

THE POINT



MEDIA CONVERGENCE

Investigative journalist Andrew Conte leads collaboration in new Center for Media Innovation



Dear alumni and friends,

Back to school season at Point Park is one of my favorite times of the year. Our Pittsburgh neighborhood is filled with the energy that our students and families bring with them as they arrive in, or return to, our urban campus.

The energy and excitement was especially strong on Sept. 13, the day we celebrated the grand opening of the latest project that

has already begun to reshape and revitalize Point Park's Downtown community – the new Center for Media Innovation. Situated at the corner of Wood Street and Third Avenue in the heart of our Downtown campus, this state-of-the-art incubator and collaborative space enables Point Park students from across the University to work with the latest technology alongside experienced journalists and media professionals.

The opening of the Center brought the University community together with many of these industry leaders for a daylong celebration that included opportunities to explore new media technology and enjoy panel discussions, entertainment, special presentations and much more. We invite all of our alumni and friends to visit this exciting new media crossroads to take a look inside and enjoy one of the many educational events and exhibits that are open to the public. Visit page 18 to learn all about the Center and see a schedule of upcoming activities.

The spirit of collaboration is alive and well at Point Park. You can see it not only in the new Center for Media Innovation, but across the entire University and throughout all of

our academic programs. For example, since the University's founding, Point Park has developed strong relationships with local businesses and organizations by educating students in career-focused programs taught by faculty who work in their fields. In turn, companies have found success working with our Career Development Center to recruit skilled interns and employees.

Strengthening this important connection between educating students and preparing the future workforce, Point Park has established a new cooperative education program, or co-op, for our School of Business undergraduate students. We look forward to sharing more details about this new co-op program, as well as many other innovative projects, in the months to come.

At Point Park, collaboration and innovation are always in season. On your next visit to Downtown Pittsburgh, we hope you'll stop by our dynamic urban campus and experience the energy and excitement for yourself.

Warm regards,

Dr. Paul Hennigan
President

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ON THE COVER:
Investigative journalist Andrew Conte, director of the Center for Media Innovation, outside the new collaborative space at Wood Street and Third Avenue in the heart of Point Park's Downtown campus. Photo by Christopher Rolinson.

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TALK TO US!

The Point wants to hear from you. Send your comments and suggestions to:

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FEEDBACK

Lasting Influence

I received my 2016 Spring issue of *The Point* and read the article on **Nathan Firestone** J.D., professor of political science [recently named vice chair of Pennsylvania's Minor Judiciary Education Board]. As an alumnus, and former stu-

dent of Dr. Firestone, I was not surprised at the accolades bestowed upon him by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. He was always held in the highest regard by his students and fellow faculty members. I certainly wish him well, and continued success and good health. He taught us so much, and was responsible for my

successes throughout my early and present career. The students of Point Park University are most fortunate to have access to his knowledge. Best wishes to all alumni, all current students, and those [who] graduated this year.

John C. Huckestein (A&S 1972)
Hollywood, Fla.



On the Move

Each year in late August, dozens of student leaders, faculty and staff join together to fill bins, haul mini-refrigerators, and generally assist first-year and upper class students and their families with all aspects of moving into the University's

residence halls in Downtown Pittsburgh. "The University community is responsible for doing all of the "moving in" for our students," says **Michael Gieseke**, dean of student life. "We believe this not only provides better customer service for our students and their families, but it also

allows faculty, staff and student leaders the chance to participate in an exciting University-wide initiative to start off the academic year." This fall, Point Park welcomed 614 first-time, full-time freshmen registered for the fall semester. They represent 10 countries and 36 states.

NEWS AND VIEWS

Professional Advancement

George (Fritz) Kiersch has been appointed assistant vice president in the Office of the Provost. According to Provost **John Pearson**, Ph.D., "Fritz will be an invaluable asset in our work to make and maintain nationally distinctive academic programs that attract students and provide opportunities to students and faculty to advance in their disciplines." Kiersch comes to Point Park from Oklahoma City University, where he served as a member of the faculty, an artist-in-residence, and a chair of the Department of Moving Images Arts. The founder of a number of undergraduate and graduate interdisciplinary degree programs related to moving image production and studies, Kiersch has had a long career as producer and director of theatrical and television full-length feature films. "With [his] focus on student learning, extensive professional experience as both an artist and a person engaged in the business of art, track record of success in academic program development, clear understanding and appreciation for the work of the faculty, and strong desire to help us strive for academic excellence, he will be a wonderful addition to Point Park," said Pearson.

Jessica McCort, Ph.D., assistant professor of composition and rhetoric and coordinator of the writing intensive program, served as editor of the recently published book *Reading in the Dark: Horror in Children's Literature and Culture*. Published by the University Press of Mississippi, McCort's book explores the intersection between horror, popular culture and children's cultural productions, including picture books, fairy tales, young adult literature, television and monster movies.

Jamesena Talbott, D.M., professor of leadership, was invited to present at

the 2016 Strategic Horizons Network Conference for Community College Presidents. Talbott's June 13 presentation at the Renaissance Pittsburgh Hotel was titled "Essentials for Community Engagement Programming." In addition, the segment included a workshop facilitated by **Kendra Ross**, who is a Ph.D. in community engagement student at Point Park and graduate assistant. The presentation and workshop culminated with a question and answer session with ideas for program development, community engagement and social innovation.

Jason Varnish, a part-time faculty member in the Sports, Arts and Entertainment Management program, made it possible for seven SAEM students and alumni to work in VIP services, production running and floor seating at Beyoncé's *The Formation World Tour* May 31 at Heinz Field in Pittsburgh. "My Box Office Management course, taught by Jason Varnish, and my Business of Concert Production and Touring class, taught by **Ed Traversari**, really prepared me for this event," said **Nicolette Jones**. "We had a great time! It was a fantastic experience to work on such a high profile tour. It was all thanks to part-time SAEM faculty member Jason Varnish, who had a contact with the production team," remarked **Ashley Dobransky**, SAEM alumna, M.B.A. student and assistant to the chair of the Department of Management in the University's School of Business. Varnish is also owner/consultant of BOM Advisers, a box office management company of managers, supervisors and event staff whose expertise in event management includes ticketing as well as operations, marketing and social media.

Edward Scott, C.P.A., M.B.A., the George Rowland White Endowed Professor in Accounting and Finance and chair of the Department of Business, led the Fourth

Annual Accounting Career Awareness Program (ACAP) at Point Park last summer. Twenty-two students from 16 high schools spent the week on campus for the program. "The students were highly engaged from start to finish and the workshops were the most interactive between students and presenters since inception of the program," said Scott, who began ACAP in 2013. Part of the National Association of Black Accountants, Inc., ACAP's goal is to increase understanding among high school students in underrepresented minority groups about accounting and its career opportunities. The students traveled to public accounting firms Ernst & Young and Sisterson & Co. LLP to see what it's like to work in the field. The students also visited Massaro Construction and heard presentations from accounting, finance and business professionals from KPMG, Maher Duessel, the National Association of Black Accountants Pittsburgh Chapter, PNC, Schneider Downs, Tyler Collier and Associates LLC, UPMC and more.

Brent Robbins, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology and chair of the Department of Humanities and Human Sciences, served as guest editor and writer for a special issue of the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, which focused on "Community Psychology and the Hermeneutics of Love." The May 2016 issue also featured articles written by **Robert McInerney**, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology, and **Rachael Goss**, part-time psychology instructor. "This is a very important issue for us because the concept of a 'hermeneutics of love' as the basis for clinical and community psychology is a major philosophical foundation for our undergraduate and graduate programs in psychology," according to Robbins. "We [approach] psychology from a humanistic perspective, which places special emphasis on the dignity of persons."

James Lamb has joined Point Park as the University's new director of cooperative education. An alumnus of Duquesne University (M.S., Education) and The Pennsylvania State University (B.S., Rehabilitative Education), Lamb most recently served as president of the Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh. His responsibilities there included developing strategic plans to advance the institute's mission and promoting the institute to local, regional, national, and international development agencies. Lamb has more than 30 years' experience empowering young people through education, employment, personal and professional development, cultural diversity, and coaching. In his new role at Point Park, Lamb will focus on engaging and sustaining partnerships with industry, faculty and other stakeholders and organizations to develop and grow cooperative education opportunities and experiential learning opportunities.

Welcome New Faculty

Point Park welcomed 14 new full-time faculty members for the 2016-17 academic year. These faculty bring their industry expertise and real-world professional experience into the classes they teach. The new faculty members are: **Sandra Mervosh**, instructor of human resource management (School of Business); **Ben Schonberger**, instructor of photography (School of Communication); **Mark Burrell**, assistant professor of dance; **Colleen Hooper**, Ph.D., visiting artist, dance history; **Tracey Brent-Chessum**, Ph.D., assistant professor of musical theatre; and **April Daras**, visiting artist, theatre (Conservatory of Performing Arts); **Denise Beverina Moore**, instructor of education; **Ronald Dufalla**, Ph.D., instructor of education; **Elisabeth Ehrlich**, Ed.D., instructor of education; **Eric Stennett**, Ed.D., visiting assistant

professor of education, and director of the Ed.D. in leadership and administration program; **Jill Thomas**, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology and director of the M.A. clinical-community psychology program; **Chris Girman**, Ph.D., assistant professor of literary arts; **Kristy Long**, instructor of natural sciences; and **Yaser Roshan**, Ph.D., assistant professor of electrical engineering (School of Arts and Sciences).

Welcome New Trustees

Three prominent Western Pennsylvania business leaders have been elected to Point Park's Board of Trustees. **Dave Duncan**, CEO of Duncan Financial Group, graduated from Point Park in 1979 with a bachelor's degree in business administration. Duncan Financial LLC is one of the largest branch offices in the country of their broker dealer, Cambridge



International Media Class Visits Amsterdam, Bruges and London

For 12 students in Point Park's spring semester International Media class, summer vacation began with a trip abroad to learn firsthand about the media, history and culture in London, Bruges and Amsterdam, May 8-20. Professors **Helen Fallon** and **Bob O'Gara**, retired faculty member **Jan Getz**, and M.A./M.B.A. alumna **Emily Kolek** accompanied the group. "This class and trip was an experience of a lifetime. You get to affordably visit multiple countries with your friends, see how other people live, work and play, and get academic credit for it," said **Lauren Joseph**, a senior public relations and advertising major with a minor in multimedia. For **Jessica Federkeil**, a senior journalism major, this was her first time traveling by plane. "Traveling abroad was an amazing experience. It's so important to go out and see different cultures and learn new ideas, especially as a college student," said Federkeil. "I wouldn't have been able to take this trip if it wasn't for this class and financial assistance from the John Fallon Travel Scholar-

ship." In London, the group visited Battenhall (communications agency) and BMB (advertising agency) and experienced cultural outings to such landmarks as Parliament and Big Ben, Westminster Abbey, Trafalgar Square and Buckingham Palace. In Belgium, the group visited the historic Center of Bruges, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Markt Square and sampled the famous Belgian chocolate. On the agenda in Amsterdam was a visit to Vrije Universiteit for a discussion about media in The Netherlands, Het Parool (newspaper), de Volkskrant (newspaper), Ketchum Amsterdam (communications agency) and World Press Photo Foundation. They also visited such landmarks as the Anne Frank House and the windmills of Zaanse Schans. **Jane McAnallen**, a senior PR and advertising major, praised the opportunity to "visit agencies and network with people you would have never met otherwise."



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POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

2012 M.B.A. alumna *Ericka Williams* recognized the importance of having a will for her family.

Investment Research. Duncan has previously served as a Point Park trustee. **Joseph R. Greco**, president and CEO of Greco Gas Inc., graduated from Point Park in 1971 with a bachelor's degree in business management. Greco Gas has proudly served the Western Pennsylvania and Greater Pittsburgh marketplaces since 1941 with the highest quality industrial and specialty gases, bulk propane, welding equipment and supplies, industrial supplies, filler metals, and safety equipment. **Lafe Metz** is the national chair of the Real Estate Group at Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC, managing a group of 45 attorneys across the firm's 19 offices.

He focuses his practice on high value commercial real estate transactions, with emphasis on tax-advantaged structures and public financing incentives. He also devotes significant time to representing renewable energy producers, including hydroelectric power plants, wind farms and solar energy developments.

College of Distinction

Innovative application of high impact educational practices at Point Park earned the University recognition among the nation's Colleges of Distinction. Point Park students have earned college credit

and valuable life experience through service learning, learning communities and internships. "We're so happy to award Point Park for developing skills relevant to graduates' lives," said **Tyson Schritter**, executive editor for Colleges of Distinction. "High student engagement in college is one of the keys to a successful undergraduate education. With an increasing emphasis on hands-on learning techniques, Colleges of Distinction applauds Point Park for practicing methodologies that prepare students for their futures." Schools must demonstrate results across the Four Distinctions — Engaged Students, Great Teaching, Vibrant Community



Point Park police Lieutenant Nicholas Black wears body camera.
Photo by Chris Rolinson.

Body Cameras Help Police Focus on Safety

As part of a longstanding commitment to maintain a safe campus, Point Park police officers are now equipped with body cameras. Training for the 13 sworn police officers was conducted last summer and officers began wearing the devices on Aug. 1. "Our officers go out of their way to become familiar and comforting faces to those on our campus, but we recognize there is a need to be prepared for any type of situation," said **Jeffrey Besong**, chief of police and vice president of Public Safety. "The use of body cameras acts as an additional safety precaution for both officers and citizens." Research has shown that people tend to be far less aggressive and adhere to social norms when they are aware a camera is in use. In addition, the body cameras offer the ability to: more accurately document events, actions, conditions and statements made during incidents; enhance the ability to prepare reports and present court testimony; improve

the training capabilities of the department; assist with investigations of alleged police misconduct; and protect department members from civil liability resulting from wrongful accusations of misconduct. "Point Park has always been diligent about creating a safe environment in which to live, learn and work," said President **Paul Hennigan**. "The use of body cameras is just the latest example of our University's proactive approach to that commitment." In fact, Safe Campus, the National Campus Safety Summit, placed the University's police department on its 2016 Top 25 list. Point Park was selected from more than 4,700 eligible college or university administration departments based on efforts and improvements in campus safety. Point Park police are also active in community service. For example, officers participated in the YWCA Greater Pittsburgh Center for Race & Gender Equity "Stand Against Racism" event last summer.

and Successful Outcomes. High school counselors and educators make nominations, and each school is evaluated on key indicators including student engagement, student empowerment, and curricular innovation. Colleges that have distinguished themselves in each of the Four Distinctions and that have demonstrated dedication to enriching student outcomes through innovative learning opportunities are then invited to join Colleges of Distinction. "This honor validates our commitment to providing students with a personalized support system that allows them to flourish," said President **Paul Hennigan**. "The University offers numerous real-world learning opportunities that prepare students for success from the moment their careers begin." The annual process to select the nation's Colleges of Distinction also includes a review of each institution's freshman experience, as well as its general education program, strategic plan, and alumni success and satisfaction measures.

New B.S. in Mechanical Engineering

Beginning in Spring 2017, Point Park will offer a new Bachelor of Science degree program in mechanical engineering that combines rigorous theoretical study with practical, hands-on experience. The program's innovative curriculum will include mechanical engineering courses in the freshman year so that students can develop an early understanding of their chosen profession. Additionally, this distinctive new program will provide its graduates with outstanding preparation for professional practice, graduate school and engineering licensure. The new degree program in mechanical engineering has been designed in full compliance with the criteria of ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology). The program is not yet accredited by ABET because this organization does

not accredit new programs until they produce graduates. Point Park faculty intend for the mechanical engineering program to produce its first graduates in May 2019, and expect to receive accreditation in July 2020. This accreditation, once granted, will be applied retroactively by ABET for up to two years to ensure that all graduates hold a degree from an accredited program. All courses in the mechanical engineering program are available on an evening or weekend schedule, allowing working students to complete the four-year degree requirements without putting their careers on hold. Numerous day courses, including the core curriculum, are available to serve the needs of traditional students as well. For more information, visit: pointpark.edu/Academics/Schools/SchoolofArtsandSciences/Departments/NaturalSciencesandEngineeringTechnology/MechanicalEngineering.

The Pennsylvania Society and Maguire Foundation Scholar

The Pennsylvania Society Scholarship program with the Maguire Foundation announced that **Darian Ward** has been selected as one of 25 inaugural scholarship recipients. Darian will receive an annually renewable \$8,000 scholarship for four years of undergraduate study at Point Park. Ward was selected from over 1,000 applicants in the first year of the scholarship competition. Each scholarship recipient needed to be a senior at a high school in Pennsylvania. A recipient must have enrolled in a 4 year accredited college in Pennsylvania, have a 3.0 or higher grade average, and have demonstrated financial need and a commitment to serve the community. All Pennsylvania Society Scholarship winners are required to complete 9 credits of study in history, civics, and/or government studies. In its



Convocation 2016

Point Park's annual Convocation brings together first-year students, faculty and administrators for the kickoff to the academic year. **Adelyn Biedenbach** (COM '12), director of digital media for the NHL's Florida Panthers, was the featured speaker at this year's event on August 26. Biedenbach, a South Hills native and 2012 graduate of Point Park, welcomed students at the ceremony, along with the **John Pearson**, the University's new provost, and President **Paul Hennigan**. "I'm honored and excited to come back and speak to Point Park's freshmen class. You don't typically choose where you go

to high school, but with college, you have a choice," Biedenbach said. "You pick the place that fits your goals, the place that feels like it fits you. That was Point Park for me. It's an atmosphere unlike anywhere else, with people who care about you and an amazing city for a campus." Biedenbach is about to begin her fourth season with the Florida Panthers, and her second as director of digital media. In that role, she oversees social media, digital media and FloridaPanthers.com, and contributes to the communications and public relations strategy for both the team and the BB&T Center.

first year, The Pennsylvania Society and the Maguire Foundation have offered \$200,000 in scholarship awards for Pennsylvania high school students to attend college in Pennsylvania, enriching the strength of the talent pool in the Commonwealth.

From Cuba to Point Park

In late July, Point Park welcomed a group of young Cuban boxers (ages 13 to 21) and several of their coaches to live on the University's Downtown campus during a visit to Pittsburgh to box with the Pittsburgh Amateur Boxing Group. The weeklong visit culminated in a series of boxing matches that took place on the

Roberto Clemente Bridge. The matches were televised by WPXI-TV (on the PCNC channel) and the event broadcast live to 11 million Cubans via satellite. The historic exchange was initiated with the visit of a Pittsburgh delegation to Cuba in June 2016, and is expected to serve as a foundation for future academic and economic exchanges. The Cuban boxers' visit to Pittsburgh was made possible by a collaboration among government leaders, including Congressman **Mike Doyle**, Allegheny County Executive **Rich Fitzgerald**, Representative **Paul Costa** (a Point Park alumnus) and former State Senator **Jim Ferlo** and former State Representative **Mike Diven**.



Student Film Screened at Cannes Film Festival 2016

A short film made by Point Park students was screened at the 69th Cannes International Film Festival in France last May. *Ava*, a five-minute film done for a Production II class in the Cinema Arts program, follows a young woman diagnosed with a deadly disease and how it affects the loved ones around her. "I had a good friend who passed away our senior year of high school from brain cancer," said **David Randolph** of Wexford, who wrote, produced and directed the film earlier this year as a sophomore at Point Park. "I always thought it was such a tragic story and I wanted to display it, but with a sweet ending. He was the prom king, and the original idea was for *Ava* to be taken to prom by the end of the film. It's never said

it's a prom, but it's very much [implied]." In fact, not much is said because it was decided *Ava* would be a silent film. "The production of *Ava* was very trying. We had a lot of setbacks with location and scheduling issues, but we were able to come together and work as a team," Randolph said. "Collaboration played a key factor in our success." **Cara Friez**, one of the group's Production II professors, called *Ava* a very high quality and ambitious film. "It's beautifully shot and edited," she said. "I told them this was a big production and questioned whether they wanted to do it in such a short time. They went above and beyond to make it work." The film was accepted as part of the Creative Mind Group's screening at Cannes in the Short Film Corner, and was shown in full at the festival.

Seven Deadly Sins Theme for Undergraduate Symposium

Students across many different majors presented research surrounding the wonders of pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath and sloth this year at the Annual Undergraduate Symposium.

Hosted by the Department of Literary Arts, the spring symposium centered on the theme of the "Seven Deadly Sins." "Our theme of the 'Seven Deadly Sins' helped bring together a number of exciting interdisciplinary projects around a single point of focus and led to many lively discussions," explained **Barbara**

Barrow, Ph.D., assistant professor of British literature. "It was a fantastic opportunity to get to see the students' different projects and learn more about the research and creative thinking happening on our campus." Student projects ranged from short films and poems to literature and media analyses related to topics such as lust in Anime, greed in *The Hunger Games* and sloth in Netflix viewers. **Ta'Sey Harmon**, a sophomore broadcast reporting major, presented "Greed Within Sports" at the student panel session focused on greed. "So many people gave me feedback and were so engaged in my topic. It was interesting to study today's greed in college and professional sports," explained Harmon. New this year, the symposium featured senior creative writing majors **Zachary Borzovoy** and **Jacob Mullins**, who were elected as the keynote speakers, and read some of their original fiction and poetry. "Their presentations were a real display of the range of work our department and students produce," said **Karen Dwyer**, Ph.D., associate professor of English and coordinator of the creative writing program.

Dinwoodie and Baranski Inducted into Pioneer Athletic Hall of Fame in 2016

Point Park's Pioneer Athletic Hall of Fame includes two new inductees: **Rob Dinwoodie** (Baseball, 1997-2000) and **Lindsey (Pesanka) Baranski** (Softball, 2008-11). Dinwoodie and Baranski were enshrined at an induction ceremony on October 1, part of the Point Park's annual Athletics Alumni Weekend. Dinwoodie was a star player for the Pioneers' baseball team from 1997-2000. An infielder from Mississauga, Ontario, he was a key part of an NAIA World Series team in 1998, and he left his mark on Point Park by the time of his gradua-



CSI: Point Park

More than 50 high school students registered for the annual CSI summer camp at Point Park, held July 12-15 this year, making it the largest high school group the forensic science program has hosted at the University. During the four-day camp, students investigated — and then created their own — mock crime scenes in the CSI House on campus and conducted lab work on various types of evidence (hairs, fibers, fingerprints, etc.). They also heard presentations from faculty in the

Department of Criminal Justice and Intelligence Studies on subjects ranging from criminal justice and intelligence and national security to Ninja fighting and forensic entomology. "This was a group of extremely bright students and advanced learners," remarked **Edward Strimlan**, M.D., assistant professor and coordinator of the forensic science program. "It was exciting to have a lot of out-of-town students again this year," added Strimlan.

tion. Dinwoodie earned NAIA Honorable-Mention All-American honors and was an All-Northeast Region performer for the Pioneers. His place in the Point Park baseball record book endures after the end of his college career. Dinwoodie was a part of a talented infield that also included fellow Pioneer Athletic Hall of Famers **Don Kelly** (HOF '10) and **Ryan Ellis** (HOF '11). Outfielder **Mike Smith** (HOF '11) was also a teammate, which gives four Hall of Fame inductees from that team. The Pioneers had a record of 136-55-1 (.710) from 1997-2000. Baranski, who was known as her maiden name Lindsey Pesanka during her time with the Pioneers, was an all-conference

player who ushered in a big turnaround in Point Park softball. Baranski was the first recruit signed by current head coach **Michelle Coultas**, who just finished up her 10th year at the school. That signing provided a cornerstone for a program that had not won more than 10 games in a season in several years. Baranski was an all-conference player for four years. Her freshman year ended with an American Midwest Conference Freshman of the Year honor. Over four years, she batted .304 with 128 hits in 134 career games. For more information on the Pioneer Athletic Hall of Fame, and to learn how to make a nomination, visit PointPark.edu/Athletics/HallofFame.



M.B.A. Student Receives Chuck Cooper Scholarship

DaMarra Underwood, who expects to complete her M.B.A. with a concentration in Sports, Arts and Entertainment Management in December 2016, has been honored with a graduate merit scholarship from the Chuck Cooper Foundation. The Foundation's mission is to continue the legacy of Charles "Chuck" Cooper, the first African-American drafted into the National Basketball Association, by awarding graduate-level scholarships and by providing comprehensive leadership development, professional skills and opportunities to underserved students. **Mitchel Nickols**, Ph.D., Point Park part-time professor, is a consultant and leadership program developer with the Foundation. "I have learned so much in the time I have attended this University and I am looking forward to continuing to grow and learn from the faculty at Point Park," said Underwood, who is an accomplished Gospel singer and plans a career as a music executive.

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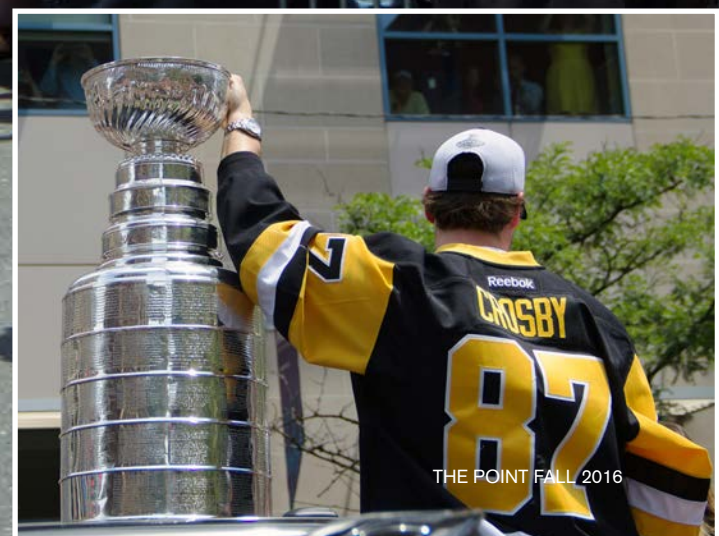
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HOMETOWN PROUD

Point Park's downtown campus was at the heart of a victory parade on June 16 to celebrate the Pittsburgh Penguins' 2016 Stanley Cup championship. Staff, faculty and students joined throngs of Pens fans from far and wide to see Sidney Crosby and fellow players carry the Stanley Cup down the Boulevard of the Allies.

Photos by Shayna Mendez, photojournalism major.



Stanley Denton, Ph.D. Leads College Now, Paves the Way for Black Male Teachers

by Barbara Vilanova



When the popular website Slate.com wanted to explore why there aren't more African-American male teachers, they sought out **Stanley Denton, Ph.D.**, associate professor of education at Point Park, for answers.

Denton has been a leader in the formation of the Black Men Teaching Initiative, a Western Pennsylvania-wide effort aimed at increasing the percentage of African-American males enrolled in college education programs from one percent to five percent over the next three years. It's an aggressive goal, but one that Denton believes is entirely possible.

Collaborative Effort

According to the Slate article, Pennsylvania's effort at increasing black male teachers in the classroom is one of a handful of similar initiatives across the country aimed at addressing what

the article's author Dani McClain called "a national problem." "The Pennsylvania schools' program could be particularly helpful because the mismatch in Pittsburgh's public schools is wide. While just over half of the 26,000 students are black and one-third are white, according to data from 2014, 85 percent of the district's teachers were white and 14 percent were black," reported McClain. Addressing gaps like this is a major goal of the Black Men Teaching Initiative.

As Denton points out, Point Park can't do it alone, which is why faculty and staff from other nearby universities including Indiana University of Pennsylvania, California University of Pennsylvania and the Community College of Allegheny County are involved in the effort. Last May, Point Park hosted about 100 high school students for the "Ever Consider Teaching?" conference focused on the need for more black male teachers in America's schools.

Reaction to the conference was uniformly positive, especially among the younger attendees. Participant Emanule Cargile, a junior from Propel Andrew Street, said, "It was a powerful experience. They were passing the baton to our generation."

College Now Opportunities

In addition to the ambitious goals of the Black Men Teaching Initiative, Denton spearheads College Now, a dual enrollment collaborative program that lets qualifying students earn up to 30 credits at a significantly reduced tuition rate during their junior or senior years of high school. Students participating in the College Now program can receive guidance and mentorship from faculty and advisors, and as an added incentive, those high school students who decide to enroll in College Now and major in education are given preference in the admission process.

Denton was a natural choice to head this program. In his former position as program officer for multicultural education in the Pittsburgh Public Schools, Denton created a national award-winning model program for incorporating diversity across the curriculum. A frequent seminar leader and speaker on diversity, educational issues and conflict resolution for community groups, national conferences, not-for-profit organizations and business groups throughout the United States and in Africa, Denton is also active in numerous civic and community affairs, serving on the Duquesne, Pa. School District Board of Control. He is also involved in mentoring middle school youth through the Mt. Ararat Baptist Church Male Mentoring Project.

Education Changes Lives

Darlene B. Marnich, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Education Department in the School of Arts and Sciences, puts Denton's efforts into the simplest of terms. "Stanley believes that education can change lives."

"In recent years, the state is not certifying nearly as many teachers as it did 10 years ago. Therefore, with the fewer number of graduates, and a higher number of teacher retirements, our students are getting jobs when they graduate." With Denton's efforts, she adds, "the hope is that many of those teachers will be black males and role models for our children."

Read the entire Slate.com article on efforts to encourage more black male teachers at: <http://slate.me/1XbL4Og> ❖

GIFTS AT WORK

BUILDING A BRIDGE

A \$130,000 grant from The Pittsburgh Foundation Funds a New Program for At-Risk High School Students' Transition to College

Point Park University has received a \$130,000 grant from The Pittsburgh Foundation to initiate "Bridge to Your Future: Explore the Possibilities," a two-year pilot program that will address the problems of access to, and success in, college for underrepresented, at-risk students. A group of faculty are collaborating on the multidisciplinary program, in which Point Park will partner with Pittsburgh-area school districts to provide dual-enrollment opportunities and other support for high school seniors as they prepare to transition to college. The pilot program is based on national best practices that address core barriers to at-risk students.

Reaching At-Risk Students

According to Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations **Sharon Navoney**, "This generous grant from The Pittsburgh Foundation is exciting and forward thinking in that it will help us to reach students who may not otherwise consider college. Underrepresented and low-income high school students often do not have the supports in place to pursue a college education, even if they have the desire and ability."

"The 'Bridge to Your Future' program will enable Point Park and The Pittsburgh Foundation to tackle core barriers to college access, including student loan literacy, college-level readiness and college acculturation," says Navoney. Through a competitive application and selection process, high school teachers (supported by their school district) will be selected to collaborate with University faculty on curriculum and professional development in order to deliver learning outcomes, and establish classroom culture practices, within their home classrooms for college credit.

Critical Community Partnership

Navoney says that the value of support from partners such as The Pittsburgh Foundation "cannot be overstated. Without such critical external support, Point Park could not dream big and innovate in how we meet student needs, as well as the workforce needs of the regional economy. Together, we are able to collaborate and build bridges, so that students are able to succeed and go on to be leaders here in Pittsburgh, across the country, and around the world." ❖

THE WHO'S TOMMY, SWEET CHARITY, AND MUCH MORE

Playhouse presents big musicals, a holiday comedy, classics and contemporary works

Point Park University's Conservatory Theatre Company will present six productions in the 2016-2017 season, ranging from revamped classics to popular musicals. The season begins Oct. 21 and runs through April 16, 2017, at the Pittsburgh Playhouse, 222 Craft Ave. Opening the season on Oct. 21 will be the Tony Award-winning musical, *The Who's Tommy*, based on the band's rock opera *Tommy*. This timeless rock and roll tale of a pinball prodigy has become a worldwide hit, along with garnering Tony, Grammy, Olivier, and Drama Desk Awards. The season continues with Edward Bond's masterpiece about people and society, *The Sea*, opening Nov. 11. Described by the Wall Street Journal as "a masterpiece that deserves to be produced and pondered again and again," *The Sea* is an interesting mix of farce, comedy, social mockery and poetic tragedy.

***The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: The Musical* Among Season Highlights**

Kicking off the holiday season is *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: The Musical*, opening Dec. 9. This lively production will touch families' hearts and funny bones while celebrating Christmas, family and community. Next up for the CTC is *Big Love*, opening Feb. 24. In this humorous, but tragic, modern adaptation of Aeschylus's *The Suppliants*, 50 brides run away to an Italian manor to prevent marriage to their cousins. Another Tony Award-winning musical, *Sweet Charity*, opens on March 17. Based on the film, *Nights of Cabiria*, this jazzed musical has had numerous revivals around the world. The beloved Fosse-style musical won Tony, Drama Desk, and Sydney Theatre Awards. Rounding out the CTC season is a modern twist on an American classic, *Uncle Tom's Cabin, or the Most Popular American Play You've Never Seen*. Based on the anti-slavery novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe, originally published in 1852, this show has been rewritten to reflect modern concepts and ideas that are relevant to society today.

***I'm Gonna Pray for You So Hard* and *Woody's Order* at The REP**

The 2016-2017 season of The REP, Point Park's professional theatre company, includes regional premieres and shows written by some of the best contemporary playwrights. The season opened on Sept. 9 with the regional premiere of MacArthur Genius award-winner Tarell Alvin McCraney's vibrant new play, *Wig Out!*, an exploration of drag culture and the stereotypes that go along with gender identity. The director is Point Park alumnus Tomé Cousin, an internationally recognized artist, educator and creator of musical theater works, ballets, films, new opera, song cycles and

art installations. *I'm Gonna Pray For You So Hard*, by Halley Feiffer and directed by Robert Turano, runs Sept. 30–Oct. 16. Described by Adam Feldman of Time Out New York as "Viciously funny! Brutally effective," the show explores a complex father-daughter relationship and broke box office records at the Atlantic Theater Company's Stage 2 Space. The season concludes with *Woody's Order*, Feb. 3–19. Written by Pittsburgh native Ann Talman and directed by Point Park faculty member John Shepard, *Woody's Order* is the story of a unique sibling relationship between Ann, an actress who is stuck between choosing her Broadway career or being a caregiver, and her brother Woody, who has cerebral palsy. This one-woman show follows Ann's close relationship with Woody from childhood through her teenage and college years and into adulthood.

***Ballet Off-Center* Highlights Dance Season**

The Conservatory Dance Company's 2016-2017 season includes a unique production of *Ballet Off-Center*, which will be presented Dec. 2-11 at the Rockwell Theater. The Conservatory Dance Company season also includes such annual productions as *Contemporary Choreographers*, in which luminaries of the dance world collaborate with students; the annual *Conservatory Dance Company at the Byham* production; and *Point Park Connections*, which runs April 21-23 at the GRW Performance Studio on campus.

***Pinkalicious: The Musical* and More at Playhouse Jr.**

Playhouse Jr., Point Park's family and children's theatre company, invites school and community groups and the general public to enjoy its 68th season, which opens to the public on May 6. In spring 2017, Playhouse Jr. will present *Pinkalicious: The Musical* May 6–21 at the Rockwell Theatre. With book and lyrics by Elizabeth Kann and Victoria Kann, and music and lyrics by John Gregor, this fun and rousing show is based on the Kanns' book *Pinkalicious*. Also opening to the public on May 6 is *The Adventures of Nate the Great*, which will be on stage at the Playhouse's Rauh Theater through May 21. Adapted for the stage by Pamela Sterling, this lively production is based on the *Nate the Great* series of books by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat. The second oldest children's theatre company in the country, Playhouse Jr. features acting, musical theatre, stage management and technical theatre/design students both on and off stage at the Playhouse.



ON STAGE THIS FALL AND SPRING

THE REP

Wig Out!

By Tarell Alvin McCraney
Directed by Tomé Cousin
Sept. 9–25
Rauh Theater

I'm Gonna Pray For You So Hard

By Halley Feiffer
Directed Robert Turano
Sept. 30–Oct. 16
Studio Theater

Woody's Order

By Ann Talman
Directed by John Shepard
Feb. 3–19
Studio Theater

CONSERVATORY THEATRE COMPANY

The Who's Tommy

Music and Lyrics by Pete Townshend
Book by Pete Townshend and Des McAnuff
Additional Music and Lyrics by John Entwistle and Keith Moon
Directed by Zeva Barzell
Oct. 21–Oct. 30
Rockwell Theater

The Sea

By Edward Bond
Directed by David Cabot
Nov. 11–Dec. 4
Studio Theater

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: The Musical

By Jahanna Beecham & Malcom Hillgartner
Adapted from the book by Barbara Robinson
Directed by Philip Winters
Dec. 9–18
Rauh Theater

Big Love

By Charles L. Mee
Directed by Reginald Douglas
Feb. 24–March 12
Rauh Theater

Sweet Charity

Book by Neil Simon
Music by Cy Coleman
Lyrics by Dorothy Fields
Based on the original screenplay by Federico Fellini, Tullio Pinelli and Ennio Flaiano
Directed by Michael Rupert
March 17–26
Rockwell Theatre

Uncle Tom's Cabin, or the Most Popular American Play You've Never Seen

Adapted by Tome Cousin and Jason Jacobs
Original play by George Aiken
Based on the novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe
Directed by Tomé Cousin and Jason Jacobs
April 7–16
Rauh Theatre

CONSERVATORY DANCE COMPANY

Student Choreography Project

Oct. 14–16
GRW Performance Studio

Contemporary Choreographers

Nov. 16–20
GRW Performance Studio

Ballet Off-Center

Dec. 2–11
Rockwell Theatre

Conservatory Dance Company at Point Park University

Choreography by dance faculty
Feb. 23–26
GRW Performance Studio

Conservatory Dance Company at the Byham

April 13–15
Byham Theater (Downtown)

Point Park Connections

April 21–23
GRW Performance Studio

PLAYHOUSE JR.

Pinkalicious: The Musical

Book & Lyrics by Elizabeth Kann & Victoria Kann
Music & Lyrics by John Gregor
Based on the book *Pinkalicious* by Elizabeth Kann & Victoria Kann
May 3–21; Open to the public
May 6
Rockwell Theatre

The Adventures of Nate the Great

Based on the *Nate the Great* series of books by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat
May 4–21; Open to the public
May 6
Rauh Theatre

SPECIAL OFFER FOR ALUMNI

Point Park alumni receive a 50 percent discount off regular ticket prices. Visit or call the box office: 412-392-8000. For more information on the 2016-2017 Playhouse season, including subscriptions, tickets and alumni discounts, visit www.pittsburghplayhouse.com.



Playhouse Rising

Construction is underway on Point Park University's new Pittsburgh Playhouse, a 92,000-square-foot cultural hub that will be situated on a 1.6 acre parcel between Forbes and Fourth avenues in Downtown Pittsburgh. From this view atop Point Park's adjoining University Center, it's possible to see the new main stage theater taking shape along Forbes Avenue (on the left hand side of the photo).

Eye on Playhouse Progress

You can watch each stage of construction of the new Playhouse, as it unfolds in real time, from the University's construction cam.

Follow the action at: bit.ly/29RV6nC

Photo by Christopher Rolinson.



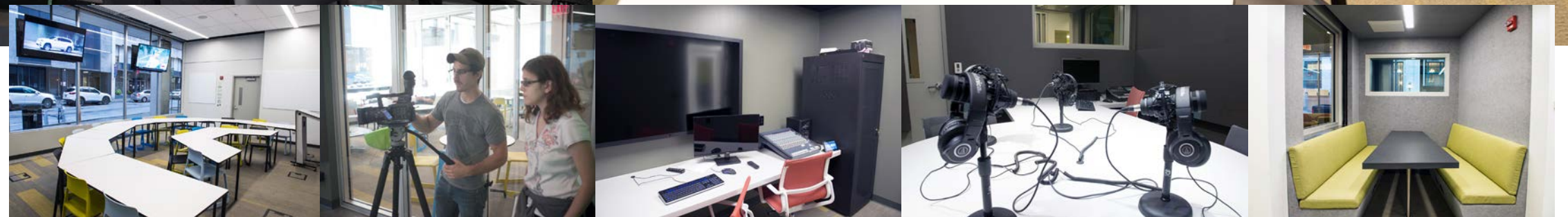
CENTER FOR MEDIA INNOVATION DESIGNED TO EDUCATE A NEW WAVE OF TECH-SAVVY JOURNALISTS

With the official opening on Sept. 13 of the Center for Media Innovation, Point Park is taking a leading role in educating a new generation of media professionals.

The Center also positions the University as an important resource for professional journalists and as an advocate for helping the public-at-large understand the important role a strong, independent media plays in society.

Modern Media Hub

"The media industry has evolved beyond individual labels such as print and television. Young journalists must be prepared for a massive multimedia effort that requires knowledge and



expertise in multiple disciplines," said Andrew Conte, director of the Center for Media Innovation and an award-winning investigative journalist in his 15 years at the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review. "The Center for Media Innovation is designed as an incubator and collaborative space that brings together a cohesive, interactive strategy to education."

The Center's floor-to-ceiling glass walls, flat-screen televisions and a digital ticker offer a New York City-style media hub where passersby can be entertained and informed as students learn their craft.

"Point Park has spent the last decade bringing activity to its street-level spaces along Wood Street, Boulevard of the Allies and Forbes Avenue," said Paul Hennigan, president of the University. "The Center is uniquely designed to showcase the vibrancy of the educational opportunities we offer our students while providing the public a visually engaging experience."

New Media, New Tools

While the Center will be a relevant educational tool for students of all schools at Point Park, the goal is to reach beyond University walls. "This is a major investment in supporting journalism at a time when the industry needs it the most. Along with training a new generation of journalists, we will offer opportunities to professionals looking to sharpen skills and add new ones, as they work to keep up with industry changes," Conte said. "The general public also will be welcome to attend events designed to teach them about media and the vital role it must continue to play in their daily lives."

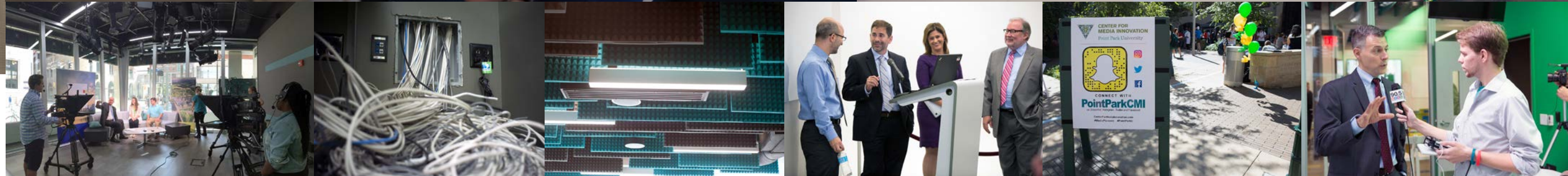
Designed by Pittsburgh-based GBBN Architects, the 4,000-square-foot center cost \$2.5 million to build and has been made possible, in part, with a grant from the Allegheny Foundation. Trib Total Media is a sponsor of the Center's news ticker.

The Mission of the Center

- **TRAINING:** The Center will engage current students, high school students, professionals and citizens in learning journalistic skills and values.
- **OUTREACH:** The Center will serve as a clubhouse for journalists, with frequent events for professionals, opportunities for students and prospective students, and national aspirations for recognizing industry leaders.
- **ONLINE PRESENCE:** The Center will have a digital presence as compelling and interesting as the physical space. The online site will include podcasts, a video library, news stories and a blog, with robust social media components.



Chelsea Pompeani (COM '11), the new media innovation specialist at the Center, speaks with President Paul Hennigan at the opening event.



Inside the Center

- **TV and radio broadcast studios:** The television studio includes a green screen, industry-specific lighting, and high-definition cameras.
- **Photo studio:** The studio features high ceilings and light control for the best possible shooting environment.
- **Multimedia newsroom:** Reporting and multimedia storytelling, along with graphics production, social media, and web development are conducted in this smart classroom.
- **Transformational presentation and gallery space:** The Center can transform into an event space for educational sessions with newsmakers and industry leaders. The area can be used as a photo gallery, offering another space to showcase work.

By the Numbers

- The 17-foot-by-15-foot pivot wall and folding glass partitions allow three rooms to become one large space.
- Three miles of data cabling has been installed in the Center.
- There is a three-degree angle tilt to the glass walls in the television studio to help reflect sound and light waves.
- Four-inch acoustic foam insulates the walls in the radio studio.
- A one-inch foam padding system in the studio floors absorbs sound in the space and prevents exterior noise.
- Fourteen televisions of various sizes are installed throughout the space.

Grand Opening

Point Park's new Center for Media Innovation officially opened on Sept. 13 with a full day of events for the entire Point Park community, the media and the public.

The day began with an opening ceremony at the Center, followed by the #MediaPioneers Morning Panel featuring: Luis Fabregas, editor, Trib Total Media; Ben Howard, assistant managing editor, digital design, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette; Ted Achladis, digital content manager, WPXI; Michelle Wright, morning host, WTAE; and Terry O'Reilly, president and CEO, Pittsburgh Community Broadcasting Corp (91.3 WYEP and 90.5 WESA).

The celebration continued with an outdoor lunch in Village Park, featuring entertainment provided by Pioneer Records, Point Park's own record label, with performances by student artists Hannah Jenkins and John Kono Rushlander.

Media Share Insights

After lunch, the panel discussions continued with "The Speed of Live: Why Sports Matter Most to Fans & Brands," featuring Chris Eames, vice president of sales and marketing for ESPN and James Kerr, director of sponsorship for AT&T, presented with the Pittsburgh Center for Sports Media & Marketing. That was followed by the #MediaPioneers Afternoon Panel, featuring Tracy Certo, founder and publisher, NEXTpittsburgh; Lexi Belcufine, editor, The Incline; Jim Kubus, manager, UpGruv; and Mila Sanina, executive director, PublicSource.

Sarah Koenig, creator of the hugely popular Serial podcast, was the keynote speaker at an evening event that concluded the day's festivities.



CMI construction manager Calvin Ruth of Landau Building Co. with his daughter Skyler, a sophomore broadcasting major who will benefit from learning opportunities at the Center.



Events at the Center

The Center for Media Innovation will offer an ongoing slate of events, presentations, exhibitions and much more, most of which are open to the public.

For example, the Center has presented “What if 9/11 Happened Today,” featuring Associated Press photographer Richard Drew, who talked about his experiences capturing the “Fallen Man” images at the World Trade Center. In addition, local reporters took part in a panel discussion. The event was co-sponsored by the Press Club of Western Pennsylvania, the Women’s Press Club of Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Black Media Federation.

A First Amendment photo exhibit opened on Sept. 16. Matt Adams, a Point Park graduate who is now photo editor for National Geographic, and Christopher Rolinson, a Point Park photojournalism professor, selected two dozen photographs

that are evocative of the First Amendment to display at the Center.

Pulitzer Prize-winning Washington Post reporters Keith Alexander, a Point Park graduate, and Wes Lowery talked about their police brutality series and the #BlackLivesMatter movement at an event co-sponsored by the Pittsburgh Black Media Federation on Sept. 21. Other September events included a presentation by Point Park alumnus Fred McLeod, the voice of the NBA’s Cleveland Cavaliers, who talked about his experiences during the team’s 2016 championship run. The appearance was co-sponsored by the Pittsburgh Center for Sports Media & Marketing and the University’s Sports, Arts and Entertainment Management Program.

For more information, visit: www.centerformediainnovation.com

FALL EVENTS AT THE CMI

OCT. 18 PRESIDENTIAL SPIN: BUILDING A CANDIDATE’S NARRATIVE

Local representatives of the presidential campaigns talk about how they have tried to build compelling candidate narratives during the long election cycle.

OCT. 20 SELLING THE PITTSBURGH STEELERS

Kathy Wallace, corporate sales and marketing manager for the Pittsburgh Steelers, talks about sales and marketing strategies.

OCT. 20 PEN TO THE PRESIDENT: 2016 POLITICAL CARTOONS

Opening of exhibit of political cartoons curated by Rob Rogers of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and the Toonseum. Rogers and Randy Bish of the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review take part in a

workshop/panel discussion. Co-hosted with Pahl Hluchan, animation professor.

OCT. 27 PRESS FORWARD: HOLDING POLICE ACCOUNTABLE

Jamie Kalven, founder of the nonprofit Invisible Institute, speaks about his reporting on the shooting of Chicago’s Laquan McDonald by police. A story he wrote for Slate Magazine prompted other reporters to question the shooting. Co-sponsored by the Press Club of Western Pennsylvania and the Pittsburgh Black Media Federation.

NOV. 14 DIANE REHM VISITS POINT PARK

Longtime American public radio talk show host Diane Rehm, whose eponymous show is distributed national and internationally by National Public Radio, visits Point Park. ❖

ALUMNI CONNECTION



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Oct. 20 (Philadelphia) Alumni Reception

Oct. 25 (Chicago) Alumni Reception

Nov. 12 (Washington, D.C.) Alumni & Student Dinner

Nov. 16 (Pittsburgh) Recent Alumni Happy Hour

Dec. 3 (Pittsburgh) Holiday Luncheon & Nutcracker Performance

Jan. 30 (Los Angeles) Alumni & Student Reception

Feb. 13-17 (FLA) Alumni Receptions with President Paul Hennigan

Visit PointPark.edu/alumni for more information.

Greetings from campus!

Fall is an exciting time at Point Park University. We recently welcomed the class of 2020 to our Downtown Pittsburgh campus and they have integrated themselves seamlessly with the community, as evidenced by the constant activity in Village Park. Our students are working hard in the classroom, in their internships and other experiential learning activities, and in their extracurricular pursuits.

Just as our students are busy with the new academic year, we've been busy planning another slate of events, benefits and programs for alumni across the country. Before we do, let's look back at the 2015-2016 academic year, in which the Office of Alumni Relations:

- Hosted 24 alumni events in cities all over the country, including Los Angeles, Miami, New York City, Orlando, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Tampa and Washington, D.C.
- Increased the number of alumni benefits to include discounts on everything from graduate degree programs and homeowners' insurance to tickets to cultural and athletic events, and much more.
- Introduced an exclusive mobile app that keeps the Point Park University alumni network at your fingertips.

This coming year we look forward to seeing alumni in Pittsburgh and across the country at events and lectures, introducing new alumni benefits, and increasing opportunities for alumni to give back to their alma mater. Visit PointPark.edu/alumni to stay up-to-date on events, programs and benefits available to you. You can also follow us on Facebook (facebook.com/pointparkalumni) or Twitter (twitter.com/pointparkalumni). We also welcome alumni to visit and tour our constantly growing campus, including the brand-new Center for Media Innovation.

I remain grateful to so many of you who continue to be generous with your time and your feedback about your experiences with Point Park following graduation. The Office of Alumni Relations and the University community is using your feedback to enhance the experience of alumni with their alma mater for years to come. I look forward to starting new conversations, and continuing others, over the next academic year.

All my best,

Sarah Myksin

Director of Alumni Relations
smyksin@pointpark.edu

CLASS NOTES

1970s

Joseph Walker (COM 1973) writes, "After a 41-year career in journalism and public relations, I am now enjoying retirement in The Villages, Fla. But I have not fully abandoned the skills I learned at Point Park University. For example, I produce a quarterly e-newsletter for members of my high school class. And until recently, I produced a monthly e-newsletter for the Village of Piedmont, where my wife and I live in The Villages. We also were privileged to attend the recent alumni luncheon in Tampa. It was great to reminisce with other alums about our years and professors who guided us at Point Park, and to hear from President **Paul Hennigan** about all the wonderful developments at our alma mater. Special mention was made of the late, great J&C professor **Vin LaBarbera**, who was a mentor and inspiration to many of us. We miss him to this day."

1980s

Samuel J. Cordes (COM 1980 and 1985), principal of the western Pennsylvania-based labor and employment law firm Samuel J. Cordes & Associates, has been named the Best Lawyers 2017 Employment Law "Lawyer of the Year." Only a single lawyer in each practice area and community is honored with a "Lawyer of the Year" award. Cordes has also been listed as among only 10 Pittsburgh area attorneys on the Super Lawyers Pennsylvania Top 100 list for 2016.



Michael P. Mauer (COM 1984) has been honored with a National VFW Writing Award.

The Point Park graduate and life member of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 914 Intrepid West Mifflin earned the VFW's top honors for feature writing in 2016. Mauer, an Army veteran of Operation Desert Storm, won the grand award for best feature article in the VFW National Publications Contest. The article, "Post with No Home Earns All State Honors," was published in the August/September 2015 edition of the Pennsylvania VFW News. Mauer's entry bested a field of articles submitted from more than three dozen VFW departments across the United States and around the world. The judges' panel was comprised of professional journalists not affiliated with the VFW. An active freelance writer for more than 35 years, Mauer won the Army's highest journalism honor, the Keith L. Ware award, in 1991. He was also awarded the Joint Service Commendation Medal by Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf for his actions as a military reporter in Operation Desert Storm. In 1984, Mauer earned a bachelor's degree in journalism and communications from Point Park. He has been married for more than 30 years to **Marsey Mauer**, also a 1984 graduate.

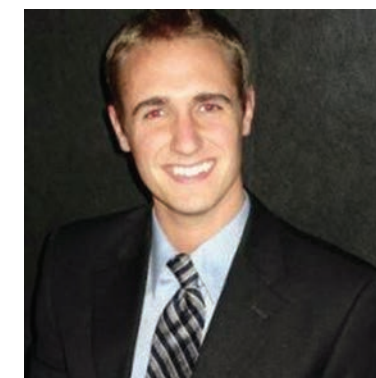
1990s

Celia Wexler (COM 1996) has published her second book, *Catholic Women Confront Their Church: Stories of Hurt and Hope*. Published September 28, the book tells the stories of ten exceptional Catholic women who have struggled with the question: Can you be both a Catholic and a feminist? Wexler received a starred review from Publishers Weekly, which praised the book for its "thought-provoking profiles" that "brim with hope and concern for the future of the Catholic Church." Wexler earned her master's degree in journalism at Point Park.

Karen Ferrick-Roman (COM 1991) has been named the inaugural director of com-

munications and education at Village Theater Company in Sewickley. The nonprofit's art house theater and film-based educational center will open this spring, bringing new educational and entertainment options to regions northwest of Pittsburgh. She continues to serve as director of university and student relations for the Pittsburgh Chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators and recently joined the board of the Merrick Art Gallery in New Brighton, Pa. She earned her master's degree in journalism and communications, graduating summa cum laude, in 1991 at Point Park.

2000s



Daniel Allman (COM '08) has joined CNN in Washington, D.C. as an assignment editor. His responsibilities include coverage of the 2016 election season. A native of Lower Burrell, Pa., Allman joined WTAE-TV in Pittsburgh as an associate producer after earning his degree in broadcasting from Point Park. He later became an assignment editor at WMAR-TV in Baltimore, where he covered the city's riots and unrest in spring 2015.

DROP US A NOTE!

Visit PointPark.edu/classnote to share your news.

IN MEMORIAM

Rev. John Zingaro

Helen Fallon (COM 1975), director of Point Park's Honors Program and a professor in the School of Communication, wrote the following remembrance of her friend and fellow alumnus **Rev. John Zingaro** (COM 1976).



Journalist, volunteer, world traveler, minister. Those words aptly describe the Rev. John Zingaro, a 1976 journalism and communications graduate. Alumni from that era remember him as intelligent, compassionate and hard-working. John lived his life dedicated to making a difference until he died of cancer July 14 at age 62. John came to Point Park with sports writing and photography experience at the Ellwood City Ledger, and he served as sports information director from 1974-76. In the 1980s he wrote freelance articles for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and other publications. But volunteering for Vista and working as the Pittsburgh Neighborhood Alliance executive director led him to become a Presbyterian minister. He earned a master's degree at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in 1993 and took courses at several European and American universities. He served as a missionary in Tanzania and East Africa, then as pastor to churches in

Wisconsin, New Jersey and Illinois. When he returned to Pittsburgh, John served as a supply pastor, preaching just nine days before he died. Always adventurous, he lived in and rode his bicycle through 13 countries and spoke Swahili, German and French. He wrote six books. And John never lost his love of sports. He was a regular Pirates fantasy baseball camps attendee and loved being a soccer, field hockey, softball, and baseball referee and umpire.

Susan Gribble Ryberg

Susan Gribble Ryberg (COM 1971) died on May 26 in Goldsboro, N.C. She was 66. A native of Pennsylvania, Ryberg was retired from the Moyer Library on the campus of the University of Mount Olive. She earned her bachelor's degree in journalism and communications at Point Park in 1971 and later pursued graduate studies in both musical theatre and communications. She was also a librarian for 25 years at the University's Helen-Jean Moore Library, and taught courses in both social sciences and journalism at Point Park. She is survived by her husband, alumnus **Allen E. Ryberg** (COM 1988) and her son, former Point Park student Stuart A. Kushon. Read the entire obituary: bit.ly/1YcrGQJ.

new show called, *Team Ninja Warrior: College Edition*. I am not sure where my career will take me, but I am glad Point Park helped me get where I needed to be."



Perris Drew (COPA '16) "recently experienced a budding actor's dream gig when he worked as a stand-in and understudy for the Oscar-winning actor **Denzel Washington**," according to an article in the New Pittsburgh Courier. "Drew, who earned his degree in theater arts (with a concentration in acting) in May, 2016, spent three weeks last April acting as a stand-in and understudy for

Washington when the actor was in [Pittsburgh] to rehearse his planned production of *10 August Wilson* plays over the next decade for HBO. Drew said landing the acting job with Washington happened very quickly and was the result of efforts by his agent Jarod Pascoe of the Docherty Agency. "He told me Denzel was coming to Pittsburgh and had the idea to cast a couple young actors from the city to be understudies and stand-ins during rehearsals! His agent recommended Drew update his resume, which he quickly did and 48 hours later, he was hired. Drew was the understudy for the character of Jim Bono' who is Troy Maxson's (played by Denzel Washington in the recent production of *Fences* on Broadway) best friend. 'The experience felt like a three-week acting intensive. Having the chance to play opposite Denzel, and for him to share his experience and wisdom in such an intimate setting was truly life-changing,' said Drew." Read the whole article in the New Pittsburgh Courier: bit.ly/294SgLP

Dominic Rodriguez (COPA '13) writes, "I concentrated in directing in the Cinema and Digital Arts program. For my final Production IV film, I made a documentary about furries with **Olivia Vaughn, Christine Meyer, Jordan Serra, and JP Pelc**. The 12-minute short was called *Fursonas*. We continued working on the project after graduating, hoping to expand it into a feature-length film. Four years later, *Fursonas* has premiered at a major film festival, Slamdance, where it won the Spirit of Slamdance Award. Subsequently, the film acquired distribution from Gravitass Ventures and is currently available on Video On Demand on platforms such as iTunes, Amazon, and Google Play. The film has received positive reviews from sources such as The Hollywood Reporter and Variety, and the story of how it came to be made has appeared in dozens of articles from Esquire to Glamour.

Michael Suppa (A&S '10) was selected to be a member of the inaugural class of

Melissa Meighan (BUS '08, '09) writes, "I'm proud to represent Point Park University as a financial analyst at the U.S. Department of the Treasury in Washington, D.C. I love being able to put Point Park on the map and to promote the City of Pittsburgh!" Meighan earned her undergraduate degree in business management and her M.B.A. at Point Park.

2010s

Cody McDevitt (COM '13) writes, "I was recently offered a book deal from Arcadia Publishing for a book about the history of Pittsburgh's nightlife. The book will feature recipes from the city's top barkeeps and chefs. It will be released in early 2017."

Olivia Ciotoli (COM '14) writes, "I am a co-owner of The Black Cat Market, which will be Pittsburgh's first cat cafe. We launched a kickstarter to help fund the cafe on May 3 and we are already over halfway to our goal.

Check out www.blackcatmarket.com for more info." She earned her degree in photojournalism at Point Park.

Rich Venezia (COPA '11), an avid genealogist since childhood, started Rich Roots Genealogy in 2014. He specializes in Italian, Irish, and other immigrant ancestry, as well as Pittsburgh research. He just celebrated his second season as a researcher on *Genealogy Roadshow* (PBS), and also recently worked as a consultant on *Follow Your Past* (Travel Channel). Visit www.richroots.net for more information.

Alyssa Knierim (A&S '14) writes, "I, along with fellow alumni **Joe Rittenhouse** (COPA '14), **Linda Kanyarusoke** (COPA '14), **Steve Faber** (COPA '12) and **Anthony Gullikson** (COPA '16), participated in the 2016 Mongol Rally, a 10,000 mile charity road trip from England to Mongolia in support of Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. The adventure took us through

17 different countries, several mountain ranges, and three deserts. We posted updates of our journey on social media and recorded the entire experience for a documentary. See www.facebook.com/teamkeystone16, [@team_keystone](https://twitter.com/team_keystone) on Twitter and Instagram, and www.teamkeystone.org.

Bethany Winchester (COPA '16) writes, "I was a part of the new M.F.A. [Writing for Screen and Stage] program at Point Park and my class was the first ever to graduate from this program. During my second year of the M.F.A. program, I earned an internship at A Smith & Co. Productions in Los Angeles. My internship was located right next to Universal Studios in the heart of Studio City. I got to work on many different shows during my time there, including the new NBC show *Spartan Ultimate Team Challenge*. From my internship, I earned a job in the casting department, and got selected to cast for the NBC show *American Ninja Warrior Season 8*, which aired in June. I am now working on a

“ I enrolled in the M.B.A. program at Point Park University because I decided it was time to make an investment in myself. The environment at Point Park motivated me that much more, and the experience has made me want to give back. I know there are other people who are interested and want to learn. I contribute to help them achieve their goals, and hope to make a difference in the lives of students like me.”

MELANIE HAILSHAM
M.B.A., '12

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Melanie gives so others receive the same academic opportunities she enjoyed at Point Park.

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POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

CLASS NOTES

"40 under 40" honorees in Alexandria, Va. He was also appointed to chair the Alexandria City Council's Child, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission. Suppa, who earned his degree in elementary education at Point Park, now works for the Alexandria City Public Schools. The organization chose Suppa to record segments of his lessons for its professional learning web site and professional development across the division. According to Suppa, "In selecting me they noted the thoroughness of my plans - something that I credit Point Park for holding me to a very high bar from the start"



Kevin Gallagher (above) and **Justin Karter**, graduates of Point Park's master's program in clinical-community psychology, have been named editors of the American Psychological Association's Society for Humanistic Psychology Newsletter. In the article

"From the new editors: Les Temps Modernes, Karter, Gallagher and fellow editor Andrew Bland, Ph.D. wrote: "We, the new editors, recognize that recent developments in social and political events call on humanistically trained academics and practitioners to redouble their engagement with the world ... we seek to renew this position, and we want to encourage members to draw on their unique philosophical and psychological training and turn their minds and pens toward the world." According to Professor **Brent Robbins**, "They are very smart and socially conscientious individuals with an incredible depth of knowledge in their areas of interest. They really make me proud!"



Beulah Moody, Our Most Senior Alumna, Turns 100

Beulah Moody (A&S 1968), who earned her bachelor's degree in early childhood education at Point Park in 1968, recently celebrated her 100th birthday. According to an article by Kevin Kirkland in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, "She was the oldest of three children born to Gurney and Nellie Coleman on July 4, 1916, near Grantsville, Md. Growing up on a farm, she exchanged her black travel shoes for white school shoes every morning when she arrived at a one-room schoolhouse. She skipped second grade because she was so smart... Mr. Moody was working for a newspaper in Cumberland, Md., when he met her at the dentist's office. They married in 1946 and moved to Pittsburgh, where he worked for the Associated Press before becoming a labor writer for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. They lived in Bethel Park for 61 years and had one son, John of Ridgewood, N.J. At age 52, Mrs. Moody earned a bachelor's degree from Point Park

... and six years later, received a master's in education from the University of Pittsburgh. She taught in the Easter Seals school system, which provides special education to severely physically and mentally disadvantaged children. She eventually became Easter Seals executive director in Allegheny County, retiring in 1986. 'My husband and I both worked until we were 70. I think the secret of a good long life is to keep busy and stay aware of what is going on in the world," she said. After retiring, the Moodys traveled the world, visiting their son as he worked as a journalist in Moscow, Bonn, Germany, Vienna, Paris, Mexico City, Costa Rica and Rome. He is now executive vice president and executive editor of Fox News. ... Mrs. Moody handles her own finances, files her own taxes (grudgingly), and reads The New York Times daily, completing the crossword puzzle in ink. She leads a monthly book group, takes a pottery class and is a member of a society dedicated to helping the less advantaged. ... 'I was born during the First World War, waited four years during World War II for the man I married and worried about my son during the Vietnam War,' she said. "There have been a few bumps and bruises along the way, but now, under the care of my loving son, his beautiful wife and my precious grandchildren, I would say it has been a beautiful life, and still is." Read the entire Post-Gazette article: bit.ly/2bMreVb

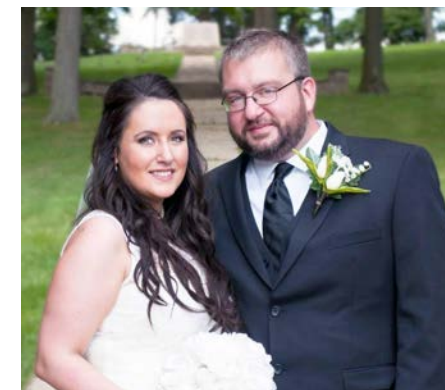


Philip Lewis (COPA '11), played the lead role of the villain in the independent film *Rising Fear* about a fictional terrorist bombing in downtown Pittsburgh. According to the filmmaker and star Tom Getty, the movie was honored at the GI Film Festival, was screened at a festival in Los Angeles, and is available on DVD on Amazon.com. Lewis studied cinema arts at Point Park. See the trailer at <http://trailer.risingfear.com>.

Alyssa Taglia (COPA '14), a native of Wolcott, Conn., was crowned Miss Connecticut 2016 on June 18. Taglia represented the Nutmeg State at the Miss America competition in Atlantic City, with finals televised on Sept. 11. According to the Hartford Courant, "During her year of service as Miss Connecticut, Taglia said she hopes to continue to spread her platform, "Smiles For Seniors: Enriching the Lives of Seniors Across America" – a cause she has championed since age 12. Taglia is also eager to work with the Miss America Organization's National Platform – Children's

Miracle Network Hospitals. Funds raised by the Miss Connecticut organization's titleholders help Connecticut Children's Medical Center. Taglia earned the pageant's Miracle Maker award, having raised more funds than any other contestant for the cause. "I think that's one of the more important jobs of Miss Connecticut, and I can't wait to embrace it," she said.

Nick Moran (A&S '15) writes, "I just got amazing news that I will be interning at Mount Sinai West! While I am there for the next year I will have the opportunity to work with the Crystal Clear project at the Addictions Institute under the supervision of Dr. Joseph Ruggiero. I am excited about this because I will get to work with the LGBTQ population for those individuals who have substance use issues and additional mental health issues." Moran earned his degree in psychology at Point Park.



Angela (Goodwin) Sexton (COM '10) is the registration coordinator in the Office of the University Registrar at Point Park. She earned her degree in broadcasting in 2010 and is currently studying for her master's degree at the University. She and **Shaun Sexton** were recently married in Baldwin, Pa.

Courtney Mahronich (A&S '11, '12) has been named director of trail development for Friends of the Riverfront in Allegheny County. Mahronich will be responsible for implementing the trail vision outlined in the 2015-2018 Friends of the Riverfront Strategic Plan, which includes extending the Three Rivers Heritage Trail along the Allegheny River corridor in



Brie Gallagher (COM '06) named ESPN's top VoluntEAR for 2016

By Kevin Taylor, Director of Athletic Communications

A big honor came the way of **Brie Gallagher** ('06), a former Point Park women's cross country runner and a production coordinator at ESPN. Gallagher was named the "Team ESPN VoluntEAR of the Year" for 2015, an award that recognized her as the top overall volunteer person of all employees at ESPN, the Worldwide Leader in Sports. Gallagher was honored at the Team ESPN Volunteer of the Year Awards in May 2016. She is based at the ESPN location in Charlotte, N.C., and has planned and/or participated in hundreds of volunteer projects. She accepted her award from Disney Media Networks President John Skipper and ESPN Senior VP of Corporate Communications Chris LaPlaca.

In 2015, she organized many volunteer activities with Special Olympics, which included ESPN employee participation at the North Carolina Summer Games. Gallagher was one of 30 employees of Walt Disney Company to attend the Special Olympics World Games as part of Disney's Global Service Project. She also created a Unified Bowling team and recruited volunteers to run in legs of the Unified Relay Across America. Still an avid runner, the latter project reaches back to her influence as a Point Park cross county team member.

After graduating from Point Park, Gallagher was a programming and production intern at ESPN in 2007. She has held several posts at ESPN throughout the years with her current position being a production coordinator II. In that role, some of her duties are to maintain personnel schedules, track resource usage and logistics and act as a coordinator for College Football Awards and a liaison between production and other ESPN departments.

Allegheny County. She will work with public and private property owners, as well as partnering organizations, to make sure the trail building process moves forward smoothly. Her duties will include community outreach working with Allegheny County and municipalities along the Allegheny River.

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WALKING ON AIR

Fred McLeod's journey in broadcasting has taken him from Point Park to the Cleveland Cavaliers' NBA Championship

by Kevin Taylor



Photos courtesy of NBA Photos.

On June 22, 2016, it was Point Park alumnus Fred McLeod who had the honor to serve as emcee of the Cleveland Cavaliers' NBA championship victory parade. As the team's play-by-play voice for Fox Sports Ohio, it was McLeod who was on the microphone in front of the estimated 1.3 million people in attendance. It was a big moment in McLeod's career. And that's saying something. Because in a sports broadcasting career that has spanned 42 years, McLeod has enjoyed many big moments.

The 2016 NBA title for the Cavs was a monumental event as it ended a 52-year

championship drought for the city of Cleveland. For McLeod, it was his fourth NBA championship ring, which goes along with the three others he won as the play-by-play voice of the Detroit Pistons. McLeod's journey in broadcasting all began in St. Joseph, Mo., when the Point Park baseball team made the trip to the 1974 NAIA World Series during his senior year.

Pioneer Baseball Standout

A standout pitcher for the Pioneers, McLeod made the most of that trip to the World Series. The Pioneers made a run to the semifinals, and McLeod got to pitch.

It was a great experience – the first of the Pioneers' 11 World Series trips since the founding of the University. But the best thing that came out of it for McLeod was a job offer. The rest is history.

In a story that McLeod has told many times when his Point Park days come up, he faked an arm injury on one of the Pioneers' practice days in St. Joseph, Mo. He cut a demo tape of his broadcasting work and took it to KQTV, where he auditioned at the local station. KQTV had a pressing need for a sports anchor. And coming off an internship with Sam Nover at Channel 11 in Pittsburgh, McLeod had the chops for the job. He was hired and

started at KQTV right away. When the Point Park baseball team returned to Pittsburgh after a 2-2 showing at the World Series, McLeod turned right back around and headed to Missouri. "Without baseball, without Point Park, and without that internship with Sam Nover at Channel 11, I don't know that it would have worked out the same way," said McLeod.

First Start in Broadcasting

That was the start of his professional career in sports broadcasting. He's had several stops along the way, and the last 10 seasons he's worked for the Cavs as

the play-by-play voice. A big honor that came his way early on was that at 23 years old, he was the youngest sports anchor at a Top 10 market in the country. That came at WTAW in Cleveland.

He also spent time at WSTV in Steubenville and KPIX in San Francisco. Next came 24 years as a sports anchor at stations in Detroit, where he was also the voice of the NBA's Pistons. A Strongsville, Ohio, native, McLeod grew up going to Cleveland Indians and Browns games. In high school, his family moved to Elizabeth, Pa., and he graduated from Elizabeth Forward High School south of Pittsburgh. Baseball was what mainly led him to Point Park.

He had dreams of one day playing professionally. But he found another profession during his time with the Pioneers. With the Cavs, McLeod is still on top of his game. He has to be with the responsibility of covering LeBron James and NBA champs on a daily basis.

Motivation Is Key

"I'm as motivated now as I was 30 years ago," he said. "You have to be. There are a lot of people who I'm sure want my job. The key is to have no entitlement – you get out of it what you put in. It is much harder than most would think, and it is all about preparation."



Photos courtesy of NBA Photos.



field. It is still something that Point Park continues to take pride in, as evidenced by the fall 2016 opening of the new Center for Media Innovation (see page 18).

Hands On Experience

"Getting the hands-on experience in front of the camera and behind the camera as well as the opportunity for internships is huge," he said. "Working with Sam [Nover] opened up many doors." The media innovation that McLeod sees as the most influential is the advent of Twitter. It gives the media an "immediate connection to each of the fans." He should know. He leads all current NBA play-by-play broadcasters in Twitter followers.

McLeod tirelessly works in preparation for each broadcast. It is something that he learned at Point Park and was instilled during in internship at Channel 11. "No one is going to out-work me," McLeod said. "Whether it's a preseason game or the playoffs, the approach has to be the same."

An aspect of Point Park that benefitted him was the ability to get hands-on experience within the broadcasting

In today's 140-character world, he stresses that brevity is a key. "You have to get people's attention, be brief and be descriptive." He has seen the sports broadcasting world come full circle from his first job at KQTV. "You have to be able to write, shoot and edit your video packages. You have to be able to do it all. That's the way it was back then, and we are seeing that again now."

"And writing is a skill that you must have. I've always had a love of writing. And I am proud of my vocabulary. I'm a storyteller, and it all starts with writing." ❖

Kevin Taylor is director of athletic communications at Point Park.



Point Park cross country and track and field runner **Katie Guarnaccia** qualified for the NAIA national championships in the fall, winter and spring. She was a national qualifier and KIAC champion in cross country and qualified for nationals in indoor (5,000 M) and outdoor track and field (10,000 M). Photo courtesy of NAIA.



SPORTS ROUNDUP

▶ BASEBALL

The Pioneers' baseball team finished in third place in the KIAC during the regular season and finished with a record of 28-24 overall and 20-8 KIAC. It was a season filled with many key injuries, which caught up to Point Park in the end. The Pioneers had four all-conference players in pitchers **Jason Kim** and **Jarrad Brown**, center fielder **Demetrius Mooror** and shortstop **Jake Horew**.

▶ SOFTBALL

The Point Park softball placed third in the KIAC and made another run to the KIAC Tournament semifinals. The Pioneers ended up 23-19 overall, 14-4 KIAC with a very young team. Point Park's youth showed during its spring trip to Florida, but the team finished strong going 22-10 the rest of the way. Freshman pitcher **Ashley Iagnemma** was named the KIAC Newcomer of the Year.

▶ GOLF

The Point Park golf teams had the men finish second and women take third at the KIAC championship tournament. It was a rebuilding year for both squads. The men had three freshmen and a sophomore in the lineup, which came up just short of a fourth-straight KIAC title. The women's team also had three freshmen starting but managed a solid third place in the conference.



Pioneers Keep the Commissioner's Cup

For the second year in a row and the third time in four years, the Point Park University athletic department claimed the KIAC Commissioner's All-Sports Cup as the top overall athletic department in the KIAC for 2015-16.

The Pioneers placed first, second or third in the KIAC in each of its 13 varsity sports to keep the Cup. It was an historic win because the Kentucky Intercollegiate Athletic Conference has changed its name after 100 years of existence.

River States Conference

Effective July 1, 2016, the KIAC changed its name to the River States Conference. According to a statement by the conference, which Point Park has been a member of since 2012, the new name was selected "to best reflect the current membership."

The River States Conference includes 13 members from five different states – Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Indiana and Kentucky. The Ohio River originates at Point State Park, just blocks from the Pioneers' campus, and flows through the center of the conference.

"This is the continuation of the positive change that is going on with our conference," said Point Park Director of Athletics **Dan Swalga**. "We are very excited about the transition to River States Conference, which is a very beneficial change for us based in Pittsburgh."

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