT THE MARK ENGINEERING CENTER

- Additive manufacturing and high-performance computing labs
- Refreshed building facade facing the Fenner Quadrangle and courtyard areas
- Microfabrication lab outfitted with equipment donated from ON Semiconductor
- Two large flex labs, interdisciplinary-collaboration space and student lounges
- Flexible wet lab space for bioengineering experimentation, faculty research and graduate student activities
- Dedicated space for 3-D printing and high-end computers that are integral in research and new product design activities





3



4



5

**1.** Xiaoming Mu, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, works with junior mechanical engineering major James DeGerolamo on one of the engineering center's 3-D printers. **2.** Xiaoming Mu, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, standing foreground, supervises mechanical engineering junior Jeshurun Sestito in one of the flexible lab spaces. The space allows students and faculty to work on multiple projects in one area. **3.** Rooms for student collaboration line the hallway in the Mark Engineering Center. **4.** Matthew Saporito, visiting instructor in electrical engineering and physics, confers with Nikolas Placek, junior electrical engineering major, in one of the collaboration spaces off the main lab. **5.** Abas Sabouni, associate professor of electrical engineering, standing center right, coaches electrical engineering graduates Yasmin Aboajila '18 and Matthew Miller '18. PHOTO 5 BY MARK MCCARTY/CCA

**SAMANTHA SONNETT '04** recalls the moment that changed the course of her education and career: It was Sept. 11, 2001, during a public speaking class at Wilkes. Her instructor switched on a television and Sonnett watched in horror as the Twin Towers fell.

"It angered me so much," she says. "Right after 9/11, I decided to focus my career on ensuring that something like that doesn't happen again."

It was too late for the psychology major and U.S. Air Force Reserve member to change her degree path. So Sonnett augmented her coursework with self-study, devouring books on terrorism and the Middle East.

She later studied master's degree courses in international criminal justice and counter-terrorism at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City.

Sonnett had hoped to apply her education to a military career, but the Air Force unexpectedly discharged her because of her sexual orientation. Before the 2011 repeal of the military's Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy, openly gay Americans could not serve in the military. Instead, she joined the New York Police Department.

Today Sonnett is an instructor with the Chemical, Ordinance, Biological and Radiological Awareness (COBRA) unit, in the police department's Counterterrorism Division. She and her colleagues teach 18,000 officers a year how to protect the public and themselves when responding to calls related to terrorism and hazardous materials. She is one of two women who are instructors in the four-person unit.

The three-day COBRA course includes a day of lecture followed by two days of field exercises. Participants perform tactical operations—shooting, clearing rooms, victim extraction, and running decontamination lines—while wearing hazmat suits and breathing through a respirator.

The training covers situations ranging from terrorism-related events to more common dangers encountered on the job. Sonnett cites an example scenario of an overturned tanker surrounded by a low-lying cloud.

"A cop with this training will understand how to read the truck placards and know that the cloud isn't from some fire. It's anhydrous ammonia and if you walk into it, it will kill you almost instantly."

She also teaches basic life support skills and trauma treatment through the police department's Medical Emergency and Critical Intervention Unit.

Sonnett began her New York police career two months after graduating from Wilkes. She served several years as a patrol officer and in 2010 shifted to the Domestic Violence Unit, where she handled nearly 4,000 cases per year.

Elder abuse was rampant as were crimes against women. Sometimes her investigations led to arrests, but frequently the elderly had dementia and couldn't be easily interviewed.

"Then I started to realize a lot of women were being choked, but not to the point where they were completely unconscious or dead," she says. "Because of a gap in the law, there wouldn't be an assault charge even though someone had closed their airway."

In 2010, New York added a second-degree category to its strangulation laws, stating that choking to the point of injury or unconsciousness could be classified as a felony. This meant that cases previously treated as misdemeanors could now result in up to a seven-year prison term.

One of Sonnett's cases was the first to be tried under the new law. A man had beaten his 26-year-old girlfriend and choked her till she passed out. He was charged with misdemeanor assault and second-degree strangulation.

Sonnett testified in the groundbreaking trial, but the jury found the boyfriend not guilty of the second-degree charge. He served 38 days in jail for misdemeanor assault.

Throughout her career, Sonnett continued to hone her counter-terrorism knowledge and skills and, in 2016, was invited to join the COBRA unit.

"I was looking for people to staff the department's counter-terrorism training program and she was the first person who popped into my head," says New York Police Lt. Matthew

# SAFEGUARDING

## SAMANTHA SONNETT '04 WORKS FOR THE NEW YORK POLICE DEPARTMENT'S COUNTERTERRORISM DIVISION

By Koren Wetmore

Strong, who has known Sonnett since their days as rookie cops. "Her enthusiasm is contagious. She motivated everyone to become an expert in the field and that had a positive effect on the whole unit."

Sonnett recently expanded her reach to include first responders nationwide. As an adjunct instructor for Texas A&M's Extension Service, she uses her vacation time to train officers in hazmat operations.

"We go to funerals nearly every week for people who died from what they were exposed to during the 2001 attacks," Sonnett says. "I want cops to understand the threats—whether it's carcinogens from a building explosion or sarin gas in a subway—so we don't have another 9/11."





# SAFETY

Samantha Sonnett '04 rides on a radiation detection boat in New York harbor—one of the tools she uses in work detecting chemical hazards.  
PHOTO BY DAN Z. JOHNSON



# Gateway *to the* Future

## CAMPAIGN

## Wilkes Launches Public Phase of \$55 Million Fundraising Campaign



Homecoming Weekend 2018—often a time to remember the past—kicked off with a celebration of Wilkes University’s future. Alumni, faculty, staff and students gathered for the Gateway to the Future Campaign Kick-Off Celebration. The event, held in the McHale Athletic Center, launched the public phase of the \$55 million fundraising campaign that will transform the University, brick by brick, opportunity by opportunity and student by student.

The event was hosted by chief development officer Margaret Steele, who introduced two current students and one young alumna—all first-generation college students—who spoke about the personal transformations each achieved during their Wilkes educations. (Please see the separate story on the opposite page for excerpts from their speeches.)

Jason Griggs ’90 spoke on behalf of the Board of Trustees. Noting the campaign’s success during the last four years, Griggs said, “This campaign is an opportunity for each of us to have

impact at Wilkes University. Whether you are a golden Colonel, a graduate of our most recent class, or a long-time member of one of our giving societies, Gateway to the Future offers an opportunity to make a difference in a way most meaningful to you personally.”

Wilkes President Patrick F. Leahy began his remarks by announcing that the Board of Trustees approved a new campaign goal of \$55 million and by announcing that Griggs has made a \$500,000 leadership gift to the campaign.

Calling the campaign kickoff “a special event on a special weekend,” Leahy noted that when he wrote the University’s strategic plan, also called Gateway to the Future, he was reminded of a quote that he had used in his installation address

Left, University Trustee Jason Griggs ’90 addresses attendees at the launch of the Gateway to the Future Campaign on Homecoming weekend. Center, Wilkes President Patrick F. Leahy shares his vision for making Wilkes one of the finest small universities in the nation. Right, Wilkes vocalists sing the alma mater at the campaign kickoff. PHOTOS ON THESE PAGES BY KNOT JUST ANY DAY

at Wilkes. “I quoted the American architect Daniel Hudson Burnham, who said ‘Make no little plans, for they have no power to stir the soul....Make big plans; aim high in hope and work,’ ” Leahy said, explaining that he took his cue from those words to advance an ambitious plan for Wilkes.

Leahy outlined four major campaign projects that would be supported by the Gateway to the Future Campaign:

- The renovation of the Ralston Athletic Complex
- The renovation of the building at 116 S. Main St., which will continue the redevelopment of South Main Street while providing new office space and student housing
- General scholarship and research support
- Expanding tuition assistance to make Wilkes more affordable and support the University’s tradition of providing access for first-generation students

Leahy asked alumni at the kickoff to support the campaign at any level possible. Because alumni support is crucial to Wilkes’ rankings in lists of the top colleges in the United States published by magazines like U.S. News and World Report, Leahy stressed that gifts of any size are helpful.

Leahy closed by saying that everything the campaign funds impacts one constituency. “You see, like everything at Wilkes, it’s about the students,” Leahy said, referencing the three student speakers who had opened the program. “I hope you will support the campaign in their names. On behalf of them—and all of our students—thank you.”



## STUDENTS AND ALUMNA RECALL OPPORTUNITIES AT WILKES

“To those of you who have made Wilkes a beacon of hope that shines brighter with each effort you make to support each and every capital project: thank you. Because of your Wilkes legacy, we now begin ours.”

– **Aislinn Speranza**, senior communication studies and marketing major, CEO of Zebra Communications and Kirby Scholar

“My time at Wilkes University has been absolutely nothing like the vision I had in place as an incoming freshman. I have learned to listen to the advice of others and to believe in myself. And while I believe you should plan and have a plan, the most important thing we can do at Wilkes is to look for opportunities and take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way.”

– **Dillon Davis**, senior biology major and member of the Honors Program. Davis completed research while studying abroad in Southampton, England.

“To my fellow first-generation college students in the room, please remember to thank those who helped you achieve this goal....To the faculty, staff, and administration of this University, you have built a place of comfort and understanding, one in which I knew I could succeed, grow, and call my home. Lastly, to the donors: with each and every one of your donations, you have been able to not only give me, but numerous first-generation students, the resources we needed to succeed. Without you, I would not be able to call myself a Wilkes alum.”

– **Nancy Ramirez**, Class of 2018 graduate.

# Animal Advocate

ATTORNEY GARRY S. TAROLI '76  
WORKS TIRELESSLY FOR  
ANIMAL RIGHTS

By Andrew Seder



**The curtain has come down on the world's largest circus. Sea World has stopped breeding orcas in captivity and states have cracked down on puppy mills. There are laws stipulating how long dogs can be kept outside in extreme weather. Garry S. Taroli '76 has applauded the decisions, seeing each as a victory, not just for animals, but for humans, too.**

The Wilkes alumnus, a Wilkes-Barre real estate attorney by trade, has made a local, state and international name for himself in the animal rights realm. His heart, his checkbook and much of his free time are devoted to making sure the voiceless are heard.

Taroli's involvement is reflected in his board membership with the SPCA of Luzerne County; his work with rescue organizations in northeast Pennsylvania such as Blue Chip Farms Animal Refuge, Valley Cat Rescue or Modified K-9; and his role as a special Luzerne County assistant district attorney tasked with prosecuting animal cruelty cases.

The Dallas, Pa., resident has shared his home with more than a dozen animals in his life, including Lilah, a German shepherd/collie mix who died in 2017 at the age of 16.

"You always hear about dogs that are your soulmate," Taroli says. "That was her."

But it was Laddie, his very first dog, that made an indelible impression on his psyche and steered him down a lifelong path of acting in the best interests of animals. His parents brought Laddie home to the family home in Kingston, Pa., when Taroli was 4. The two quickly bonded, but within a few years the dog had contracted distemper, which at that time was a death sentence.

His parents sent Laddie to live with Taroli's grandfather, who worked in the coal mines for decades and who was known as someone who could fix anything. Young Garry thought the dog could be fixed, too, but he learned that wasn't the case.

"Years later, when that scene came back to me, it was one of those things that really affected me," he says. His love of animals was uncaged.

Taroli majored in political science at Wilkes. While he still lived with his parents during college, the Wilkes swimming pool was his home away from home. A four-year member

of the Colonels swim team—he co-captained his final two years—he fondly recalls his teammates, the meets and how that team went from also-rans to powerhouse.

"We ended up breaking every swimming record but one," Taroli says. Although his name is no longer in the record book, his memories remain worthy of a gold medal. He still keeps in touch with many of his teammates and they get together often.

But while swimming was rewarding for him personally, his success in the water didn't make a big splash toward helping the plight of animals, which he yearned to do. After he earned his law degree at Dickinson School of Law and started practicing law with the firm Rosenn Jenkins and Greenwald, he began devoting his free time to animal rights issues.

He was instrumental, along with Luzerne County SPCA Executive Director Todd Hevner, in getting the county council to adopt an ordinance prohibiting dogs from being outdoors for more than 30 minutes when the mercury rises above 90 degrees or dips below freezing.

The ordinance was a feather in his cap and he was even more pleased when the Pennsylvania Legislature passed Libre's Law, a statewide statute that incorporated the outdoor dog ordinance Luzerne County instituted and added to it, including stiffer penalties.

His activism isn't limited to local causes. The July 2015 killing of 13-year-old Cecil the lion on a reserve in Zimbabwe by an American infuriated him. He made his outrage known through media interviews, a Washington rally and even a letter to the Zimbabwe embassy.

A vegetarian since 1995, Taroli, who loves the Grateful Dead, the San Francisco Giants and Star Trek, quotes Ghandi: "The greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated."

Hevner praises Taroli for his work with the SPCA and his animal rights advocacy, much of it on a pro bono basis. Taroli received the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Pro Bono award in 2017 and was recognized with a citation from the state House of Representatives for his advocacy work.

"I don't know a man who is a bigger advocate for animals, period," Hevner says, adding that the passion, knowledge and guidance Taroli has provided to the SPCA and other organizations is "invaluable."

Luzerne County District Attorney Stefanie Salavantis says even before she became district attorney, she knew Taroli from his reputation as someone "known for his dedication to help animals who have suffered from abuse and neglect. When I met him, I realized he was so much more."

The press release that accompanied the pro bono award called Taroli "a hero." Taroli scoffs at the word.

"There are people like Todd, humane officers like Wayne Harvey, Marge Bart at Blue Chip, who live this every minute of every day. They're the heroes," he says.

Garry S. Taroli '76 confers with Big Mama, one of the dogs whose cases he has defended for the Luzerne County SPCA.  
PHOTO BY EARL AND SEDOR PHOTOGRAPHIC



## Alumni Association Welcomes New Board Members

The Alumni Association Board of Directors welcomed six new directors elected to the board during the March 2018 meeting. They began their three-year terms in June.

The six new directors talk about their favorite thing about their experience attending Wilkes and about what they like about being involved as alumni.



### Rich Albrecht '05

**Occupation:** Assistant Director, Institute on Protective Services at Temple University

My favorite thing about my Wilkes experience was the “Wilkes experience.” On the academic side, taking Dr. (Robert) Bohlander’s class, “Critical Thinking in Psychology,”

probably had the largest impact on me, personally and professionally. The second thing that stuck out to me was the atmosphere created by the faculty and staff of the psychology department; it is second to none. I enjoyed the opportunities to travel with Dr. Bohlander and Dr. (Deborah) Tindell attending psychology conferences and getting to know them on a personal level. Dr. (Ed) Schicatano’s contagious passion for neuroscience was a blessing and I am thankful for all the hard work in getting the neuroscience program approved as a minor and, subsequently, as a major. As an alumni board member, I am excited for the additional opportunities to interact with current students and alumni. While I’ve been involved with the mentoring program since its infancy, I am looking forward to those interactions in a variety of differing formats.



### Troy Carey '16

**Occupation:** Information Security Analyst, NBT Bank

I came to Wilkes as a freshman in 2013. During my time there, I quickly learned what made this University so special. The faculty and staff are one of a kind. They care about the students and truly want

to see them succeed. I had so many professors who I relied on, in and out of class, to make my experience that much more successful. They helped me fulfill goals I didn’t know I was capable of achieving. The alumni board gives former students a unique way to give back to future students, staff, and faculty at a university that’s already given us so much. My time at Wilkes played a huge role in making me the person I am today, and I want to provide that same opportunity for current and future students. It’s also fun to connect with other alumni who I might not otherwise communicate with. This is such an engaging community of people to be a part of, and one that allows me to be an even closer part of Wilkes University.



### Neal McHugh '86

**Occupation:** Manager of Environmental Affairs, Buckeye Partners

I transferred to Wilkes after attending a community college and expected to feel like an outsider, but that was not the case. I quickly became part of the Wilkes family with the help of Deans

George Ralston and Art Hoover, two men who mentored me during my time at Wilkes. I found that my professors would go the extra mile to help me be successful if I put in the work. Through my participation in Air Force ROTC, the First Aid Team, Student Government and as a resident assistant, I learned many valuable life skills and made lifelong friends. I welcome the chance to become a bigger part of the Wilkes family. I have been working with the mentoring program for a few years and joining the alumni board gives me a chance to become more of an advocate for Wilkes and assist in achieving the goals of the Alumni Association and the University. I think we can really expand alumni participation of the 1980s era alumni—my era—so I plan to make that a focus while I am a member of the alumni board.



**Donna Chisarick  
Michael '78**

**Occupation:** Registered Nurse

I've always spoken highly of my time at Wilkes. Academically, I was prepared to head into my career as a nurse, well prepared to take on whatever job I chose and be successful. So many memories of studying in the library or drinking coffee in the commons added to the exceptional learning experience. I can never talk about my college experience without mentioning the friends I made and how we have a special bond and still remain friends. Returning for Homecoming is one of the highlights of every year for me. Social media has helped us stay close throughout the year, but the time we get to sit together and reminisce is so important to me. Living in Georgia, I sometimes feel so far away, but spending time with my Wilkes people brings me back to my roots! I always wanted to get involved with the University in some way and I am honored that I now have the chance through the Alumni Board. I'm hoping to contribute ideas to keep my fellow alumni interested in coming back to where it all started and celebrate the growth of our great University.



**Michael Scott '93**

**Occupation:** Proprietor, Nips Park Avenue Saloon

As I take the time to reflect on my educational experience at Wilkes, I am profoundly grateful for everything that I have been blessed with, personally as well as professionally. When I chose Wilkes University, I had no way of knowing that I would be so truly fortunate to have forged the lifelong friendships my time at the University has provided me. My time at Wilkes prepared me to take on many different and challenging opportunities throughout my professional career. It is with great pride that I have introduced several student athletes to Wilkes, and I've enjoyed watching them evolve into outstanding young men and great representatives of the University. I am proud that I am able to serve the University that has blessed me with so much.



**Lisa Shafer '01**

**Occupation:** Senior Director of Alumni and Parent Engagement, Swarthmore College

My appreciation for Wilkes has grown over time. My career in higher education advancement has allowed me to reflect, observe, and truly see the real value in Wilkes as an institution, not just for its students, but also for the region. I look forward to the University continuing to find ways for it to expand its reach, since it has so much to bring to the table. I am excited and honored to join the Alumni Association Board of Directors, because I see this as another opportunity for me to reconnect with Wilkes—learning from it yet again and hopefully contributing more to it this time around.

**MEET THE 2018 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION  
SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT: HUNNTER MAXWELL**

Hunnter Maxwell PharmD '22 was awarded the Alumni Association Scholarship for the 2018-2019 academic year. Both of Hunnter's parents, Scott '94 and Donna Dicton Maxwell '93, are Wilkes alumni. Hunnter, a pharmacy student, is a student-athlete on the men's soccer team and is involved in the Pre-Pharmacy Club. Learn more about our recipient by visiting: [www.wilkes.edu/HunnterMaxwell](http://www.wilkes.edu/HunnterMaxwell)



Hunnter Maxwell, second from left, is pictured at the White Coat Ceremony in the Nesbitt School of Pharmacy with his siblings and his parents, Scott '94, right, and Donna Dicton Maxwell '93.

## Two Alumni Give Back Through Professional Development

Gneiss is a type of metamorphic rock. It's also the name of a new scholarship started by two Wilkes alumni who wanted to give back to the University. It's an appropriate name for a scholarship that will give a Wilkes student the opportunity to attend the Field Conference of Pennsylvania Geologists.

Heather Shocker '94 and Jason Sheasley '93 established the GNEISS Scholarship—which stands for Geologic Networking Experience Initiated by Sheasley and Shocker. With the new geology major at Wilkes, the pair thought that it would provide a good professional experience for students. The two have been regular attendees of the conference for several years. It provides opportunities for geologists and geo-scientists to learn about the geology of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Shocker earned her master's degree in geology from Michigan Technological University in 1997 and she is now the director of program management with DigitalGlobe, International Defense and Intelligence in Denver, Colo. Sheasley is a licensed professional geologist in Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Florida. He is an associate and senior hydrogeologist with Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. in Jacksonville, Fla.

"It is important for us to give back to Wilkes students because we both benefited from the generosity of others who were willing to share their knowledge and experience with us," Shocker and Sheasley recall. "We believe we can make a difference by offering students tangible, real-world experiences and introduce them to others working in the geosciences field."

The conference provides both networking and educational opportunities. "The unique thing about the conference is that it involves traveling to various locations, like mines, quarries, road cuts, around the state to observe and study geologic features first-hand," says Sheasley. He adds that students also have an opportunity to meet professionals in the industry and explore career opportunities.

"The conference is very popular among Commonwealth geo-scientists and, for logistical reasons, the number of participants each year is limited to 275. In most cases, the conference is booked within a weeks' time," explains Sheasley. He and Shocker have arranged with the conference coordinators to secure a spot for a GNEISS Scholarship recipient each year.

The first scholarship recipient was Emma Sukowaski, who is also the first declared geology major at Wilkes. The second recipient is Ryan Wysocki, a junior geology major.

Sukowaski says attending the event helped her to refine career and graduate school choices. "At the conference, I learned that I had many options," Sukowaski says. She is now considering attending graduate school or obtaining her professional geologist license and becoming a consultant.

### ABOUT THE GNEISS SCHOLARSHIP

Applicants for the scholarship prepare a 500-word essay explaining why they would like to attend the conference. The recipient must give a short presentation to the Earth and Environmental Sciences Department about the conference to encourage other students to apply.

Shocker and Sheasley would like to challenge fellow alumni to donate to the scholarship. "Our hope is that we will be able to send more than one student to the conference, offering them this unique experience," they say. Alumni can donate to the scholarship by contacting them at [gneiss.scholarship@gmail.com](mailto:gneiss.scholarship@gmail.com).

For more information about scholarships at Wilkes, contact Margaret Steele at **570-408-4302** or [Margaret.steele@wilkes.edu](mailto:Margaret.steele@wilkes.edu).

From left, Jason Sheasley '93, Wilkes student Emma Sukowaski and Heather Shocker '94 celebrate opportunities for geologists.



## Andrew Bartlow '10 Receives Postdoctoral Fellowship at Los Alamos National Laboratory

Andrew Bartlow '10 discovered a new world when he began conducting research as an undergraduate at Wilkes University. In his sophomore year he joined the laboratory of Michael Steele, professor of biology and H. Fenner Chair of Research Biology, and the experience changed his career path.

"I was interested in veterinary medicine at the beginning of my undergraduate career," Bartlow says. "I started doing research as a sophomore in Mike Steele's lab and I didn't realize that it was a profession I would like or that it was even a possibility."

Yet Bartlow has made research his career. He is currently a Director's Postdoctoral Fellow at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, the laboratory best known for the Manhattan Project and the development of the first atomic bomb.

Bartlow joined Los Alamos' Bioscience Division as a graduate research assistant in October 2017 and applied for the highly competitive fellowship in February 2018. He says that of more than 30 applicants, he was one of five chosen to receive the prestigious fellowship, which provides research funding for up to three years. A community ecologist, Bartlow studies biological communities and how environmental change, such as climate change and habitat change, influences communities.

Bartlow is currently researching bird communities in the Los Alamos area in relation to climate change and pine tree mortality and is involved in projects studying the microbial communities of people and animals. He describes himself as the "stats person;" he analyzes collected data to identify patterns and tests hypotheses related to ecological concepts. He hopes to use this research to better understand how environmental change impacts biological communities and if scientists can use certain communities as indicators of environmental change.

Bartlow credits the education he received and the research experience he gained at Wilkes for his career trajectory. After graduating from the University with a degree in biology, Bartlow pursued a doctoral degree at the University of Utah, where he studied parasite community ecology and received a prestigious National Science Foundation Research Fellowship



**"Having those skills and the basic foundation of ecology that I got at Wilkes...allowed me to explore different areas of research and be involved in a lot of cool projects."**

- Andrew Bartlow '10

Andrew Bartlow '10 presents research from his work at Los Alamos National Laboratory at the Western Asia Bat Research Network (WAB-Net), held recently in the Republic of Georgia. PHOTO COURTESY ANDREW BARTLOW

for his work examining host/parasite interactions in the Great Basin Desert in western Utah.

"They are all the same," Bartlow says. "They are all biological communities. Whether it is a bird, microbial, or parasite community, all the same concepts and skills apply. So I can use those statistics and those methods and analyze the data the same way. Having those skills and the basic foundation of ecology that I got at Wilkes as an undergraduate, and researching with Dr. Steele, allowed me to explore different areas of research and be involved in a lot of cool projects."

Bartlow says it would be great to be converted to a scientist at the laboratory but thinks his ultimate goal would be to work at a liberal arts school, have a few graduate students working with him, and work with undergraduate students as well.

He states, "I know the benefit of getting undergraduates involved in research. Being at Wilkes and seeing Dr. Steele and the rest of the biology department foster that undergraduate research environment, I think I could do that myself. It's rewarding, benefits many people and gets potentially the best people into science as a career."

- By Francisco Tutella MFA'16

# Andrew Seaman '10 Earns Society of Professional Journalists Highest Honor

Andrew Seaman '10 attended the Society of Professional Journalists President's Installation Banquet in Baltimore, Md., this September for the final time as the chair of the organization's ethics committee. But what he thought would be a night of reflection turned into a celebration.

Seaman was awarded the Wells Memorial Key for Outstanding Service to the Society. It is the group's highest achievement, awarded to the member who is judged to have served the society in the most outstanding fashion during the preceding year or over a period of years.

"He is one of the most reliable people I have ever worked with," says Lynn Walsh, former Society of Professional Journalists president. "He is constantly available, timely with projects and just fun to work with. Andrew has a way of getting serious points across by adding in a bit of wit."

In 2014 Seaman became the chair of the organization's ethics committee. "It's sort of surreal," he says. "I wouldn't have expected to be able to do that." He first joined the organization's board of directors as a student member, and then was named to the awards committee before chairing the ethics committee. He was part of the group which reviewed and edited the code of ethics which hadn't been updated since 1996. The code provides the cornerstone for professional standards for all journalists.

But since then, Seaman has shifted fields in the world of communications. He joined LinkedIn in May 2018. Seaman joined the company, touted as the world's largest professional network, as news editor. Based in New York City, he works with a team to provide the news and views that members need to discuss what matters most in their fields.

"The way they approach journalism is unlike other tech companies—it's really innovative," he says. "I think of journalism as something that is unchanging—what changes is how you get that information."

LinkedIn provides users with access to information from leading professionals and industries in resources like the LinkedIn Daily Rundown. Seaman explains that the team keeps up to date with professionals and industry trends to make



**"I think of journalism as something that is unchanging—what changes is how you get that information."**

— Andrew Seaman '10

Andrew Seaman '10, at podium, accepts the Wells Memorial Key for Outstanding Service to the Society of Professional Journalists. PHOTO COURTESY THE SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS

sure users are in the know. "LinkedIn wants to start putting that information out there to utilize that information for other members," explains Seaman, who majored in communication studies at Wilkes.

After earning his master's degree from Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, he was employed by Thomson Reuters. As the senior medical journalist and then digital editor during his roughly seven years with the organization, he covered the Affordable Care Act, the White House and health policy.

Though the Wells Memorial Key was his latest achievement, Seaman also was previously recognized with three President's Awards from the Society of Professional Journalists for his work chairing its ethics committee. Stepping down from his role at the Society of Professional Journalists has allowed time for a new perspective, Seaman reflects. "It's been a wonderful part of my life."

Seaman has been a journalist since his undergraduate career at Wilkes where he was the editor-in-chief of the student newspaper, *The Beacon*. "Wilkes was a fantastic education because it wasn't big and you could do stuff right away," he says adding, "That prepared me to jump in on projects."

He credits his Wilkes mentors for their support—and notes that it does not end at graduation. Part of his support network includes Andrea Frantz, who was an associate professor of communication studies during his time at Wilkes, and Mark Stine, professor and chair of communication studies.

"It's fun to run into your Wilkes support network—to run into them in the city," he says. "It's good to have people from Wilkes with you throughout your career. Seaman says his time at Wilkes, as well as his various internships and career experiences, have positioned him for what comes next.

— By Sarah Bedford '17

## Undergraduate

**1962**

**Ruth Melberger** of West Pittston, Pa., conducted a tree tour of West Pittston in conjunction with the West Pittston Library. Area residents attended the 90-minute tour where Melberger pointed out different varieties of trees, including a magnolia tree rarely seen in this climate.

**1967**

**William Schmidt** of Roseburg, Ore., and his wife Gretchen, spent the summer of 2018 working at the front desk of the Best Western Weston Inn in West Yellowstone, Mont.

**1969**

**Robert Catina**, of Effort, Pa., received the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division Liberty Bell Award.



**1965**

**Leslie (Tobias) Jenkins** of Aurora, Colo., and Jim Jenkins recently took a cruise to the Baltic countries including Russia. Leslie and Jim Jenkins are pictured in front of the iconic St. Basil's Cathedral in Red Square, Moscow.

The award was presented during the state association annual meeting in May in Hershey, Pa. The Liberty Bell Award honors individuals for their outstanding community service and for promoting the blessing of liberty guaranteed by the Constitution. After teaching business law at Pleasant Valley High School for nearly 40 years, Catina currently serves as tipstaff to President Judge Margherita Worthington of the Monroe County Court of Common Pleas.

**James Wills** of Sterling, Va., was named the managing member of Phillips Strategic Advisors, a business development company specializing in Asian, Africa and Middle Eastern markets.

**1970**

**Rabbi and Cantor Elliot Rosenbaum** of Laredo, Texas, published his latest video, "Hashkiveynu," which is available on YouTube. The project began in 2013 with the composing, recording and publishing on YouTube of 20 original songs based upon the liturgy of the Jewish Sabbath Evening Service. Rosenbaum began to republish in 2015, adding vocal harmony and instruments to each audio track. The videos are part of a whole album, "Friday Night!," which was inspired by The Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." Rosenbaum created the album to add accessible melodies to the cantorial repertoire to encourage those with limited



**1970**

**Carl Charnetski** of Harveys Lake, Pa., professor of psychology at Wilkes, was recently honored by S.A.F.E. Inc. with the Angel of Autism Pioneer Award.

Hebrew skills and to serve as a tool for students to learn the liturgy of the Sabbath evening prayers.

**1974**

**Pamela Pethick Gale** and **Randall Gale** of Camp Hill, Pa., have been married 44 years. Pamela is retired from teaching reading in the Camp Hill School District. She previously worked in the personnel office of the Pennsylvania Department of General Services. Randall is a partner in the Harrisburg, Pa., office of the law firm of Thomas, Thomas & Hafer LLP, where he has worked for the last 33 years. He previously worked in the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General and as a law clerk with the United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

**Bruce Weinstock** of Kingston, Pa., and his wife Nancy were honored on April 27 by the Wyoming Valley Children's Association for more than 30 years of service.



**1976**

**Joseph Jedju** of Flagtown, N.J., was recently honored as general music teacher of the year for 2018 by the West Virginia Society for General Music. His award was presented in Charleston, W. Va., on March 9 before the start of the annual All State Children's Choir concert.

**1976**

**Barbara Gavlick Hartnett** of Swoyersville, Pa., retired from her costume rental business Costumes by Barbara in March after over 30 years in business. She continues her love of costumes and theatre in her online ETSY shop "Surely You Jester."

**Noel Jorgensen Cardew**, **Bouraine Meehan Smith**, **Mary Lou Murray Brady** and **Sandy Akromas Thomson**—also known as the Wilkes College Barre Hall girls—got together in July at the Barley Creek Restaurant in Tannersville, Pa., for a mini reunion.

**1978**

**Michael Heller** of Marshall, Texas, was named a charter member of the newly formed Brig Gen Camp 5, Department of Texas, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War and has been appointed chaplain by the camp.



1980

**Mark Rado** was presented with the Achievement Medal for Civilian Service by retired commander Sgt. Maj. Marshall Williams.

1982

**Ruth McDermott-Levy** of Villanova, Pa., received a Fulbright-Saastamoinen Foundation Health and Environmental Sciences Award for teaching and research. She will be at the University of Eastern Finland from August to December 2018.

1983

**Margie Eckroth-Bucher** of Bloomsburg, Pa., retired on June 30, 2017, from Bloomsburg University after 24 years. She was a full professor of nursing, and upon retiring was granted Faculty Emeritus status by the university's council of trustees.

**Ellen Van Riper** of Phoenix, Ariz., was promoted to the position of chief deputy city attorney for the City of Surprise, Ariz.

1984

**Michael Williams** of Liberty, N.Y., was recently appointed superintendent of schools in the Tri-Valley Central School District, in Grahamsville, N.Y.



1985

**Timothy Williams** of Lancaster, Pa., has recently been appointed the superintendent of the York Suburban School District in York County, Pa. He was previously the superintendent of the Westmont Hilltop School District in Johnstown, Pa. Earlier in his career he served in various school administrative roles in Lancaster County, Pa. Williams is pictured being sworn in as a commissioned officer by Pennsylvania Secretary of Education Pedro Rivera.

1987

**Helen Barrett Snyder** of Watstontown, Pa., recently married Robert Snyder. They live with their golden retriever, Cosette. They were married in Helen's hometown church, Saints Peter and Paul in Towanda, Pa., and celebrated afterwards at her family's Barrett Century Farm. She is the director of religious education at St. Joseph's Church in Milton, Pa.

1988

**Edward Nowicki** retired from the United States Air Force on June 1, 2016, as a lieutenant colonel. His retirement ceremony was held at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas.



1994

**Lt. Col. Robert McAllister** of Marlboro, Md., assumed command of the historic unit of the 1st Battalion 109th Infantry Regiment, 28TH Infantry Division. The Pennsylvania Army National Guard unit consists of more than 700 soldiers and is based in Honesdale, Williamsport, Tamaqua, Stroudsburg, New Milford, and Carbondale. It is the unit in which McAllister originally enlisted in 1991. McAllister previously had been assigned to the Army Capabilities Integration Center, Fort Eustis, Va.; which develops capabilities for the Army's future force. He has served in Bosnia and Iraq and in homeland operations related to Hurricane Katrina and Operation Jump Start.

1990

**Janice Saldukas-Parsons** is an education associate in the Exceptional Children's Workgroup at the Delaware State Department of Education.

1993

**Daryle Cardone** of Virginia Beach, Va., was named the executive officer of the USS George Washington, a Nimitz Class aircraft carrier, in Newport News, Va. He serves in the U.S. Navy.



1997

**Shawn Harden** of Blacksburg, Va., was promoted to senior associate at Dewberry, an engineering consulting firm. Previously, Harden was a civil engineering and land development expert with the Danville, Virginia, firm. Harden has been with the firm for more than 17 years, and is the civil and economic development department manager, responsible for leading an experienced team of engineers in the layout and design of industrial parks and commerce centers. Harden is currently overseeing the design of the SoVa Mega Site at Berry Hill, located in Pittsylvania County, Va.

**Brian Malina** of Easton, Pa., started a new job as director of marketing and communications at the New Jersey Institute of Technology's Ying Wu College of Computing.

1997

**Sean Higginson** of Saint Charles, Mo., was recently named president of Radiology Consultants of Lynchburg in Lynchburg, Va.

1998

**Phillip Torres** of Brooklyn, N.Y., a licensed respiratory care practitioner, is now practicing respiratory therapy at Renown Regional Medical Center in Reno, Nev.

# James Alfano Jr. '15 Promotes Cultural Understanding With Fulbright

James Alfano Jr. '15 received the Fulbright U.S. Student Program award to Taiwan in education. Alfano is teaching English at Hualien City School Districts as part of a project to promote cultural understanding and language instruction to Taiwanese students. The award is presented by the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. Alfano graduated from Wilkes with majors in history and secondary education.

Alfano is one of over 1,900 U.S. citizens conducting research, teaching English and providing expertise abroad for the 2018-2019 academic year through the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. Recipients of Fulbright awards are selected on the basis of academic and professional achievement as well as a record of service and leadership potential in their respective fields.

"I feel very thankful for the opportunity to teach in Taiwan and provide English instruction while teaching their students about Western culture," Alfano says. "It's definitely a once-in-a-lifetime experience and I'm happy to represent my country and university in a way that's impactful to students who are entering a very different, globalized world."

Alfano was nervous about how the citizens of Hualien would respond to him since it is a small city without much diversity. However, as soon as the Wilkes graduate set foot on foreign soil, everyone welcomed him and helped make the cultural adjustment easier than expected.

Alfano will be in Taiwan until June 30, 2019, spending almost a full year in Taiwan. Before leaving, he researched the country's school system and learned how they feel about learning English.

"I learned very quickly that it's different from your typical American school setting," he says. "I think having that prior knowledge allowed me to align my expectations properly and avoid getting too blindsided by the differences."

He credits his ability to adapt and learn in new, unfamiliar environments to what he learned at Wilkes.

"My student teaching seminar was incredibly helpful for preparing me for this, as that was one of the busiest times of my life," he says. "There were challenges to overcome, and I believe the counsel I received from the education and history departments allowed me to persevere and find my own teaching style."

Alfano is hoping to learn about a culture that he believes "often goes unnoticed on the world stage."

"Taiwan is in the news or brought up occasionally, but only in the context of escalating tensions with China," he says. "The citizens of Taiwan have been incredibly nice and considerate, despite my vast unfamiliarity with the Chinese language. I aspire to continue learning about their culture to truly understand the values of both their citizens and students."

When he returns, he aspires to teach his American students about Taiwanese culture in a more immersive way to remove misconceptions and stereotypes. In doing this, Alfano will continue the Fulbright Program tradition of building lasting connections between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.

"Ultimately, I believe this experience will make me not only a more culturally empathetic individual, but a more effective teacher that can draw on real-world, first-hand experiences

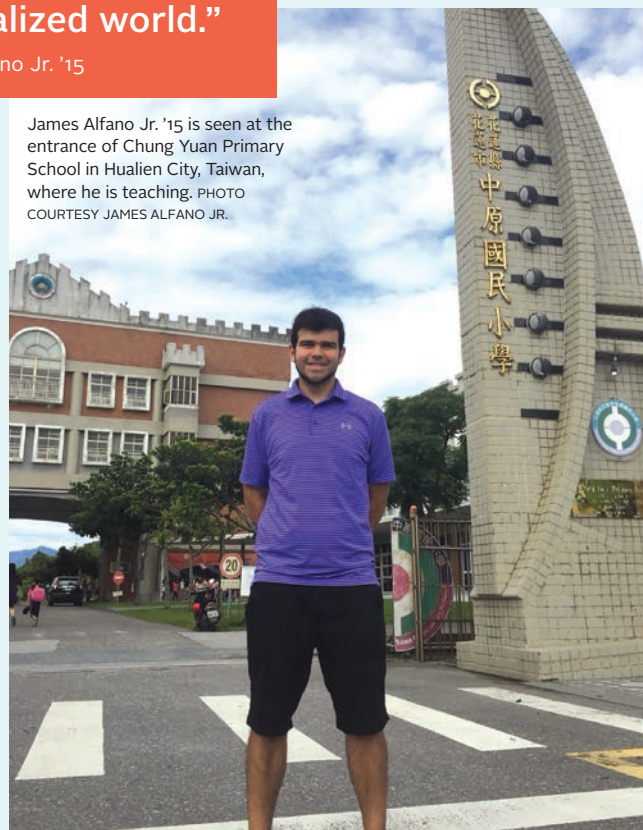
that are critical when discussing concepts in high school social studies classrooms," he says.

– By Samantha Stanich MA'18

**"...I'm happy to represent my country and university in a way that's impactful to students who are entering a very different, globalized world."**

– James Alfano Jr. '15

James Alfano Jr. '15 is seen at the entrance of Chung Yuan Primary School in Hualien City, Taiwan, where he is teaching. PHOTO COURTESY JAMES ALFANO JR.





2006

**Jason Bozinko and Sarah Doman-Bozinko** of Swoyersville, Pa., welcomed their baby boy, **Jackson Francis** on April 16, 2018

2001

**William Layo** of Memphis, Tenn., is working for SAIC as an information strategic planning consultant for the City of Memphis.

2002

**Sandra (Burke Porasky) Fassett** of Shickshinny, Pa., had a chance meeting with the granddaughter of Wilkes' founding President Eugene Farley. While Fassett and her husband were standing in line to enter Magnolia Market in Waco, Texas, owned by Joanna and Chip Gaines of HGTV's "Fixer Upper," they struck up a conversation with a young woman standing behind them. They learned that the woman's grandfather was the founder of Wilkes College.

2005

**Darron Fadden** of Scranton, Pa., and his wife Jessica, welcomed daughter, **Cecilia Mae**, on Aug. 22, 2018. She weighed in at 7 pounds, 6 ounces and was 21 inches long.

2007

**Donna Talarico Beerman MFA'10** of Lancaster, Pa., recently was featured in a front-page story in the living

section of LNP, Lancaster's Sunday newspaper. The story was about Hippocampus, the online literary magazine that Talarico Beerman founded and edits, and Books at Hippocampus, a book publishing arm that her business launched in 2017.

2008

**Mark Levy** of Aventura, Fla., published a collection of 70 short essays, *Trophy Envy*, that he had broadcast on the public radio show, Weekend Radio.

**Wendy Miller** of Muncy, Pa., was named assistant dean of health sciences at Pennsylvania College of Technology. In May, she completed her doctorate, receiving the Doctor of Education degree in educational leadership from Gwynedd Mercy University.

2009

**Jonathan Hummel** of Schuylkill Haven, Pa., began working as a staff accountant at Evans Network of Companies in April 2018. Prior to working with Evans, he was a staff accountant at Schuylkill Community Action.



2008

**Mark Congdon Jr.** of Greensboro, N.C., graduated with a doctorate in communication with a concentration in social entrepreneurship in communication pedagogy and educational leadership from the University of Maine in May. Congdon accepted an assistant professor position at the College of Saint Rose in Albany, N.Y., beginning in fall 2018. Congdon is pictured at his graduation from the University of Maine with his Ph.D. co-advisor, Liliiana Herakova, left, and University of Maine President. Susan J. Hunter, right.

2010

**Jason R. Woloski** of Plains, Pa., was promoted to assistant program director of the Geisinger Kistler Family Medicine Residency in Wilkes-Barre. Woloski continues to see family medicine patients at the Geisinger Kingston Outpatient Clinic and Geisinger Wyoming Valley Hospital. He also serves as a clinical assistant professor of family medicine for the Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine.

2013

**Trisha O'Boyle Perrin** of Swoyersville, Pa., wrote a children's book, *Luna the Rescue*. It was published Feb. 15, 2018.



2009

**Jeffrey Bauman** of Duryea, Pa., accepted a position at Johnson College as an academic advisor. In this newly created position, Bauman will coach and counsel students through course selection as well as assess and measure student success based on retention and persistence to degree completion. Bauman completed his Master of Arts degree in higher education from Messiah College in spring 2016. He also was recently elected as a member of Duryea Borough Council for a four-year term. Bauman is pictured at his first meeting of the Duryea Borough Council.

2015

**Rasha Shaker** of Greater Nashville, Tenn., was promoted to research and engagement supervisor at Grayscale Marketing in Nashville, Tenn. Previously she was the advertising and marketing coordinator for the company. She is now a member of The Recording Academy, the largest professional organization in the music industry.

2016

**Justin Davis** graduated from University of Pennsylvania with a master of science in education degree focusing on policy and reform.

# Erin Gallagher '13 Creates Graphic Images of Social Media Activity

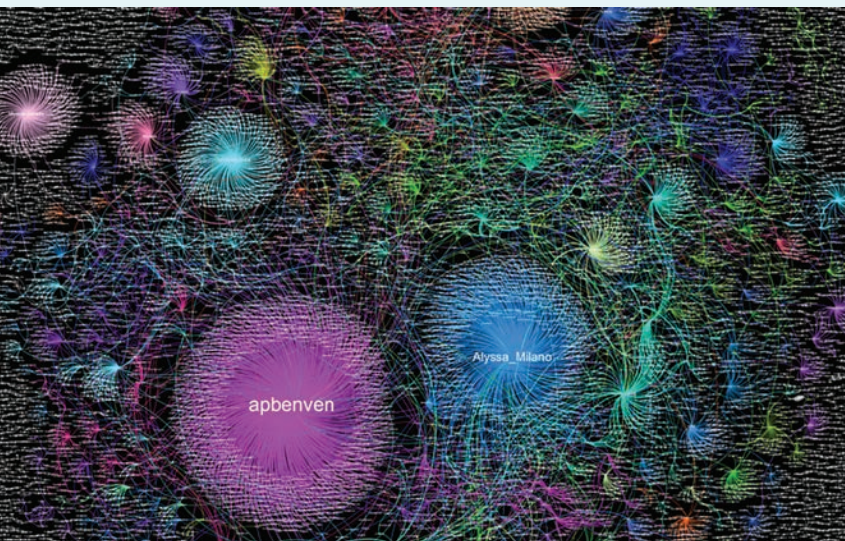
Integrative media alumna Erin Gallagher '13 of Kingston, Pa., has been creating visual representations of social media activity since February 2017. Her work has been gaining attention and has been featured on the online news site *Buzzfeed*. It recently earned her an interview with the *Canadian Broadcasting Company*.

Gallagher describes her work as “ongoing social media research.” She started her data visualizations to help others understand social media manipulation.

“After the 2016 election there was a lot of fear about propaganda bots swaying public opinion and trolls nudging us to vote one way or another, or to not vote at all,” she explains. “So my original intention was to show people what Twitter bots look like, and I’ve done that a few times. But I’ve found that there is also value in showing people what our real human interactions on social media look like.”

Describing her process, Gallagher says she downloads tweets for a hashtag or a keyword. She then creates a network graph of that Twitter activity using Gephi, an open source network visualization software that reveals patterns and trends in the data being researched. The result is a visual representation of a digital conversation shown by burst of color on a black background, resembling fireworks at night. Pictured below is a graphic reflecting the online activity around the hashtag #metoo, which exploded on social media amid news related to sexual assault allegations. It was featured in *Artnet News* in November 2017.

– By Samantha Stanich MA '18



## 2017

**James Brown** of Scranton, Pa., started a business, The Brown Initiative, LLC., with his siblings, Christian and Dianna Brown. The performing arts company puts on shows featuring singing, dancing, and live music. The trio performs locally near their home in Daleville, Pa., and Scranton, Pa. In March, Brown continued his baseball career when he signed to a team in France that is part of the French Federation of Baseball and Softball. He signed a contract to play for the Metz Cometz for the 2018 season which will keep him in France until October 2018.

**Rachel Leandri** of Wyoming, Pa., is the co-owner of the dance studio, Broadway on the Boulevard in Pittston, Pa., with partner Brad Chikowski. The studio was formerly known as the Pittston David Blight School of Dance. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was conducted by Wilkes University’s Small Business Development Center in August. A feature about the studio ran in the *Times Leader* online.

## Graduate

### 2001

**Robert Catina MS**, see undergraduate, 1969.

### 2006

**John A. Bednarz Jr.** of Shavertown, Pa., has been selected a Pennsylvania Super Lawyer for 2018 by *Philadelphia Magazine*.



**Sherri Maret MS** of Chambersburg, Pa., recently published her book, *The Cloud Artist*. It is now a finalist for the 2018 Oklahoma Book Award. Sherri is a veteran English teacher and librarian and is now a full-time author. She taught in the Chambersburg, Cumberland Valley, and Shippensburg, Pa., school districts for 20 years. Another book is in the works for a release later on this year.

Bednarz has received the honor for 10 consecutive years in the field of workers compensation law.

### 2010

**Donna Talarico Beerman MFA**, see undergraduate 2007.

### 2011

**Sarah Doman-Bozinko MS**, see undergraduate 2006.

### 2012

**Liz Krewson-Ross MBA** recently joined the team at the Evergreen Family of Companies in Wyoming, Pa., as the manager of marketing and social media. Prior to her current position, she was the marketing and communications specialist at NiUG International.

# In Memoriam

## 1940

**Mary Elizabeth (Schwager) Burnaford** of Lancaster, Pa., died on Dec. 21, 2018. She loved music and participated actively as a pianist.

## 1946

**Harriet B. (Brown) Schectman** of Scranton, Pa., died June 29, 2018. She was an aging program representative for the Pennsylvania Department of Aging for Lackawanna and adjacent counties.

## 1948

**Elmo Clemente** of Kingston, Pa., died on March 9, 2018. He was a member of the U.S. Navy, serving as an executive officer aboard the LSM 246 during the invasion of Okinawa in the South Pacific. He also served during the Korean War. He was a certified public accountant and co-founded the accounting firm Snyder & Clemente.

## 1949

**Joseph A. Hughes Jr.** of Dallas, Pa., died on July 23, 2018. He served in World War II with the U.S. Army. He was also a professional engineer and principal in the Hughes Corp. and Home Fuel Corp.

**Jack M. Kloeber** of Harleysville, Pa., and Lansdale, Pa., died on May 8, 2018. He was a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army and a veteran of World War II. He was employed by Sordoni Construction in Forty Fort, Pa., and was a partner with Heddon Construction in Dallas, Pa.

## Annabel (Rosenheim)

**Morris** of Kingston, Pa., died on May 19, 2018. She owned and operated A.E. Morris Jewelers in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., with her husband Abraham.

## 1950

**Edwin Johnson** of Dallas, Pa., died on Feb. 16, 2018.

## 1951

**Shirley (Salsburg) Bernard** of Forty Fort, Pa., died on May 9, 2018.

**Melvin H. Feltz** of Wilkes-Barre, Pa., died on March 30, 2018. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps., 4th Air Force West Coast, for three years as a radio operator. He owned and operated an upscale women's clothing store, The Hollywood Shop, in Wilkes-Barre.

## 1952

**Charles Augustine Caffrey** of Williamsport, Pa., died on Jan. 12, 2018. He was in the U.S. Army where he served in Army Intelligence. After being honorably discharged, he worked for the National Security Agency as an analyst during the height of the Cold War. He earned a degree in law.

## 1953

**Theresa B. (Cionzynski) Lastowski** of Nanticoke, Pa., died on Jan. 13, 2018. She was employed by Mercy Hospital, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., as a medical technologist as well as by the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Plains Twp., Pa.

## 1954

**Thomas Robert Adams** of Nanticoke, Pa., died on Feb. 18, 2018. He served in the Navy for four years, ending his career as a lieutenant.

## 1957

**James E. Mark** of Wilkes-Barre, Pa., and St. Petersburg, Fla., died on Sept. 23, 2017. He was an internationally renowned polymer chemist and was employed as a professor of chemistry by the University of Michigan. He also was a professor of chemistry at the University of Cincinnati and was the first honoree there to be named distinguished research professor. He published more than 650 research papers; and coauthored or coedited 24 books. He was the founding editor of the journal *Computational and Theoretical Polymer Science*. He received numerous honors including the ACS Kipping Award; the Flory Polymer Education Award; and the Reed Lectureship at Rensselaer.

## 1958

**William A. Zdancewicz** of Edwardsville, Pa., died on Jan. 13, 2018. He served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War. He also worked for the Girl Scouts and was a barbershop quartet singer.

## 1959

**Lynne (Herskovitz) Warshal** died on Aug. 1, 2016.

## 1960

**Norbert 'Bud' Hysick** of New Britain Borough, Pa., died on Nov. 16, 2017. He was a veteran with the U.S. Army and was stationed in Japan shortly after the Korean conflict. He was employed for 30 years as a salesman by the Joseph Dixon Crucible Company and later worked for the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board and Hatfield Auto Auction.

## 1961

**Maurice D. James** of Allentown, Pa., died on April 5, 2018. He was employed by the public accounting firm of Peat, Marwick and Mitchell. He and his wife owned and operated Ashley's Greenhouses and Florist.

**Donald Radnor** of Charlotte, N.C., formerly of Mountain Top, Pa., died on Feb. 24, 2018. He served in the Navy during the Korean War as a naval aviation electronics engineer, Air Transport Squadron 22. He was an insurance broker and served on the Crestwood School District School Board.

## 1962

**Judy Lawrence** of Nanticoke, Pa., and Dover, Del., died on March 27, 2016. She taught language arts and social studies at Central Middle School in Delaware for many years.

**1964**

**Jennie A. (Moses) George** of Wyomissing, Pa., died on July 29, 2018. She worked loading shells in a munitions factory during World War II. She also taught in the Wilkes-Barre Area School District for 27 years, much of the time teaching fourth grade at Dodson School.

**Paula A. (Mesaris) Odell** of Middlesex, N.J., and formerly of Exeter, Pa., died on April 2, 2017. She was a kindergarten teacher in Middlesex, N.J.

**1966**

**Frank Malia Jr.** of Forty Fort, Pa., died on April 16, 2018. He served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean conflict. He was employed by IBM and was a sales representative for Armour Pharmaceutical.

**1968**

**Marianna (Tomassetti) Baldwin** of Havertown, Pa., and Devon, Pa., died on March 2, 2018. She worked as an administrative assistant for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

**1969**

**Fred L. Ford Jr.** of Halifax, Pa., died on June 20, 2018. He was a U.S. Army veteran and served with the 759th Military Police during the Vietnam War. He was employed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Welfare, where he led the development of the

Pennsylvania Department of Welfare Child Support website. He was a founder of the Heights Packers football team and the Wyoming Valley Junior Football Conference.

**Eleanor M. Krushefski** of Hanover Twp., Pa., died on May 8, 2018. She was the choir director at Exaltation of the Holy Cross Church and made numerous operatic appearances locally and in other areas.

**Joseph P. McGraw Sr.** of Shavertown, Pa., died on May 29, 2018. He was a U.S. Navy veteran and served in the Korean War. He was employed by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare as an income maintenance caseworker.

**Katherine M. (Urban) Panzitta** of Mountain Top, Pa., died on May 15, 2018. She devoted her life to the healthcare profession and worked with the Keystone Job Corps.

**1970**

**Angelo O. Garofalo** of Clarks Summit, Pa., died on May 30, 2018. He was employed as a music history professor at the University of Scranton as well as director of strategic initiatives by American Janitor and Paper Supply.

**Karen (Lewis) Harvard** of Waverly, Pa., died on April 22, 2018. She was briefly employed by International Paper. She was a beautiful swimmer, a talented person with cross-stitch and yarn, and an avid reader and lover of animals.

**1971**

**William H. Theurer** of Lancaster, Pa., died on April 23, 2018. He served in the Army Reserve and was employed by Henkels & McCoy for 37 years.

**1974**

**Mary B. (Becker) Marshall** of Wilkes-Barre, Pa., died on April 19, 2018. She was employed by the state of Pennsylvania as a disability claims adjudicator for over 30 years.

**1975**

**Hugh M. Richards** of Dallas, Pa., died on March 11, 2018. He was a gas well farmer.

**1977**

**Angie B. Chapasko** of Ashley, Pa., died on March 14, 2018. She was a registered nurse for Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City; Wilkes-Barre General Hospital, Plains Twp., Pa.; Children's Service Center, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.; and Northeast Counseling, Hazleton, Pa.

**Karen Line** of Wilkes-Barre, Pa., died on Jan. 2, 2018.

**1980**

**John Miranda** of Richboro, Pa., died on Aug. 29, 2016. He was a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps.

**1981**

**R. Malcolm Bowes III** of Shavertown, Pa., died on April 16, 2018. He was a systems analyst and a special project manager for the United Postal Service.

**James W. Kearney** of Laffin, Pa., died on June 20, 2018. He was a general agent with the Knights of Columbus for 38 years.

**Michael A. Kowaleski** of Wyoming, Pa., died on June 21, 2018. He worked for Century 21 as a real estate broker.

**1982**

**Mary Teresa Rondine** of Plymouth, Pa., died on March 28, 2018.

**1983**

**William Kopf Lourie** of Mullica Hill, Pa., died on Feb. 18, 2018. He was employed by Brandywine Global Investments as a computer programmer in the Philadelphia area.

**James Dabney Watkinson** of Richmond, Va., died on May 31, 2018. He was a U.S. Army veteran. He earned a doctorate in American history from the University of Virginia. He taught at various colleges in Virginia, including Virginia Commonwealth University.

**1985**

**Nancy J. Lane** of Tunkhannock, Pa., died on April 23, 2018. She served as director of Wyoming and Sullivan County Conservation Department.

**Mike Lavage** of Scranton, Pa., died on June 7, 2018. He worked at Iron City Sash and Door, Erie Materials and Harvey Building Products.

**1989**

**Marilyn (Maslowski) Gruenloh** of Pittston, Pa., and formerly Glen Lyon, Pa., died on April 30, 2018. She worked as a nurse in various psychiatric units throughout northeast Pennsylvania. She was also a travel nurse in New Jersey and North Carolina.

**1991**

**Thomas S. Chirkot** of Swoyersville, Pa., died on June 11, 2018. He was employed as a general manager by Hebelier LLC, Tonawanda, N.Y. He was also a U.S. patent holder and a published author.

**Susan (Dalton) St. Onge** of Fanwood, N.J., died on June 21, 2018. She played on the first Lady Colonels soccer team at Wilkes. Her higher education career included positions at Franklin Pierce College, Rutgers University, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Princeton University and Stevens Institute of Technology, where she served as director of graduate admissions.

**2003**

**Deborah Susan Gabriel Macri** of Mountain Top, Pa., died on April 14, 2018. She was a health and physical education teacher for 18 years in the Crestwood Area School District.

**2010**

**Katherine (Bialczak) Felker** of Scott Twp., Pa., died on April 2, 2018. She was the principal at Evans Falls and Mill City elementary schools in the Tunkhannock Area School District.

**2012**

**Andrea Yorina Vomero** of West Wyoming, Pa., died on May 7, 2018. She was a registered nurse in the Wilkes-Barre General Hospital Intensive Care Unit for almost 30 years.

**2017**

**Jessica Lynn Helfrich** of Jacksonville, N.C., died on April 11, 2018. She worked for many years as a paralegal.

## Friends of Wilkes

**Welton Grant Farrar** of Dallas, Pa., died on Aug. 15, 2018. He will be remembered by Wilkes alumni as a beloved professor of economics at the University for more than 40 years. An avid supporter of Wilkes athletics, he was elected to the Wilkes Athletics Hall of Fame. Farrar will be remembered as a fixture at Colonels football

and basketball games and at wrestling matches. He earned his bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Pennsylvania and also studied at Harvard and Cornell universities. Farrar served in World War II as a member of the U.S. Navy.

**Frank Martz Henry** of Dallas, Pa., died June 3, 2018. Henry was a member of the Wilkes University Board of Trustees since 1977. He was the recipient of Wilkes' highest honor, the President's Medal, in 2017. The honor is bestowed annually on an individual whose personal and professional life reflect the highest aspirations of Wilkes University. He had a distinguished career in the transportation industry. He was president of Gold Line, Inc. and served as the president of First Class Coach Company, Inc. He was chairman emeritus of the Wilkes-Barre-based Frank Martz Coach Company and the Martz Group companies. He served as that company's president from 1964 to 1995. His generous support for Wilkes is reflected in the Henry Student Center, which serves as the center of campus life at Wilkes since its dedication in November 2001. It was named in honor of Henry and his late wife, Dorothea. Henry's generosity is also reflected in the Frank M. and Dorothea Henry Gymnasium, named in May 1990 in recognition of their gifts to the Wilkes Tomorrow Capital Campaign.

Henry served as a director of many local, regional and national companies. He was director of C-Tec Corp. and served as honorary director of Gray Line Corporation, Inc. and served as its director and as a member of First Union NE Pennsylvania Regional Advisory Board. Other companies benefiting from his leadership as director included Commonwealth Enterprises Inc. (CTE), Wachovia Corp., Wells Fargo and First Fidelity Inc. Henry was a past chairman and member of the Geisinger Health System Foundation Board of Directors, Salvation Army Advisory Board and past chairman of the board of trustees of the Wilke-Barre Family YMCA. Henry graduated from Yale University with a bachelor's degree in economics. He was a U.S. Air Force veteran, where he served in the Strategic Air Command.

**John Horner** of Forked River, N.J., and formerly of Hoboken and Waldwick, N.J., died on Jan. 18, 2018. He was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force and served during World War II as a radio navigator and gunner. He also served in the Korean conflict as part of B-24, B-17 and B-29 air crews. He was one of the last Flyboys.



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For more information about ways to give, contact Margaret Steele, chief development officer, at **570-408-4302** or [Margaret.Steele@wilkes.edu](mailto:Margaret.Steele@wilkes.edu).



**Gateway** *to the* **Future**

THE CAMPAIGN FOR  
WILKES UNIVERSITY



# Wilkes University

Wilkes-Barre, PA 18766

## calendar of events



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### December

- 2 Civic Band Concert, Dorothy Dickson Darte Center, 3 p.m.
- 6 Jazz Orchestra Concert, Dorothy Dickson Darte Center, 8 p.m.
- 8 Flute Ensemble Concert, Dorothy Dickson Darte Center, 8 p.m.
- 9 Choral Concert, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, South Franklin Street, Wilkes-Barre, 3 p.m.
- 10 Chamber Orchestra Concert, Dorothy Dickson Darte Center, 8 p.m.
- 14-16 *The Nutcracker*, Conservatory/Degnan Ballet Center, Dorothy Dickson Darte Center, Friday and Saturday, 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m.

Through Dec. 16 *Loud Silence: Expressions of Activism*, Sordoni Art Gallery

### January 2019

- 6-10 Maslow Foundation Salon Reading Series, 7 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 6, Barnes & Noble, Public Square, Wilkes-Barre; Jan. 7-10, Dorothy Dickson Darte Center
- 15-March 1 Käthe Kollwitz: *Peasant War*, Sordoni Art Gallery
- 15-March 1 Holly Trostle Brigham: *Sacred Sisters*, Sordoni Art Gallery
- 20 Winter Commencement, Henry Gymnasium, Arnaud C. Marts Center, 1 p.m.

### February

- 9 Admissions Open House
- 21-24 *Cabaret*, Wilkes University Theatre, Dorothy Dickson Darte Center, Thursday-Sunday, 8 p.m.; Saturday-Sunday, 2 p.m.
- 28 Dave Eggers, author, Allan Hamilton Dickson Spring Writers Series, 7:30 p.m., Dorothy Dickson Darte Center

### March

- 2 Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science
- 11-16 Degnan Ballet Center 2019 Open House
- 23 Accepted Student Day

### April

- 2-May 18 Ukiyo-E to Shin Hanga: Japanese Woodblock Prints from the Syracuse University Art Collection, Sordoni Art Gallery
- 14 Bryan Stevenson, "American Injustice: Mercy, Humanity and Making a Difference," Max Rosenn Lecture, 2 p.m., Dorothy Dickson Darte Center
- 27 Junior Admissions Open House

### May

- 18 Spring Commencement, Henry Gymnasium, Arnaud C. Marts Center, Graduate Ceremony, 10 a.m., Undergraduate Ceremony, 3 p.m.