

THE POINT

CO-OP PIONEERS

New cooperative education program benefits Point Park students and employers

RUNNING TO HONOR

Athlete Anna Shields is University's first national champion



Amber Mole
Dual Major,
Business Management
& Accounting
Co-Op position,
Pricewaterhouse-
Coopers (PwC)



Dear alumni and friends,

Our fall semester is well underway, and I believe that this academic year is a defining one for Point Park University. We have reached significant milestones and have set strategic aspirational goals for students, faculty and staff in the years to come.

This year, the University has one of its largest freshman classes of traditional, on-ground students in our history. This speaks to the hard work, dedication and commitment of the staff and faculty, who work tirelessly to ensure that prospective students know the intrinsic and extrinsic value of a Point Park education.

We also recently celebrated the one-year anniversary of the opening of the Center for Media Innovation (CMI), which has already far exceeded our first-year expectations. Hands-on learning is a cornerstone of the vision of the CMI, and over the past year students have taken part in informative speaker series, podcasting and experiential learning opportunities as part of their education and the University's outreach into the media community.

Last spring, we launched the Rowland School of Business and Steve Tanzilli, J.D. was appointed as dean. In conjunction with the naming and endowment of the Rowland School, the University has established a co-operative education program that provides students with the opportunity to earn college credit while obtaining real-world experience critical to their future success. You can learn more about the new co-op program on page 16.

Point Park's on-ground senior class is the first to graduate with both a capstone course and a co-curricular transcript. We also recently graduated our first class of Ed.D. students, soon to be followed by the graduation of our first cohort of Ph.D. students in Community Engagement. This fall, the University welcomed our first cohort in the Psy.D. program. The implementation of doctoral programs is part of a strategy to make Point Park a school of choice for students seeking innovative educational experiences.

All of these initiatives enable the University to continually assess, improve and build a foundation for future students. Key among our initiatives is the new Pittsburgh Playhouse, now under construction on our Downtown Pittsburgh campus. This project will provide our students and faculty with a state-of-the-art facility in a learning laboratory environment. We envision that students from virtually every School will have an opportunity to utilize this space.

I want to thank each and every member of the Point Park family for your support as we enter into this exciting chapter of our future. Our vision is to be one of the most dynamic, private, urban universities in America, with an intense focus on student success through distinctive, innovative and experiential learning.

Warm regards,

Dr. Paul Hennigan
President



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ON THE COVER:
Business student and co-op participant Amber Mole in Downtown Pittsburgh. Photo by John Altdorfer.

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TALK TO US!

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

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Professional Advancement

Robert J. Fowler, Ph.D., part-time professor in the Literary Arts Department, served as an AP Reader/English Language for Educational Testing Services during summer 2017 in Tampa, Fla.

Jill Oblak, M.A., M.B.A., NRP, a public administration part-time instructor, was elected to the National Association of EMS Educators 2017 Board of Directors and Governance Committee. NAEMSE's mission is to promote excellence in EMS education. "Jill is a long-time EMS professional and has been involved in every facet of training and education for EMTs and paramedics. This is a great honor for Jill and a great selection for this organization," said Robert Skertich, Ph.D., associate professor and director of the public administration program.

IN MEMORIAM

Nancy Jones, Ph.D., former professor and chair of Point Park's Department of Journalism and Communications until her retirement in 1986, died on June 30, 2017 in Pittsburgh. She was 83. According to her obituary in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Jones "began her career as a reporter for the Daily Press of Newport News Virginia and later became a reporter for the Miami Herald. She went on to become a journalism professor at Penn State University and later joined the journalism faculty at Duquesne University where she taught for many years. Jones traveled extensively throughout the world and even taught journalism at the University of Beijing, China." According to **Helen Fallon**,

director of the Honors Program and former department chair, "She was incredibly active in our professional journalism groups, and Nancy advised our Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) student chapter. Nancy stood out to the administrators here as well, as a chair who worked hard to ensure that not only the work of the department was completed – and of course on deadline – but also completed with the best interests of students in mind. When I was chair, Nancy served as a role model and mentor for me, and for that I am still very grateful," said Fallon. "The Press Club of Western Pennsylvania recognized her with its Service to Journalism [award]. She deserved that honor."

Jerry Conboy, Point Park men's basketball coach from 1969-89, has been selected for the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame. He will be inducted on Oct. 28, 2017 in a ceremony in Williamsport, Pa. For Conboy, who won 305 games in 20 seasons for the Pioneers, it will be the fifth time he will be inducted into a hall of fame alongside past inductions to the Western Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame, Point Park's Pioneer Athletic Hall of Fame, the Pittsburgh Basketball Club Hall of Fame and the South Hills Catholic (Seton-La Salle) Hall of Fame. For ticket information, contact Dave Bower at (570) 220-4554.



Josh Croup, a senior broadcast reporting major, won a Mid-Atlantic Emmy Award in the College/University Student Production-Talent category at the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences awards ceremony on Sept. 9. Croup is the news/sports director for U-View, Point Park's student-run television station. In January, he traveled with a group of Point Park's School of Communication students to Washington, D.C., to cover the inauguration of President Donald J. Trump. His work in Washington was among the clips he submitted for Emmy consideration. "This is the biggest

honor of my young career, and it's one that so many people deserve to share with me at Point Park," Croup said. **Gina Catanzarite**, a nine-time Emmy winner and part-time professor, inspired Croup to enter in the on-air talent category, one of the most competitive categories under College/University Student Production. "It's been great to see him develop as a journalist over the years, but it was clear from day one that Josh not only had a natural aptitude but also a genuine passion for his career," she said.

Correction/Clarification

The Spring 2017 issue of The Point (inside front cover) referenced Point Park's first class of doctoral degree recipients. These May 2017 graduates received Ed.D. degrees. Future doctoral classes will also include those who have earned a Ph.D. (in community engagement).

Full-time Faculty Ratify Contract

On Aug. 28, the Newspaper Guild of Pittsburgh and Point Park University announced that full-time faculty members have voted 96-6 to ratify a first contract. The Guild – a local chapter of the Communication Workers of America – and Point Park worked diligently and creatively in an effort to agree on a contract that satisfies the interests of each party. The resulting four-year contract runs through 2021 and provides improvements in salaries, benefits and working conditions. The terms of the contract are retroactive and cover the 2016-2017 school year. **Michael A. Fuoco**, president of the Newspaper Guild, a local chapter of the CWA that also represents 150 editorial employees at the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, said full-time faculty members are extremely pleased with the contract. "The administration has recog-

nized the value of the full-time faculty's longstanding commitment to teaching, service and scholarship," Fuoco said. "This agreement will aid in the retention and recruitment of high-quality, full-time faculty. It also will benefit the entire University community – particularly students – by eliminating the uncertainty of the past and allowing everyone to focus on a bright future at a quality institution of higher learning." University President **Paul Hennigan** said the contract reflects the University's respect for the full-time faculty's critical role in a Point Park education. "The contract ratified by the full-time faculty represents a fair agreement that is a strong foundation upon which Point Park University and its full-time faculty can build in the future," said Hennigan.

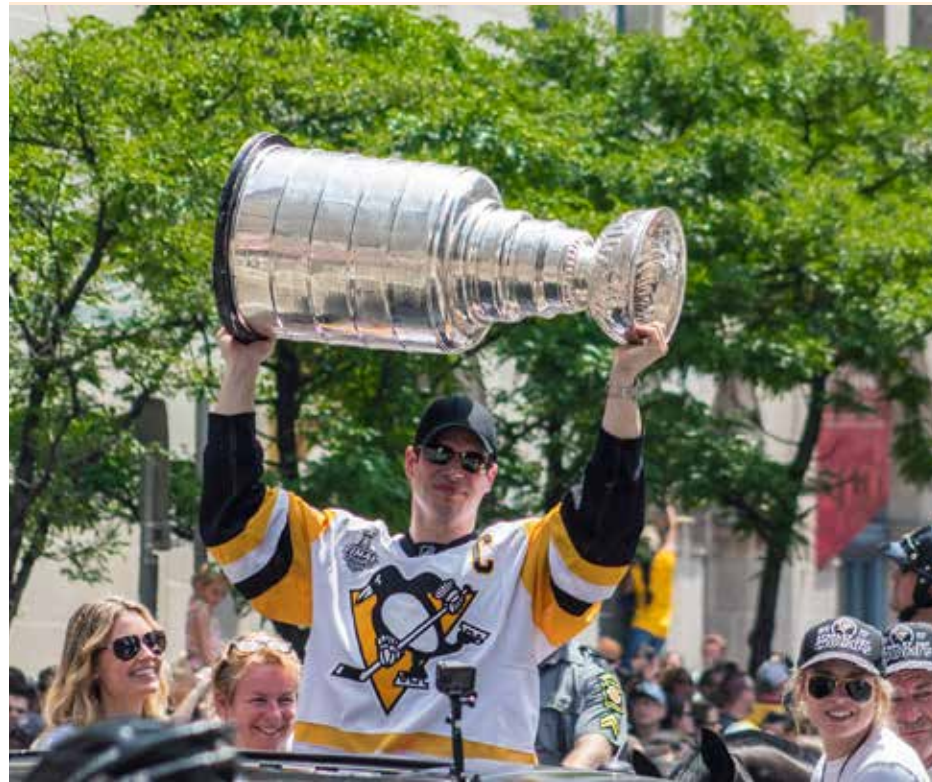


Creative College

Point Park was featured in the 2017 Creative Colleges guidebook, which includes stories and tips from real students and faculty on auditioning and preparing portfolios, artistic statements, admission essays and artistic resumes. The guidebook helps students choose the right college to fit their unique needs as a student actor, artist, dancer, musician or writer. The book also includes:

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Welcome Home Stanley

For the second year in a row, Point Park's Downtown campus was at the heart of the parade to celebrate the Pittsburgh Penguins' 2017 Stanley Cup victory. Students, faculty and staff joined Pens fans from all around to see Sidney Crosby and fellow players carry the cup down the Boulevard of the Allies. Photo by student Annie Brewer.

school profiles; degrees and concentrations offered as well as scholarships and alumni accomplishments; the scoop on academic life from students in each discipline; and advice from admissions directors. Creative Colleges has earned recognition in the Washington Post, College Bound magazine and U.S. News and World Report's annual college rankings guide and on usnews.com.

Collective Community Impact Forum

The inaugural Pittsburgh Collective Community Impact Forum — connecting the region's leaders to female and minority business owners and entrepre-

neurs — was held at Point Park on Aug. 18. Co-hosting the event were **Danielle Davis**, Ph.D. in community engagement student and owner of Davis Consulting Solutions, and **Patrick Mulvihill**, D.Ed., assistant professor of management at Point Park. **Steve Tanzilli**, J.D., dean of the Rowland School of Business, welcomed attendees to Point Park's campus and discussed the University's close connection the business industry in Downtown Pittsburgh. "It was important to hold this event on campus because it falls in line with Point Park's mission to prepare students to achieve their career goals and serve their communities," said Davis.

Students Design Fire Call System

Residents in Turtle Creek Borough have experienced a greater sense of safety for the past two years, thanks to a custom fire call annunciator system designed and built for the Turtle Creek Volunteer Fire Department by Point Park electrical engineering technology students. Now alumni, **Luther Bellows**, **Michael Bobak**, **David Lott** and **Jose Vaccarello** built the annunciator in the summer of 2015 for their senior project for the Professional Problems in Engineering Technology course taught by Instructor **Lou DeMore**. "Our engineering students do great things for society and this project is just one example of that. It has proven its worth in a real-world setting, helping to protect citizens of Turtle Creek by giving their volunteer firefighters another technological tool to do their jobs more efficiently," said **Donald Keller**, Ph.D., P.E., professor of electrical engineering. The new annunciator project was proposed to DeMore's class by **Dan O'Reilly**, president of the Turtle Creek Fire Department, electrical engineer for Eaton Corporation and part-time engineering instructor at Point Park. With guidance from Eaton, the students designed, programmed and constructed a programmable logic control fire call annunciator panel, enabling firefighters to respond faster to emergency calls.

Creative Nonfiction Conference

Point Park students heard directly from senior editors working for major magazines such as Esquire, Harper's, The Atlantic, Paris Review, Creative Nonfiction, The New York Times Magazine and more at the 2017 Creative Nonfiction Writers' Conference held on campus May 26-27. This was the Creative

Nonfiction Foundation's fifth conference in Pittsburgh, but the first time it worked with a partner — Point Park University — for its annual event. CNF was founded by American writer and literary innovator **Lee Gutkind**. At the conference, Point Park's **Chris Girman**, Ph.D., assistant professor of Literary Arts, conducted a hands-on workshop titled "The Artistry of Characterization in Creative Nonfiction" while **Andrew Conte**, M.S., director of the University's Center for Media Innovation, presented interactive sessions on interviewing techniques and activist writing. In addition, **George "Fritz" Kiersch**, Point Park assistant vice president of Academic Affairs, gave opening remarks at the conference's keynote conversation on "The State of the American Magazine."

National College of Distinction

By demonstrating continued dedication to high-impact educational practices, Point Park has again been named as one of the nation's Colleges of Distinction. The University has created a truly unique learning environment where students not only earn college credit and valuable life experience, but also participate in character-building community-based learning programs, service learning programs, interdisciplin-

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Talk Back Series Debuts

Point Park's new Talk Back Series offers the public a chance to hear from and interact with three unique speakers with ties to the Pittsburgh region. **Jasiri X**, a Pittsburgh-based hip-hop artist and activist, kicked off the series on Sept. 19. His appearance will be followed by Newsmax CEO **Christopher Ruddy**, a former reporter for the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, on Nov. 8, and NFL writer and commentator **John Clayton**, a native of Braddock, on March 19. The series is a joint production from the Pittsburgh Playhouse and the Center for Media Innovation at Point Park. "We are taking the 'talk back' element of the engagements very seriously," said **Andrew Conte**, director of the Center for Media Innovation. "The speakers are interested in far more than just lecturing from the stage. They are looking to engage with the audience and create a dialogue." Jasiri X is one of the founders of 1Hood, a Pittsburgh-based antiviolence group, which works at a community level to organize and incite change by reaching youth of color. He also founded 1Hood Media, a collective of socially conscious hip-hop artists and activists. He was joined on stage by **Yusef Salaam**, an influential speaker who, as one of the Central Park Five, spent 12 years in prison for a rape and assault he did not commit. Jasiri X's appearance was, in part, motivated by his interest in this fall's presentation of

The Scottsboro Boys at the Pittsburgh Playhouse by The REP. It tells the true story of nine African-Americans wrongfully convicted of rape in the 1930s. Christopher Ruddy is the founder of Newsmax Media, a multimedia company covering news, politics, health, lifestyles and finance. Emerging as the fastest-growing news channel, its digital properties reach 50 million Americans monthly. Ruddy will be speaking on the one-year anniversary of the election of Donald Trump, a longtime friend. Conte will moderate an extended Q&A with the audience. John Clayton began his sports writing career with the Pittsburgh Press, covering the Steelers and the NFL from 1976 to 1986. He spent more than 20 years at ESPN, where he built a career as both a writer and popular on-air personality. Clayton will discuss the changing role of media in sports, and the evolution of the Super Bowl from just a championship game into a two-week media frenzy. **Bob Pompeani**, KDKA-TV sports anchor and Point Park alumnus, will moderate the event. All Talk Back events will be held at the Pittsburgh Playhouse, 222 Craft Ave. in Oakland. The series is sponsored by TribLive, Herbein + Company, Talk Radio 1320 WJAS and the McGinnis Endowment. Visit www.pittsburghplayhouse.com or call 412-392-8000 for ticket information.



Playbill Ranks Point Park in Top 10 on Broadway

Playbill.com ranked Point Park University No. 8 in the “Big 10: The 10 Most Represented Colleges on Broadway in the 2017-2018 season,” ahead of schools such as the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, Yale University and Florida State University. “Year after year, Point Park finds itself well-represented on Broadway, and it’s a testament to the University’s unwavering commitment to the performing and cinematic arts,” said **Ronald Allan-Lindblom**, artistic director of Point Park’s Conservatory of Performing Arts. Playbill.com’s ranking is based on its own research, which includes Broadway shows currently open, plus shows that have announced casting for the 2017-2018 season. Among the Point Park alumni recognized by Playbill.com are: **Mike Cannon** and **Bobby Petska**, *Aladdin*; **Rory Max Kaplan**, *Bronx Tale*; **Callan Bergmann** and **Ahmad Simmons**, *CATS*; **Jessica Ernest**, *Chicago*; **Courtney Bassett**, *Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812*; **Jordan Grubb**, *Groundhog Day*; **Neil Haskell**, *Hamilton*; **Jeff Kuhr**, *Kinky Boots*; **Viveca Chow**, *Miss Saigon*; **Kaley Ann Vorhees**, *Prince of Broadway*; and **Connor John Gillooly**, *School of Rock*.

ary programs, collaborative assignments and projects, capstone projects, study abroad programs and internships. “We are honored to name Point Park as a 2017-2018 College of Distinction for its continued commitment to student success,” said Tyson Schritter, chief operating officer for Colleges of Distinction.

“Colleges of Distinction applauds Point Park for pushing the envelope with its up-to-date curriculum, enriching the college experience with high-impact educational practices, and providing every student with an education that stretches far beyond what’s typically required from an academic major.”

OnStage Ranks Dance in Top 10

Point Park’s Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance program has been named by *OnStage* blog as one of the 10 best in the country for 2017-2018. Point Park came in at No. 8 on this year’s list, sharing space with such schools as The Juilliard School, Southern Methodist University, Indiana University and Butler University. **Garfield Lemonius**, associate professor of dance, said, “The Conservatory of Performing Arts has a long tradition of training superbly versatile dance artists. That we are always ranked among the best schools in the country speaks volumes of our dedication to the profession and to preparing artists for an ever-changing industry.” *OnStage* takes months to research the best programs, basing it off cost vs. scholarships, curriculum, performance opportunities, facilities, faculty experience, career support and more. The blog called Point Park’s facilities “state of the art” and notes “triple threat” training in ballet, jazz and modern dance.

CMI Celebrates First Anniversary, Honors Richard M. Scaife with Plaque Dedication

The Center for Media Innovation (CMI) at Point Park University marked its one-year anniversary on Sept. 12 with the dedication of a plaque honoring **Richard M. Scaife** and two panel events. Scaife, the late owner of Trib Total Media, also was chairman of the Allegheny Foundation, which provided a grant to build the CMI. “Mr. Scaife often talked about ‘investment in ideas,’ and how much he believed that a free, independent press plays a critical role in democracy,” said **Andrew Conte**, director of the center and former investigative reporter at the Scaife-owned Pittsburgh Tribune-Review.



Adventures in Ireland and Iceland

Seventeen Point Park University students in the Exploring the International Media and Professions course gained new perspectives on the world during their summer trip to Belfast, Dublin, Galway and Reykjavik. Professors **Helen Fallon**, **Darlene Marnich**, **Bob O’Gara** and academic coordinator **Jan Getz** accompanied the group. This year marked the 10th international media trip offered by the School of Communication.

Conte and students also moderated two #MediaPioneers panel events. The first panel included: **Don Marinelli**, director of innovation, 535media/Inven Global; **John Chamberlin** and **Frank Murgia**, hosts of *YaJagoff!* podcasts and

Pittsburgh Podcast Network; and **Rob Taylor**, managing editor, New Pittsburgh Courier. The second panel featured: **Eric Heyl**, field editor of the Pittsburgh-area Patch.com sites; **AmyJo Brown**, founding editor of Grant’s Hill, a media tech-

nology startup based on local government reporting; **Ann Belser**, founding editor of Print, a print-only newspaper serving the East End; and **Alyse Horn**, editor, Storyburgh, a nonprofit community storytelling platform. ❖

United Against Campus Sexual Assault

University leaders united with community organizations, advocates and government officials at a Sept. 11 event to report on the region’s progress in addressing campus sexual assault. The event was sponsored by the FISA Foundation, which partnered with The Heinz Endowments and the United Way of Allegheny County to establish the program “Southwest PA Says No More.” President **Paul Hennigan** joined Chatham University President **David Finegold**, Carlow University President **Suzanne Mellon**, Seton Hill University President **Mary Finger**, Robert Morris



University Provost **David Jamison** and University of Pittsburgh Senior Vice Chancellor for Engagement **Kathy Humphrey** to report on the collective

policies and practices their universities have implemented as part of a commitment to a safe campus culture.



Something Old, Something New

When Point Park University's new Pittsburgh Playhouse opens in Downtown Pittsburgh in fall 2018, visitors will be treated to artistic treasures both on and off the stage. Some of those treasures will be visible in a new café to be housed in the historic Stock Exchange Building, a former bank building on Fourth Avenue that will be part of the Playhouse complex. When patrons look toward the café's ceiling, they will see spectacular, 114-year-old stained glass windows that are original to the building and had been hidden for decades above a false ceiling. Williams Stained Glass Studio in Castle Shannon, Pa. is engaged in the intricate process of restoring 21 surviving windows, as well as recreating a new window that will match a missing panel. According to University Architect Elmer Burger, the windows are unsigned. Because of their extraordinary design quality, says Burger, the colorful panels are likely the work of Rudy Brothers Co., who created stained glass for H.J. Heinz Co. and many of Pittsburgh's most illustrious buildings a century ago. Photos by by Chris Rolinson.



LEADING ROLE

*Board of Trustees
Former Chair
Anne Lewis reflects
on Point Park growth*



In summer 2017, Pittsburgh civic and business leader Anne Lewis stepped down after six years as chair of Point Park's board of trustees. She continues to serve as a volunteer leader of the capital campaign to support the University's Academic Village Initiative, including the \$74 million new Pittsburgh Playhouse scheduled to open in 2018. As board chair of Oxford Development Company, Lewis has been active in civic leadership for more than two decades, spearheading major development efforts for the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, Fox Chapel Country Day School and Shady Side Academy. She was named a Distinguished Daughter of Pennsylvania (2014) in recognition of her exceptional public service to the Commonwealth. Lewis is a board member of Buhl Foundation, The Pittsburgh Promise, The Pittsburgh Foundation, Allies for Children and The Fred Rogers Company. She and her family are active

in supporting the victims of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (better known as Lou Gehrig's Disease); in 2010, the ALS Association of Western Pennsylvania established the Anne Lewis Humanitarian Award and Fund in honor of her achievements. Lewis also supports Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz College: as an alumna (MPM 1990), past commencement speaker, member of the dean's advisory council, and donor of the Anne V. Lewis and Edward J. Lewis Post-Graduate Fellowship in Social Innovation. She chatted with The Point:

Why did you decide to serve as chair of the board of trustees?

AL: I joined the board at Point Park seven years ago, having recently finished a major capital campaign and expansion at

the Children's Museum. President Paul Hennigan thought my experience with that – and other similar projects in my philanthropic career – would be very helpful in realizing his vision of the Academic Village and the transformation of Point Park's Downtown campus. It was a good time for both the University, and for me personally, to begin a new chapter together.

The University has experienced unprecedented growth in recent years. What are some of the milestones that mean the most to you?

AL: Well, although the capital campaign and construction of the new Pittsburgh Playhouse have consumed a large share of my time as board chair, I think some of the biggest accomplishments we've made have been in strengthening the University's relationship to the city – expanding our ties with the business community (in which I also play an active role as board chair of Oxford Development) and taking advantage of Pittsburgh's largely unacknowledged role as a media innovator. So, in that regard, I see the opening of the new Center for Media Innovation, the creation of the Rowland School of Business, and the dedication of Jim Rohr Way, as milestones in making the University more relevant and more closely connected to the Downtown community. Pittsburgh is increasingly a city driven by what you might call its "knowledge economy," and these new resources will help us contribute to – and capitalize on – that growth.

You have said, "When you make young people your priority, everything else falls into place." What did you mean?

AL: That insight was one I gained through my association with [children's media pioneer] Fred Rogers, initially at the Children's Museum and later on the board of the Fred Rogers Company. Aside from my parents and my late husband, Fred probably did more to influence my thinking than anyone I've known. As I said, our economy and our society are driven more and more by knowledge today. We're learning every day, just as Fred used to remind his young viewers on Mister Rogers' Neighborhood. By making young people our priority, then, we don't just build a foundation for the future; we open our own minds to knowledge and to the many possibilities that knowledge helps to create.

What do cities like Pittsburgh need to do to become smart cities, or smarter cities?

AL: Pittsburgh has been leading the way all along as a 'smart city,' which is really just another way of saying a city driven by

knowledge and innovation, a city that 'lives by its wits,' so to speak. I can still remember when people wrote off Pittsburgh as a Rust Belt city; an urban dinosaur that would never recover from the loss of steel-making and so many manufacturing jobs. You don't hear that any more. Instead, it seems like every day you read a story in the New York Times, or see something on the national news, about a new technology being pioneered here, or something exciting on the cultural scene that's happening right here in Pittsburgh. So, I don't think it's really a question of 'becoming a smart city.' We're doing it, and we're showing the rest of the country how.

How does Point Park's Downtown location benefit students as well as the corporate, nonprofit and cultural organizations of our region?

AL: I work in the real estate business, and in that business we have a saying that only three things matter: location, location and location. In fact, that's more true today than ever before. In a time when everyone seems to have so little time, location is everything. Think about it. If you're someone working Downtown who has to commute half an hour or more to a night class, you may well decide you can't afford to take that class. If you're a student working a part-time job, or an internship in your field of study, you might not be able to afford that job or internship if you need a car or a bus to get to it. So yes, location matters a lot, and there's no University better situated in relation to our corporate community and our Cultural District.

As you welcome new board chair Joe Greco, what are your hopes for Point Park, and how do you plan to remain involved?

AL: Well, my biggest hope is that our revitalized campus, with all its new amenities, will continue to help Point Park attract a strong, diverse community of faculty and students. I'll be staying on, of course, for another year to help support Joe, ensure a smooth transition, and help close the gap for the Playhouse campaign.

Any other thoughts that you would like to share?

AL: Coming in as an outsider to the position of board vice chair and then chair – particularly within a University community as closely knit as Point Park – was a little intimidating, as you can probably imagine. So, I'd like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the many people who worked to make me feel at home and to make sure that I'd succeed. The journey has truly been one of the most deeply rewarding experiences of my philanthropic career. I'm grateful to everyone at Point Park for being part of it – and for helping me leave the University (as board chair) better than I found it. ❖

ENERGY PIONEER

By Barbara Vlanova



Joe Greco at the headquarters of Greco Gas Inc. Photo by John Altdorfer.

ALUMNI PROFILE

Point Park pride energizes alumnus and new Board of Trustees Chair Joe Greco

When Joe Greco was a student at Point Park, one of his favorite memories was the intimacy of the school's campus. Attending a college with a relatively small footprint might not be appealing to everyone, but Greco loved it. "I was able to interact with so many of my fellow students because we were not very spread out, and at the same time, when I stepped out of a campus building, I had the entire city in front of me."

That love of his campus and his alma mater has only grown stronger since Greco's 1971 graduation. In fact, this past summer, the Tarentum, Pa. native was named chair of the Board of Trustees, recognition of Greco's dedication and support for a university that he credits, without qualifiers, for his success.

"It was a great atmosphere where I was able to get involved in student government, listen to other opinions, find consensus, and along the way, learned to better define myself."

— Joe Greco

Greco is CEO and chairman of the board of Greco Gas, Inc., a privately held company that distributes industrial and laboratory gases to businesses throughout the southwestern Pa. region. The company was founded in 1941 by Greco's grandfather and now has a 4th generation of active managers in place.

Leader and advocate

"We are honored to have Joe assume the Board Chair role for Point Park," said President Paul Hennigan. "As a proud Point Park Pioneer, his advocacy for the University over the years has been a key driver in helping us get to where we are today. He is an ideal leader as we prepare for the next stage of innovative and experiential university education in Downtown Pittsburgh."

Seeing the University evolve from his college days to its current expanse in the Academic Village has been especially gratifying for Greco. He cites the establishment of the Center for Media Innovation and the fall 2018 opening of Point Park University's Pittsburgh Playhouse as major milestones for the campus community. In particular though, as a graduate with a business degree, Greco calls the naming of the Rowland School of Business "a dream come true."

"One of the most important advantages we can offer our students is Point Park's unique setting in Downtown Pittsburgh, among the city's major corporations and non-profits. No other school in the region has that kind of proximity and the Rowland School is perfectly positioned to leverage that strength with its cooperative education program and emphasis on experiential learning."

Pride of place

As a long-time Pioneer, Greco has pride of place in terms of the role the Conservatory of the Performing Arts and the Pittsburgh Playhouse has in preparing its students to become leaders in the field. He is equally enthusiastic about the University's commitment to enhancing its technology department which he believes is well-positioned to take advantage of larger developments happening in the region, including the city's emerging role as a technology incubator.

When Greco was an undergrad, he recalls thinking "many of the faculty seemed so young – we could hardly differentiate students from teachers. It was a great atmosphere where I was able to get involved in student government, listen to other opinions, find consensus, and along the way, learned to better define myself."

It's for that reason that Greco is honored and challenged by the role of Board chair. "I am so proud of everything Point Park has accomplished, and excited for what lies ahead. While we're preparing our students for rewarding and sustaining careers, we also hope to inspire them to become good citizens – to engage with one another, with their communities, and to ultimately help in shaping a better world," he said. ♦



KISS ME KATE, 42ND STREET AND MUCH MORE

Playhouse season includes crowd-pleasing musicals, classics and contemporary works

Point Park University's Pittsburgh Playhouse 2017-18 season celebrates the diversity of the theatrical experience with professional and student productions, Pittsburgh premieres, Tony Award-winning musicals, edgy new works and fresh takes on classic stories. The season opened with the Pittsburgh premiere of *The Scottsboro Boys*, and will include Tony Award-winning musicals *Kiss Me, Kate* and *42nd Street*, a modern twist on 19th century literature in *You on the Moors Now*, and a dark comedy in David Lindsay-Abaire's *A Devil Inside*, among others in this diverse and provocative season.

Bold move

"As we move boldly into the future, with a new facility on the horizon, this season celebrates all the things we love about theatre: the experiences that take us out of our comfort zone, the launching of thousands of talented student performers' careers, and honoring every facet of the craft," said Ronald Allan-Lindblom, artistic director of the Pittsburgh Playhouse. "It's a season not to be missed." New this year is a special lecture series, Freud on Forbes, where members of the Pittsburgh Psychoanalytic Center will analyze the script following four plays to help the audience get inside the mind of the playwright. See listings (opposite) for shows and times.

Kiss Me Kate opens CTC season

The Conservatory Theatre Company opens its season on Oct. 20 with *Kiss Me Kate*, a classic by Cole Porter that won the first Tony Award for Best Musical in 1949. Zeva Barzell directs and choreographs this show, bringing favorite numbers like Too Darn Hot to life on the Rockwell stage. Sheila McKenna directs Jaclyn Backhaus's *You on the Moors Now*, a modern twist on the story of 19th century literary heroines Jane Eyre, Lizzy Bennet, Cathy Earnshaw and Jo March. Celebrate the holiday season with O. Henry's heartwarming tale, *The Gift of the Magi*. The season also includes Federico Garcia Lorca's classic Spanish play, *The House of Bernarda Alba*. In March, the CTC presents the crowd-pleasing Broadway musical *42nd Street*, a show that will leave audiences

looking to the "sunny side of every situation." The season concludes in April with Anton Chekhov's classic drama, *Uncle Vanya*.

A Devil Inside at The REP

The uproarious dark comedy *A Devil Inside*, directed by alumna Kim Martin, will take audiences on a wild ride with stops at obsession, humor, revenge, love and murder along the way. It opens Feb. 2. Alumnus Tomé Cousin directed the Tony Award-nominated *The Scottsboro Boys*, a musical that uses humor, music and dance to bring a light twist to a dark drama and extremely timely piece. The show opened The REP season in September.

Conservatory Dance Company

The Conservatory Dance Company's 2017-18 season includes a variety of innovative dance productions. The season opens with the *Student Choreography Project*, Oct. 13-15. The fall season also includes *Contemporary Choreographers*, Nov. 15-19, and the *Winter Dance Concert*, Dec. 1-10. In the spring, the CDC presents the *Faculty Dance Concert* Feb. 22-25; *Point Park Connections*, April 6-8; and the *Spring Dance Concert*, April 19-22. With the exception of the *Winter Dance Concert* in the Rockwell Theatre at the Playhouse, all dance performances take place in the GRW Performance Studio on Point Park's Downtown campus.

Robin Hood and Fancy Nancy 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 69th season, which opens to the public on May 5. The season includes a beautiful, contemporary take on the classic tale of *Robin Hood*, by writers John Maclay and Joe Foust. In *Fancy Nancy the Musical*, based on the popular children's book series, young audiences will get caught up in the main character's glitter and glamour and learn some lessons about what's really important along the way. Playhouse Jr. is the second oldest children's theatre company in the country.



ON STAGE THIS FALL AND SPRING

CONSERVATORY THEATRE COMPANY

Kiss Me, Kate
Directed by Zeva Barzell
Oct. 20-29
Freud on Forbes: Oct. 21
after 8 p.m. show
Rockwell Theater

You on The Moors Now
Directed by Sheila McKenna
Nov. 10-Dec. 3
Studio Theatre

The Gift of the Magi
Directed by Penelope Lindblom
Dec. 8-17
American sign language performance: Dec. 16
at 2 p.m.
Rauh Theatre

The House of Bernarda Alba
Directed by Monica Payne
Feb. 23-March 11
Rauh Theatre

42nd Street
Directed by Eileen Grace
March 16-25
Rockwell Theatre

Uncle Vanya
Directed by Philip Winters
April 6-15
Freud on Forbes: April 7
after 8 p.m. show
Rauh Theatre

THE REP

The Scottsboro Boys
Directed by Tomé Cousin
Sept. 8-24
Talk Back: Sept. 21
Audio descriptive performance: Sept. 23
at 2 p.m.
Freud on Forbes: Sept. 23
after 8 p.m. show
Rauh Theatre

A Devil Inside
Directed by Kim Martin
Feb. 2-18
Talk Back: Feb. 15
Freud on Forbes: Feb. 17
Studio Theatre

CONSERVATORY DANCE COMPANY

Student Choreography Project
Oct. 13-15
GRW Performance Studio

Contemporary Choreographers
Nov. 15-19
GRW Performance Studio

Winter Dance Concert
Dec. 1-10
Rockwell Theatre

Faculty Dance Concert
Feb. 22-25
GRW Performance Studio

Point Park Connections
April 6-8
GRW Performance Studio

Spring Dance Concert
April 19-22
GRW Performance Studio

PLAYHOUSE JR.

Fancy Nancy The Musical
May 5-6
May 12-13
May 19-20
Rockwell Theatre

Robin Hood
May 5-6
May 12-13
May 19-20
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 2017-18 Playhouse season, including tickets, subscriptions and alumni discounts, visit: pittsburghplayhouse.com.

CO-OP PIONEERS

New cooperative education program benefits Point Park students and employers



“In addition to those real-world assignments, I also appreciated the support provided by PwC. I had the opportunity to work with a peer coach, a career coach and a relationship partner at the firm.”



Amber Mole spoke at the announcement of Point Park's Rowland School of Business last spring. Photo by John Altdorfer.

When School of Business student Amber Mole became involved with the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) on the advice of her mentor, Professor Ed Scott, she never imagined that it would eventually lead to a full-time job offer before her graduation from Point Park.

Mole, a dual major in business management and accounting who worked full-time for PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP through the University's new cooperative education (co-op) program, recently accepted an offer to join the company as a new first-year associate in fall 2018 after she completes her undergraduate degree. The Big Four accounting firm celebrated by taking Mole and other future associates to Disney World last August.

Mole connected with representatives from PwC at a NABA student conference in Pittsburgh, an extraordinary networking opportunity that resulted in several interviews, she said. As a Point Park co-op student employee at PwC, she earned both financial compensation and course credits while working in the firm's Pittsburgh office.

Professional experience

“Point Park is the first in the region to have a cooperative education (co-op) program that touches all disciplines in the Rowland School of Business, said Dean Steve Tanzilli, J.D. “We have had a very robust internship program for a number of years. When we talked with business professionals, they said, ‘We love Point Park business students, but one of the challenges with an internship is the fact that it's an inconsistent schedule. Is there a way that we can have students work for our company on a much more consistent basis, to provide more substance?’ So, we decided that now is the time to establish a co-op program.

“In the co-op program, a student works full-time, during which they are paid a reasonable wage, and they receive academic credits for their work. It is crucial, for a student's employability, that they be able to put on their resume that they have worked in business [while a student],” said Tanzilli. “So, it's a mutually beneficial program for students and for the Pittsburgh business community.

Teamwork pays off

“I really enjoyed the co-op experience, especially working with different teams and observing how they interacted,” said Mole, who worked for PwC clients in such areas as industrial services and health and financial services. “The opportunity to learn about the different industries was really great.

“You get a close up look at what it would be like as a first-year associate, because that's the type of assignments that they give you,” she added. “In addition to those real-world assignments, I also appreciated the support provided by PwC. I had the opportunity to work with a peer coach, a career coach and a relationship partner at the firm.”

Mole's peer coach was a first-year associate. “I was able to learn from her, ask questions, and we often had coffee and lunch. My career coach was a bit more senior, and it was nice learning from her and hearing her perspectives about how she joined PwC.” Mole's “relationship partner,” a partner with the firm, provided guidance on choosing areas of expertise and more.

“I loved hearing different experiences of how people have grown in their careers,” said Mole.

School of Business student Devon Tate gained similar experience in his co-op position at the business software company SAP Ariba, where he has worked as a procurement specialist since October 2016. “I have earned 12 credits toward my human resource management degree through this co-op,” said Tate, who said that he chose HR because “I've always been passionate about helping others. Also, this is a career field that is not going to phase out. There's always going to be a demand for HR.”

“SAP is the world's leading business software company. We strive to make life simpler for our clients,” said Tate. “Through our business software, I work with international suppliers to make sure their invoices are paid. I also help these suppliers navigate our software and make transactions.”

continued on next page



Producing excellent results

"I've been able to use my education from Point Park in real-life work experiences. I've learned about labor and law regulations, business writing, business research and development and how to communicate more effectively. The knowledge I've gained in these classes is something I use daily. Also, being at a diverse university like Point Park has helped me to work well with international suppliers."

According to Megan Karl, team lead, customer assistance at SAP Ariba, "Devon's co-op experience, along with working full time while taking classes full time, are preparing him for the demanding schedule of a business professional. Point Park and SAP Ariba are teaching him how to manage his time wisely and effectively while producing excellent results," she added. "With Devon's positive attitude, willingness to learn and work ethic, I have no doubt he will achieve career success."

"It's a great opportunity to gain work experience while getting your education. However, you have to be driven and motivated to effectively balance both work and school," said Tate. "The co-op program is an excellent stepping stone to becoming a real industry professional."

Hands-on experience

Recent School of Business graduate Celina DiPietro, an information technology major who worked as co-op student at the data analytics firm Othot in summer 2016, said, "Working for a startup company gives you a lot of hands-on experience, which is what I wanted to gain from the co-op program." Her job responsibilities included using machine learning algorithms on sets of data to produce results, analyzing data sets, participating in weekly meetings, sending weekly status reports and running ODSL scripts in JSON, among other tasks.

"Celina's course work at Point Park has given her a good understanding of many of the data science concepts and

machine learning algorithms that we use at Othot," commented Ashton Seward, a data scientist at Othot. "Also, her exposure to programming at Point Park allowed her to quickly understand and adapt to our Othot Data Science Language."

"I recommend the co-op program because you get to earn credits and get paid at the same time! Who would want to pass that up? Doing co-op helps you get more comfortable with the interviewing process, gives you a lot of experience working full time in an office and looks great on a resume," said DiPietro. "It also gives you a look ahead into the future and helps you figure out what you want to be doing after graduation."

DiPietro credits Professor Mark Voortman with providing her with key skills and professional contacts as she has advanced in her career. "He is very knowledgeable about everything involving technology. He keeps his courses updated with the latest trends in the job field, tailoring his classes toward what companies are looking for in their employees," she said.

Mole, who is also captain of Point Park's competitive cheer and dance team in 2017-18, said that she looks forward to serving as an ambassador for Point Park and PricewaterhouseCoopers in the coming year.

"Whether your school is big or small, it's the network that matters," she said. "For me, among the benefits of going to a smaller school like Point Park are the personal contacts and the opportunities they bring." Her advice? "Take advantage of those opportunities: network with peers, career development staff and professors." Point Park offers many professional options, from the co-op program to career fairs to campus groups such as the student accounting association. "You never know how those contacts will turn out," said Mole.

"The 'best four years of your life' can be just that and more if you are willing to make it happen."

For more information on Point Park's co-op program, visit: PointPark.edu/Co-OpStudent.

Additional reporting by Amanda Dabbs. ❖

A Storyteller's Storyteller

Professor Steve Cuden shares the ins and outs of Hollywood screenwriting with Cinema Arts students

The show business bug bit Steve Cuden early in his life, and the Pittsburgh native has never recovered. He has, however, found ways to channel his passion into new avenues, among them serving as an assistant professor in the Cinema Arts Department, where he shares his decades of experience as an award-winning screenwriter, playwright, director and producer. The Point talked with him about teaching and about other ways he scratches his creative itch.

You left Pittsburgh to pursue a career in show business. What brought you back?

SC: I'd been in L.A. for 35 years. Over time my writing career started to leak oil, and I was looking for other opportunities. I thought teaching would be a great thing to do. I was unable to find a school interested in me, even though I'd had a big show on Broadway [*Jekyll & Hyde*, which debuted on Broadway in 1997] and had written 90 episodes of TV. No school was interested because I didn't have a terminal degree. So I went back to school [UCLA], hoping to maximize my opportunities. Just pure synchronicity, as I emerged from school, within six months here was this opportunity in Pittsburgh. It was not my plan to come back to Pittsburgh, at all. It was not my plan to teach. And yet here I am, and in many ways very happy that I did. I've learned probably as much by being here as I am in giving back. I continue to learn.

Tell us about your two books, *Beating Broadway: How to Create Stories for Musicals That Get Standing Ovarions* and *Beating Hollywood: Tips for Creating Unforgettable Screenplays*.

It's all about the structural elements you need in order to construct the story of a screenplay or libretto. It's more about storytelling than it is about the literal mechanics of



By Linda Fletcher

scriptwriting. Both books are similarly formatted. That is to say the first half of each book contains an explanation of what I teach. And the back half of both books are beat breakdowns of famous properties. So, in *Beating Broadway*, there are 35 famous Broadway musicals and five famous movie musicals broken down into their narrative beats and plot points and structure. And then *Beating Hollywood* takes 40 classic movies and breaks them down.

What one piece of advice do you give all young screenwriters?

What I express on a regular basis to students is that they need to learn how to accept criticism. Most people have trouble accepting criticism—nobody likes to be criticized—but the truth of the matter is, when you go out into the real world of

Hollywood or New York, it's extremely brutal and people will tell you things that will absolutely curl your hair.

The bulk of your writing credits are for TV. How would you describe that atmosphere for a writer?

When you write as a freelancer, you're handing your work off to an editor or a producer and they're going to change things. I've had every experience you can imagine -- where very little of my work got changed to I recognized one sentence, and everything in between. As long as they're paying you for the work, that's what I'm there for. I'm a mercenary. If you have a thin skin in writing for TV, you're done, you will not succeed.

What else is on the front burner for you professionally?

There are at least three movies that I'm working on right now. Also, Andy Conte, [director of] the Center for Media Innovation, put out an offer to Point Park faculty that their radio lab is available for podcasts. I have started a podcast called StoryBeat [www.StoryBeat.net]. The subtitle of it is Storytellers on Storytelling. My goal is to interview writers, producers, directors, actors, painters, photographers, choreographers, etc. People who have some form of artistic input and how they go about constructing whatever it is that they do or how they work their world, how they live, how they rehearse, how they develop, how they paint. ❖



Point Extra

Read more about Steve Cuden's perspectives on teaching and surviving in show business at PointPark.edu/ThePoint. This interview has been condensed and lightly edited for clarity.

Covering the Environment

Environmental journalism students travel to the Dominican Republic to explore water crisis and produce water filters for local communities



Photos by Chris Rolinson, director of Point Park's Environmental Journalism program.

Eight Point Park graduate and undergraduate students, led by Associate Professor Christopher Rolinson, traveled to the Dominican Republic last May to gain a better understanding of the world water crisis and participate in volunteer efforts to produce ceramic water filters for local communities in the Caribbean nation.

The group worked with the Wine to Water organization to gain a better understanding of the world water crisis, according to Rolinson, who is director of the University's Environmental Journalism program, made possible through a grant from The Heinz Endowments. "The students made ceramic water filters in the Wine to Water facility at El Higüerito, packaged and

distributed them in the local community, and were present during official follow-ups to hear directly from the people how the water filters have improved their access to clean water, health and quality of life."

Making an impact

The experience had such an impact, added Rolinson, that "the students are forming a Wine to Water student chapter to continue carrying the message about the world water crisis and how it affects public health, to the campus community." Point Park students who made the trip to the Dominican Republic included five School of Communication students (two

graduate students and three undergraduates), two graduate students in the Department of Natural Sciences and Engineering Technology, and one undergraduate in Sports, Arts and Entertainment Management in the Rowland School of Business.

"For many of these students, this was their first international experience. In fact, one had never been on an airplane before," said Rolinson. "I couldn't have asked for a better group of students. They were fantastic ambassadors for Point Park University."

Student media reports from the trip can be seen on the *Environmental Report*: <https://environmental-report.org/>. ❖

GIFTS AT WORK

Student Receives Heinz Endowments Environmental Scholar Award

Marissa Butera, a student in Point Park's Environmental Journalism program, is the inaugural recipient of the University's Heinz Endowments Environmental Scholar Award, made possible through a grant from The Heinz Endowments.

Butera was honored for an essay in which she explored the impact of climate change, particularly the impact of hydraulic fracturing. "One of the largest environmental problems is hydraulic fracturing, or 'fracking,'" she wrote. "This process is expanding and especially ubiquitous in the area of my hometown in western Pennsylvania, which is in the heart of the Marcellus Shale."

"Hydraulic fracturing is the cracking open of shale to extract copious shale gas to supply consumers' needs for energy—here in western Pennsylvania, New York, and much of Ohio it is the Marcellus Shale," wrote Butera. "Dismally, it increases the potential for future oil spills, further pollutes the air and water, and can lead to calamities such as methane leaks and explosions. It can even be argued that hydraulic fracturing is worse for the environment than coal!"

A Voice for Earth

"Ways that I believe everyone can contribute to help end hydraulic fracturing include calling elected representatives and urging them to put a stop to the alternative routes for environmental laws, asking state officials for stronger laws, and even pushing for ideas at town meetings or with local representatives," she wrote. "The media plays a vital role in this situation as well."

"The media can be the platform for exposing the dangers and documenting the effects of hydraulic fracturing on the environment and people. The role of the media is to be a voice for our Earth." ❖

ALUMNI CONNECTION



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Oct. 15 (Pittsburgh) Alumni & Family Outing at the Pittsburgh Zoo

Oct. 30 (Orlando) Business Alumni Meet & Greet with Dean Tanzilli

Nov. 8 (Pittsburgh) Recent Alumni Happy Hour

Nov. 14 (Westmoreland County) Business Alumni Meet & Greet with Dean Steve Tanzilli

Dec. 3 (Philadelphia) All Alumni Event

Dec. 9 (Pittsburgh) Alumni Holiday Brunch & A Musical Christmas Carol

Feb. 8 (Las Vegas) All-Alumni Meet & Greet with President Hennigan

Visit PointPark.edu/alumni for more information.

Dear alumni and friends,

It is a privilege and an honor to serve as the incoming president of the Alumni Association Board of Directors. For those of you who do not know me, I graduated from Point Park University in 2010. I can truly say I wouldn't be where I am today if it was not for my experience at Point Park. I would like to thank **Carrie Potter-Murray** (COM '09) for her hard work over the last three years as president. Under her leadership we made great advances in our regional presence, enhanced our benefits to alumni, and created multichannel platforms to keep alumni aware and involved in the happenings of Point Park University.

Point Park has transformed over the years through innovative academic programs and educational experiences. I am proud of the University's history and footprint in Downtown Pittsburgh and I am eager for what our future brings. It is an exciting time to be a part of the Point Park community and, as president, I would like to ask each of you to stay connected and become involved.

As new Pioneers arrive on campus for the 2017-18 academic year, we have an amazing opportunity, as alumni, to be a part of their experience. Whether near or far, I encourage you to get involved, through speaking in classrooms, volunteering with the Pioneer Alumni Recruitment Team, or being a source of advice for students. Our alumni are an invaluable part of the Point Park community. I also encourage you to connect with us through the Point Park Alumni Facebook page, attend events in your city, come back to campus, and consider a gift to the annual fund!

I look forward to being a voice for all 28,000 alumni. The Alumni Association Board of Directors is here to serve your interests. Please keep in touch with us by sharing your ideas, and come see us at future events! You can reach us at alumni@pointpark.edu.

Best,

Jamie

Jamie Inferrera (COM '10)
President, Alumni Association Board of Directors

CLASS NOTES

1960s

Sam Depe III, a former student athlete who was a part of the first Point Park men's golf team in 1967-68, will be honored with the PGA Deacon Palmer award at the organization's annual meeting in Austin, Texas in November. Named after Arnold Palmer's father, the award recognizes a PGA pro who has displayed integrity and character in overcoming a major obstacle. Depe III, a member of the PGA for 36 years, is the owner of Hickory Heights Golf Club in Bridgeton, Pa. and the former head pro at South Hills Country Club. His career as a pro golfer ended in 1998 when he lost both legs as the result of a car accident on the way home from a tournament, but he has continued to champion the sport and its players on and off the course. The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette covered Depe III and his PGA honor: read the article at: bit.ly/2wE8SQa.

1970s



Judy Lashinski Davis (COM 1971) has released her fourth novel, *Four White Roses*, a contemporary romantic mystery published by the Wild Rose Press. Prior to retirement and her pursuit of fiction, she wrote for both industry and education. Her short stories have appeared in literary and small magazines and anthologies. Writing as Judy Ann Davis, she has four novels, one novella, and



Bob Rager (A&S 1974) has retired after a long career coaching the Pioneers. He was the head coach of Point Park men's basketball for 27 seasons, from 1989 to 2016. Rager retires with the most wins ever for a college basketball coach at four-year schools in the City of Pittsburgh. He compiled a career record of 381-365 (.510) at Point Park, which is more wins than the next-highest names on the list of Dr. H.C. "Doc" Carlson (367) and Jamie Dixon (328) of Pitt, Charles "Chick" Davies (314) of Duquesne, and his Point Park predecessor, **Jerry Conboy** (304).

Rager is also the all-time wins leader at Point Park, having passed Conboy during the 2010-11 season for that honor. Rager was hired in 1989 as Pioneers' head coach. He replaced Conboy, who was head coach for the previous 20 seasons. Rager was a player for Conboy from 1970-74 and earned NAIA All-American status. Director of Athletics **Dan Swalga** said: "Bob Rager led the Pioneers to some great seasons during his long tenure and three NAIA national tournament appearances. That brought a lot of attention to the school, the basketball program and the athletic department. We wish him well in his retirement." Rager led Point Park men's basketball to three of its five all-time appearances in the NAIA national tournament. The highlight was the Pioneers' most successful season ever with a trip to the NAIA Division I Final Four in 1996-97. Point Park also made NAIA national tournament appearances under Rager in 2000-01 and 2006-07. Rager is pictured at the preseason media day prior to the 2014-15 season.

a collection of 19 short stories published to date. A member of Pennwriters, Inc. and Romance Writers of America, Davis divides her time between central Pennsylvania and New Smyrna Beach, Fla. For more information, visit: www.judyannDavis.com.

Denny Beran (BUS 1971) received the William G. Bishop III CIA Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2017 Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) international conference in July. The award honors individuals who have impacted the practice of internal auditing and inspired professionals around the world

to make a difference in the profession. Beran has decades of experience, including more than 40 years at JCPenney Co., where he was chief audit executive (CAE) until his retirement. He has held a long list of local and international IIA positions. Beran said, "I am also very proud of being selected as a

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A NOTE!**

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to share your news.

CLASS NOTES

Distinguished Alumnus in 2005. I enjoyed my years at Point Park, and the teachers did an excellent job of preparing me for my career."

1980s

Alan Fisher (COPA 1981) was among magicians from around the world who convened in Louisville, Ky. in July at a combined convention of the International Brotherhood of Magicians (IBM) and the Society of American Magicians (SAM). Participating magicians competed for awards, and the opportunity to perform next year at the Fédération Internationale des Sociétés Magiques (FISM) convention in Korea, in the categories of stage magic (larger props and illusions) and close-up magic (cards, coins, etc.). Fisher performed in the close-up category. He has been entertaining audiences for almost 50 years, giving his first paid performance at the age of 9. He quickly

added comedy, acting and singing to his list of talents. After graduating from Point Park, he starred for 6 years in the national tour of the off-Broadway hit musical *Big Bad Burlesque*. Fisher headlined comedy clubs for eight years, and spent over a decade appearing in and co-producing shows for Don Brockett Productions. A resident of Tennessee, he has performed with The Middle Tennessee Magic Cub, Murfreesboro chapter 252 of the IBM, where he is the webmaster emeritus and a past officer. Fisher has won numerous awards for his entertainment talents and magic skills.

1990s

Robert V. Barth, Jr. (BUS 1994) retired on July 31 after 39 years with the Federal Judiciary, Clerk of Courts. He writes, "the evening class programs were very helpful and certainly contributed to [my] advance-

ment and success." Barth earned his degree in public administration at Point Park.

Jack Puglisi (COPA 1990) is an artist whose pen and ink drawing *The Watcher* was accepted into the prestigious Butler Institute of American Art's 81st National Midyear Show in Youngstown, Ohio. A resident of Castle Shannon, Pa., his work has also been exhibited in the Pennsylvania State Museum, Susquehanna University, the Three Rivers Arts Festival and many additional shows and exhibits. He is a member of the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Society of Artists. Puglisi earned his degree in visual arts and design at Point Park.

Bobbie Cabbage (COM 1996) writes, "I just celebrated 15 years of marriage to fellow classmate **Samuel Cabbage II**, on May 4, 2017!" Bobbie is a teacher in the Fox chapel area and Samuel works for CBCInnovis in credit reporting.



Timothy Cox (COM 1980) writes, "On Aug. 11-13, several Point Park alumni and former students reunited in Pittsburgh for the first time in more than 30 years. Organizers **Theresa Wickham Smith** (COPA 1982) and **Willie Brooks** were responsible for ensuring that all revelers were in good hands [in] the Steel City during this fabulous weekend. The first evening included a dinner at McCormick and Schmick's. "Lots of fun, laughs, hugs and memories were a

adult beverages and splendid menu," said Smith. On day two, we toured the University. All of us fondly recall when Point Park was a two-building college, but to witness our University now [with] 18 buildings was simply breathtaking. That evening, we regrouped at the Station Square dock, where we boarded the Gateway Clipper Fleet for dinner, dancing and more laughs. Interestingly, the Clipper's maître d' is also a Point Park alumnus, so he showed us special

attention throughout the night, along with music dedications and DJ "shout-outs." On day three, we participated in worship services at the historic Central Avenue Baptist Church in Pittsburgh's Hill District, at the invitation of church member Willie Brooks. The spiritual serenity provided an opportunity to give thanks for the chance to reunite, while memorializing those who have transitioned from this earthly world." Smith said: "When I first came to Point Park, the steel mills were still in existence. Being a big-city, New York girl, I was accustomed to going out any time of day or night to get whatever I wanted. Pittsburgh was a city, but most businesses shut down at 10 p.m. I had a tough time adjusting, and did not like Pittsburgh at all. What made me stay, and then not want to leave, were the people I met at Point Park and the friendships that continue today. We have lost a few of our friends, but know that their spirits and memories live on. We had such a good time during this reunion that we hope to do it again next year. To see pictures, connect with friends, and receive updates on the next reunion, go to PPC80salumni on Facebook. I look forward to seeing you in 2018!"

“ The new Center for Media Innovation worked with nearly 20 high schools to spark an interest in media with the next generation. ... Through my work with students, I see how critical it is to align my support with my passions. ... The more we can allow students to find their way in the future is incredibly important.”

ANDY CONTE
Director, Center for Media Innovation,
Point Park University

GIVING BACK
Andy gives to support today's students and provide opportunities for the next generation.

Whatever your reason for giving, your gift will provide opportunity. Please give to the **POINT PARK UNIVERSITY ANNUAL FUND.**
PointPark.edu/Give

POINT PARK
UNIVERSITY

WHY I GIVE

2000s

Jen Koralewski (COPA '09) is the director of the Eisenhower Dance Center in Birmingham, Mich. She earned her degree in dance in 2009.

Andrew J. Gall (A&S '07) was recently promoted to chief of detectives for the Beaver County District Attorney's Office. Gall was featured on the television programs *48 Hours*, *On the Case with Paula Zahn*, and *Betrayed* for his part in solving a 32-year-old homicide. The case was also the subject of the book *Justice Delayed* by Point Park

Professor **Steve Hallock**. Gall earned his degree in law enforcement in 2007.

Lisa Faye Nixon Johnson (BUS '05) writes, "I just completed a master of accountancy degree in forensic accounting from Florida Atlantic University." She earned her degree in business management at Point Park in 2005.

Seth Werner (COPA '04) is the production manager and instructor of theatre at York College of Pennsylvania. He earned his degree in theatre at Point Park in 2004.

Scott Nelson (COPA '03) was recently appointed director of production at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. He earned his degree in theatre arts at Point Park in 2003.

Kirsten Parker (COPA '08) is the new managing director for Faction of Fools theatre company in Washington, D.C. She recently completed her master's degree in arts management at George Mason University.

Robert Finnegan (COM '09) recently joined Duolingo, the Pittsburgh-based language-learning platform with over 170

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million users. Finnegan is pioneering the company's customer support process for the Duolingo English Test, a product designed to measure English language proficiency.

Charlene Bidula (COM '03, BUS '09) is the new communications manager at The Andy Warhol Museum. Previously, she worked as manager of communications at The Westmoreland Museum of American Art.



2010s

Jacob Frazier (COPA '16) writes, "After graduating from Point Park, I started working with Giordano Dance Chicago as a junior performing associate in Giordano II. After a year of being an associate, I have been promoted to a company member with the main company. In the 2017-2018 year, I [can] say that I am a main member of the company's 55th season." Frazier earned his B.F.A. in dance in 2016.

Marcus Lipinski (A&S '12) is a new associate with Leech Tishman Fuscaldo & Lampl, LLC, where he is part of the law firm's energy practice group. He earned his bachelor's degree in criminal justice at Point Park in 2012.



David Kelly (COM '11) has been selected as one of the 2017 Communication Arts 58th Annual Photography Winners. Since 1959, Communication Arts has published the best in visual communications from around the world. For creatives seeking recognition, the annual juried awards rank amongst the most prestigious and influential competitions in the world. Kelly was selected for his work on Big Dog Coffee, which vied with 3,736 other entries. Only 141 of those entries, including David's Big Dog work, won an award, which are chosen on the basis of creative excellence and quality of execution.

Jared Passante (COPA '14) joined the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) Feature Film Division team as executive assistant to the Vice President of Film in May 2017. Now a member of one of the seven major Hollywood studios, Passante is closely involved in the development and production of movies such as the James Bond series and the Rocky/Creed saga, among others. A native of Pittsburgh, he moved to Los Angeles in 2014 after completing his degree in cinema and digital arts.

Natasha Neira (A&S '14) created the art installation "This Isn't About You," which was exhibited at 709 Penn Gallery through the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust in July and August, 2017. She earned her degree in creative writing at Point Park.

Athena Award Nominees

Point Park was represented by six alumni who were among the nominees for 2017 Athena Awards, which celebrate women who demonstrate excellence in their profession, contribute to their community and mentor other women. Four of the six were nominated in the Young Professional category. They are: **Ashley Moorefield** (A&S '08) B.S. accelerated criminal justice; **Renee William** (COPA '05), B.A. theatre arts; **Nicole Miller** (A&S '14) B.S. civil engineering technology; **Olivia Benson** (BUS '08), master of business administration; **Shannon Gregg** (BUS '14): master of business administration; and **Megan Yunn** (BUS '07), master of business administration.

Know someone who can benefit from a Point Park education?

PointPark.edu/ReferAStudent

Dream Job

Adam Meys (COPA '07) talked with The Point about his work as part of a team that installed a new Guest Experience at the Shanghai Disney Resort last year. Here's what he had to say:

Tell us about the experience of getting to Shanghai Disney.

AM: My team and I knew we would be traveling to the Shanghai Disney Resort to train and install a newly developed interactive Guest Experience. The park was scheduled to open in June 2016, and we planned to arrive in mid-May. However, we found out a couple of weeks before that we would be flying over there the beginning of April! So, we quickly got our visas and travel arrangements in order, and before we knew what was happening, we were in China. At the time, I was super stressed out about getting everything situated at home for the trip because I was going to be in Shanghai for an extended period of time.

What were some of your favorite experiences in China, on and off the job?

AM: My absolute favorite part of my time in Shanghai would be [getting to know] the local cast members at the Shanghai Disney Resort. We were very fortunate to work with three trainers who were fluent in English, and we



soon formed a bond with them. I loved learning about their culture and lives. China has always seemed far away, so it was almost surreal to experience the country firsthand. One night, our new friends took us to karaoke, which was totally different than what we have in the U.S. We had a private room, and we controlled all the music with a touch screen. The best part of the night was when the karaoke bar's mascot, a large bear, came in to play 'rock, paper, scissors' with us. We won a bottle of hand lotion.

Why did you choose Point Park?

AM: There are a lot of great theater schools in the United States, and I was fortunate enough to have to decide between a couple of them. However, there was one thing Point Park had that no other school did - the people. Everyone I met was nice and welcoming, and seemed to genuinely care about me, not just trying to sell the school. This genuineness didn't change throughout my four years at Point Park. The staff really wanted me to become the best I could be, and made sure I was prepared for the very challenging business of theater!

What are some of your favorite student memories?

AM: The people of Point Park are really what make it an amazing school. The friendships I made there are still going strong - even though we are living in different parts of the world. I cherish the shows I worked on. I can remember every one of them distinctly, and smile thinking about the art we created as a team. All of my professors were mentors to me, but **Kim Martin** changed my life with her knowledge, guidance, humor and kindness. She truly shaped me into the professional I am today. I hope I can inspire people the way she inspired me.

What are your current artistic projects?

AM: One of the best things about Disney is that it never stops growing. Although I'm not able to talk about my current projects, I'm looking forward to continuing to spread the magic to all of the Disney parks!

Interview by Jennifer Moritz, director of alumni relations at Point Park. ❖



RUNNING TO HONOR

Track and field athlete Anna Shields is Point Park's first national champion

by Kevin Taylor



Anna Shields and Jryi Davis, each wearing the number of fallen teammate Tyler Carter, with their NAIA Track & Field All-American awards at the national meet in May 2017. Photo by NAIA.

It was a memorable year for Anna Shields and Point Park track and field in 2016-17. And the year ended with an experience few people will forget.

Shields, a sophomore from Torrington, Conn., pulled off an amazing representation of Pioneers athletics when she competed at the NAIA

Outdoor Track and Field National Championships on May 27 in Gulf Shores, Ala.

There, Shields won the NAIA national title in the 1,500 meters to become Point Park's first-ever NAIA national champion in any sport. Then, less than two hours later, she placed second in the 800 meters.

NAIA Women's Track Athlete of the Year

Shields earned NAIA All-American honors in both events and was later named NAIA Women's Track Athlete of the Year, an award signifying her as the top women's track athlete in the country.

It was the culmination of a year filled with many awards, honors and records for Shields. It was the latest chapter in her story, which brought her back into the sport of running and to Point Park. And it was also a show of triumph amid a tragic loss.

Shields, who is 26 years old, has not taken the typical path in college athletics.

A decorated runner during her high school days in Connecticut, she was highly recruited by colleges at the NCAA Division I level. After a year of running in college, she left the sport and school and joined the working world at a bank. Several years passed, and the hope of ever running collegiately again had faded. But along came the opportunity to get back into it, and that led Shields to Point Park.

"To come back to a college and to compete as a runner was something that I had only dreamed about doing

again," said Shields after the season. "Running track is what makes me happy. I could not be happier to be at Point Park."

Powerful breakthrough

And it was an incredible first year at Point Park for Shields. By her standards, it was a modest start during the fall season of cross country. She was one of the top runners on the team, for sure, and she qualified for the NAIA national meet.

Her year started with cross country in the fall. She had a good season earning all-conference honors and qualifying as an individual to the NAIA national meet.

It was during the indoor track season that she broke through as a top runner in the NAIA. She was named NAIA Great Lakes Region Women's Indoor Track Athlete of the Year on her way to earning NAIA All-American honors in the indoor mile and 1,000 meters. She placed second in both races at indoor nationals.

"I was very proud of myself after the indoor season," said Shields. "I learned a lot from that experience. It showed me that I could compete on that level." Shields took things even further during the outdoor track season. She once again qualified for multiple events at nationals hitting the NAIA qualifying standard in the 800, 1,500 and 5,000. She was ranked first or second in the country in all of those events during the season.

Shields was one of three Point Park qualifiers competing at outdoor nationals. She was joined by teammates Jryi Davis and Tyler Carter, a pair of triple jumpers who were both ranked in the Top 10 in the country.



REMEMBERING TYLER CARTER

Tyler Deshon Carter, a 19-year-old rising sophomore at Point Park, died in a drowning accident on May 24 in Gulf Shores, Ala. A History major, Carter was a member of Point Park's Men's Track and Field Team and ranked No. 4 nationally in the triple jump. He was in Alabama to compete in the NAIA Outdoor Track and Field National Championship. A native of Penn Hills, Tyler graduated from Trinity Christian School and was the son of Shawn and Yvonne Carter. "The Point Park University family is devastated by this loss," said President

Paul Hennigan. "Tyler was more than just an impressive athlete – he was an excellent student and an even better person. Our love, prayers and support are with his family and friends." According to Keith Paylo, vice president of student affairs and dean of students, "Tyler was a wonderful representative of Point Park University, and a GoFundMe account was created to assist the Carter family during this difficult time." If you are interested in donating, visit: www.gofundme.com/support-for-family-of-tyler-carter.



Dedication after tragedy

On the day before the meet, tragedy struck. While visiting the beach in Gulf Shores, Carter got caught in a rip current and drowned. Shields and Davis were there as well but were spared. In honor of their teammate, a 19-year-old

freshman from Penn Hills, Shields and Davis dedicated their national meet performances to Carter.

In the 1,500-meter finals, Shields got out to a lead after a couple of laps. Although she lost the lead in the third lap, she rallied during the final lap with an impressive final stretch. She passed British Columbia's Natalia Hawthorn down the final straightaway for the national championship with a time of 4:24.58. "I had never come back to win a race before that," said Shields. "I had passed for placements, but not to win. She made a strong move to pass, but she was not getting away. Going into that last lap, I knew that if I kept my pace, that my time would be hard to beat"

Having now climbed the summit as a national champion, Shields reflected back on her victory. It was a special accomplishment and a special moment with what went on in Gulf Shores.

"I think that there's something about a race where sometimes you are almost afraid of it," said Shields. "Because it hurts. There's some kind of strange fear to completely exhaust yourself, just instinctually.

"I had none of that. I had no fear. I had no pain. That pain doesn't matter. Just do your best and give everything. I think that helped carry me through to the finish, thinking about Tyler. My physical struggle meant nothing in those moments."



► BASEBALL

The Pioneers won first place in the River States Conference regular season with a final record of 36-19 overall and 26-6 RSC. Point Park had five hitters and three pitchers named all-conference first or second team, and head coach Loren Torres was named RSC Coach of the Year. It was the 50th season of Point Park baseball, which dates back to spring of 1968.

► WOMEN'S GOLF

Point Park finished sixth at the River States Conference Tournament this past spring. It was a young Pioneers team with three sophomores and two juniors in the lineup. The highlight of the year was winning first place at the Westminster Invitational in the fall and also taking second at Grove City and third at St. Vincent.

Pursuing high goals

Shields went on later in the day to compete in the 800 finals. Her time of 2:10.53 finished second only to Hannah Segrave of Milligan College, an Olympic trials qualifier from Great Britain. It was an impressive double, one that carried her to being named the top track athlete in NAIA and the River States Conference Female Athlete of the Year, regardless of sport.

For Davis, a junior, he once again earned NAIA All-American honors placing seventh in the nation in the triple jump. He did so with a personal-best leap of 14.67 meters.



SPORTS ROUNDUP



► SOFTBALL

Pioneers softball was once again one of the top teams in the conference. Point Park made a run in the River States Conference Tournament but came up short. Pitcher Ashley Lagnemma and first baseman Kim Corcoran (above) were named All-RSC first team, both underclassmen. The Pioneers ended the year 21-21 overall and 11-7 RSC for fourth place in the final standings.



► MEN'S GOLF

The Pioneers won the River States Conference Tournament championship in spring 2017 to qualify for the NAIA national tournament. It was the fourth time in five years that Point Park won the men's golf conference title to earn a bid to nationals. It was the fifth time overall the Pioneers competed at the NAIA tournament, which was held this year at TPC Deere Run, a PGA Tour course in Moline, Ill.

Carter's best jump of 14.70 entering the national meet still stands as the school record.

Shields still has two more years ahead of her running at Point Park for Pioneers head coach Kelly Parsley. She has high goals. One thing's for sure, she has come to the right place to pursue them.

"I am so proud to compete for Point Park and to run for a coach who believes in me and believes in our team," said Shields. "The program is only going to get better. There are a lot of exciting things to come, I know."

Coming here, my hope was to be better than I have ever been," she said. "I knew that if could get back to where I was in high school, I would be up there with the NAIA leaders. I have surpassed that now. I hit times that I didn't think were possible until this year. That's what it took to win a national championship. And that has only raised the bar for my goals for the future." ♦

Kevin Taylor is director of athletic communications at Point Park.

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