

THE POINT

A woman with dark hair and bangs, wearing a grey t-shirt and dark pants, stands next to a large, ornate, golden-brown costume piece. She is smiling and holding a golden mask with a tall, pointed headdress. The costume piece is made of many overlapping, scale-like or feather-like pieces, giving it a textured, layered appearance. The background is dark.

SETTING THE STAGE

Behind the Scenes at the
Pittsburgh Playhouse

Global Perspective

Helena Knorr Teaches Students
to Become Agents of Change

PIONEER ATHLETICS

Men's Golf Team is on Top
on the Links

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY



Dear alumni and friends,

It's back-to-school season, one of my favorite times of the year. Point Park's campus is filled with the energy and excitement that our students bring with them as they arrive in, or return to, our Downtown neighborhood.

For freshman students and their parents, this is a time of exhilaration as well as many mixed emotions. And as I watch my oldest child graduate from high school and begin college this year, I know just how they feel.

As I tell students each and every year, starting life in college may be a bit unsettling, but it's also a great opportunity to embrace a new environment and all of the new experiences that come along with it. Here at Point Park, one of the best ways to do that is to venture out and explore our urban neighborhood and nearby riverfronts.

This August marked the third year that I invited student staff to join me on a bike tour of Pittsburgh. There is no better way to see a city than from a bike, especially a city as great as ours. The ride begins at the Golden Triangle bike rental downtown, weaving along the Eliza Furnace Trail to the Hot Metal Bridge. From there, we cross the bridge and continue on the South Side Trail toward the Duquesne Incline. The group carefully climbs up to the Fort Pitt Bridge, crosses the river and heads to Point State Park. We ride over the Fort Duquesne Bridge to the North Side and journey to Washington's Landing, where we break for lunch along the

Allegheny. Recharged by some nosh, we gear up, cross the Fort Duquesne Bridge, journey to The Point and circle back to the bike rental.

It's a good ride with iconic Pittsburgh landmarks whispering their history along the way. The purpose is to introduce our students, some from the region and others from far away, to their new home in a way that captures their attention. Even natives of the city find the bicyclist's perspective refreshing. It's as though they've had their hands over their eyes for a decade and are just now ready for the big reveal. The city's stoic history and fresh innovation almost grab the students by the shoulders, spin them around and shout, "This is yours now! Don't take one minute for granted."

A cool breeze meandering off of the Mon and onto the river walk. The choppy notes of one lone busker on the Clemente Bridge before a ballgame. A neon ketchup bottle pouring itself neatly onto the Heinz History Center. This is my Pittsburgh.

Whether you are a student arriving on campus for the first time or a longtime alum, I'll bet you know that feeling well. Pittsburgh pride is part of Point Park pride. Embrace it.

Warm regards,

Dr. Paul Hennigan
President



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24



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On the cover: Costume design student Kelsey Bower helped bring the distinctive characters of the play *Chess* to life during the 2012-13 Playhouse season. This unique work of art features intricate layers of hand-worked, bronzed leather. Photo by Martha Rial.

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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

Dear Editor,

My name is Dennis Iurlano. I am writing regarding the bridge photo in the Spring 2013 issue of *The Point*. I attended Point Park beginning in the summer of 1968, graduated in May, 1972 with a bachelor's degree in accounting, and returned to take a class in the Fall of 1973.

The bridge was not there when I started but was erected during my years at school. In fact, I remember watching as the bridge was put into place. Due to a physical disability, I have mobility issues which made it difficult to cross Wood Street to get from Lawrence Hall to Academic Hall, in good weather or bad. Being a Lawrence Hall resident, the bridge made getting to classes in Academic Hall, or the library, much easier. I did not have to worry about getting across Wood Street safely and in a timely manner.

I thoroughly enjoyed my years at Point Park, and I look forward to the arrival of every issue of *The Point* magazine. I had good experiences at Point Park, and enjoy the opportunity to share some of the memories.

Dennis J. Iurlano (BUS 1972), Pittsburgh, Pa.

Hello Point,

In the spring issue of *The Point* there is a photo from the 1970s taken on the bridge. You asked if anyone could identify any of the students in the photo. The girl on the front left side of the photo with blonde hair, dark pants and a leather shoulder bag, laughing and smiling, is my fellow dance major, Leslie Hutchinson. After some time dancing in the States, Leslie moved to Paris and became a principal dancer with the Folies Bergere.

So great to see a photo of my time at what was then Point Park College! Thanks!

Kim Gilden, San Diego, Calif.

Dear Editor,

I thoroughly enjoyed the Spring 2013 issue of *The Point*. A great publication as always. In your Class Notes section showing a 1970s-era photo of "The Bridge," I believe the blonde wearing a big smile is Leslie Hutchinson, from Washington, Pa. She was a dance major, and a fellow RA in the dorms. Keep up the great work.

Lynn Mitchell (BUS 1978), State College, Pa.

Dear Editor,

In the "View from the Bridge" photo, that's Joanie Kendall (COPA 1978) on the right. I had to go to Marty Schiff (COPA 1979) for a little help there. Though I did not graduate from Point Park College, I sure got an education there. I was a freshman and Joanie was a senior. I think the year was 1978.

It was a big year for Point Park because we were opening the Playhouse that had been closed for a few years. My first crew was running the light board for *Hot L Baltimore*. Joanie was stage managing and Michael Richie was tech. director. Both Joanie and Michael took the time and taught me so much about the Craft Ave. theatre, about a counter weight system, the pin rail, hanging lights, knots – all the things that I carry with me to this day. Just out of high school and here I am running lights in a 550-seat theatre! I was not the best student at that time so the world of backstage made a lot of sense. We were all smokers then. The things we remember.

We were about three weeks into the run when I realized that "Hot L" was Hotel with the "E" burnt out. Well, we laughed and laughed. That I remember as if it were yesterday. The most important thing that I learned there from that random girl in the picture was, "If you are not early, you're late." Be on time! That's what Joanie and Michael taught me. I have had the good fortune to make a career working in the world of entertainment. A great career. Had someone not taken the time to teach me the importance of never having people have to wait for you, I wonder if things would have played out the way they have.

After *Hot L Baltimore* closed, I ended up moving into the Pittsburgh Playhouse for 16 months. Myself, Dave Butler (COPA 1979) and Joey Campayno. What a wonderful time, what a wonderful education. Much love to all,

Paul DiMeo, Los Angeles, Calif.

(Editor's Note: To see a photo feature on today's theatre tech programs at the Conservatory of Performing Arts, visit page 12.)



Above and opposite: The Bridge then and now.

NEWS AND VIEWS ►

Professional Advancement

P.K. Weston, Ed.D., professor of composition and literature and director of the English program, has been elected president of the Rotary Club of Pittsburgh. She is only the fourth woman to be elected president in the organization's 101-year history. Weston has been involved with the Rotary Club for more than 10 years, serving in a variety of positions including chair of the scholarship committee and a member of the engagement committee, women's forum and Chuck Tanner Manager of the Year committee. "Volunteerism is part of my personal ethic. I think it's the right thing to do," said Weston. "In general, I am involved in activities that serve those who don't have much of a voice in the world such as children, animals and adults whose life experiences prevent them from having that voice." Weston also volunteers for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Focus on Renewal and Golden Retrievers in Need. She is a senior reviewer and curriculum advisor for The College Board and has worked on a variety of national projects coordinated by the Educational Policy Improvement Center.

Robert Alexander, Ph.D. received notice that the British Arts and Humanities

Research Council has awarded 775,000 pounds toward completion of the Records of Early English Drama project (REED), which seeks to publish all references to entertainment in the British Isles before 1642. Alexander's area of research covers the documents of the Percy family, earls of Northumberland since the 12th century. He will travel to Durham University in the United Kingdom for the next few summers, starting in 2014.

Archish Maharaja, Ed.D., assistant professor and director of Point Park University's M.B.A. program, recently made a presentation to physician assistant students at Chatham University on "The Business of Health Care." Maharaja discussed various hot topics in the health care industry, including ethics, economics, quality assurance and information technology.

Chris Rolinson, associate professor of photography, worked with four students to prepare an exhibition entitled *Silk Road*, a collection of images taken along the Silk Road in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal and India, which ran April 25 through Aug. 9 in Lawrence Hall. The students researched, edited and prepared a collection of historic photos taken in a part of the world where there

is currently much conflict. Rolinson received more than 1,200 Kodak slides from a friend, who purchased them at an estate sale in 1972. The photos were taken in the late 1960s and early 1970s by a couple from Erie, Pa. — Albin and Virginia Curtze — who traveled extensively throughout the world. "I stressed to the students the historical context of this project, because [the photos were taken during a period] of relative peace in that region," said Rolinson. "The element of time has an effect on what images mean."

Kiesha Lalama's original work *The Bench* may eventually be headed to Broadway. The associate professor of dance created the highly personal work of choreography, which traces a couple's love story through contemporary dance, live jazz and inspirational quotes, and first staged it for Point Park's Conservatory Dance Company in 2009. In 2011 she joined with Boise, Idaho-based Titus Theatricals with the goal of finding a home for the piece on tour or perhaps Broadway in the future. According to the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, "*The Bench* premiered in July at a workshop at the Nampa Civic Center in Boise. It featured dancers from Ballet Idaho and the Boise Dance Co-op, plus vocalists Angela Birchett and Titus Burgess of Broadway



Photos this page by Brian Cohen.



fame (*Good Vibrations, Jersey Boys, The Little Mermaid* and *Guys and Dolls*). Audiences for the pair of performances were peppered with potential investors and producers, as well as Ms. Lalama's family, colleagues and friends who made the trip from Pittsburgh. Read the whole article: <http://tinyurl.com/jvljwlp>.

Mike Bruno, Point Park volleyball head coach, ran the Pittsburgh Marathon on

May 5, 2013 just like thousands of others. But Bruno had a unique challenge and a worthy cause when he laced up his running shoes for the 26.2 mile course. He ran the Marathon blindfolded with the help of his sighted guide, Point Park men's and women's cross country head coach and colleague, **Jim Irvin**. The duo trained since late 2012 for their feat, which had as its goal to raise money and awareness for the Vision Research

ROPARD Foundation (VRRF), the leading organization for low vision and blindness related to premature birth. The inspiration for the cause is **Cassie Bruno**, coach Bruno's 7-year old daughter who is

legally blind as a result of her premature birth in November 2005. Coach Bruno's blindfolded Pittsburgh Marathon solicited donations at the cause's official website, www.26-2blindfolded.com. The goal is to raise \$42,000 – which is \$1,000 for every kilometer in the 26.2 mile marathon – to be donated 100 percent to the VRRF.

Exhibition of Works by Joann Falbo

On exhibition in the Lawrence Hall Gallery is a collection of works by artist and Pittsburgh native, **Joann K. Falbo**: "A Life Lived Artfully." Falbo developed a deep love for painting during her youth through summer classes offered at Carnegie Tech, now Carnegie Mellon University. During Falbo's senior year at Richmond University, now Virginia Commonwealth University, she was encouraged to enter into a scholarship



Mike and Cassie Bruno.

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY Annual Fund

“Being a Point Park University student really has changed my life. I am learning from the best professors in downtown Pittsburgh, and transitioning into the career that will shape the rest of my life.”

Justin L. Druga
Junior, Mass Communication

You can make this life-changing experience possible for deserving students like Justin with a tax-deductible, unrestricted gift to Point Park University's Annual Fund. Or designate your gift to a school or program.

To donate online or for more information:
www.pointpark.edu/annualfund | annualfund@pointpark.edu | 412-392-3999



Mural Energizes Lawrence Hall Staircase

When students, faculty and visitors walk up the historic stone steps in the lobby of Lawrence Hall, they can now enjoy the view of a bright new mural on the landing. Created by Pittsburgh artist **Philip Salvato** (center) the mural fits into a large, arch-shaped niche that is original to the building. It depicts vibrant, free-flowing colors representative of fireworks. An orchestra is depicted at the base of the painting. The idea to commission a mural for the space was initiated by the United Student Government under the leadership of former USG President **Ian Sulkowski**, A&S'13 (left). President Paul Hennigan was enthusiastic about the idea and joined with University Trustee and art collector **Jack Tomayko**, (right) in convening a committee to evaluate mural proposals. The mural was installed on April 29, just prior to commencement.



competition for a master's of fine art at Yale University. She won the scholarship and was the only woman among a class of 20 students. Upon graduation, Falbo remained in New England and found joy in teaching art in a small studio. In addition to her work as an artist, the late Falbo was a visual therapist who was successful in assisting people who suffered visual difficulties. Her brother, **Ralph Falbo**, has left his mark on revitalizing Downtown Pittsburgh with exciting developments like First Side and his work with organizations like Riverlife. The vision of people like the Falbos is what motivates the Point Park community to make neighborhood connections and provide interesting public spaces. The next exhibition, a collection of works featuring dancers by Pittsburgh artist **Joyce Werwie Perry**, opens in October. The Lawrence Hall Gallery is free and open to the public Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. – 9 p.m., and Friday and Saturday 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. For more information, call 412-392-8008.

Alumni Author Receives National Award



Celia Viggo Wexler (COM 1995) is the author of *Out of the News*, which received the award for Best Research About Journalism at the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) Sigma Delta Chi Awards at the National Press Club in Washington on June 21. Just 84 reporters and editors, in print, broadcast and online, received the prestigious awards. According to Wexler, "the message of the event is similar to the message of my book. [That is,] despite enormous economic challenges, a lot of good journalism is being done throughout the country, and is serving democracy well." Now a public-interest lobbyist, Wexler has worked for major

newspapers in the Midwest, Northeast and Washington, earning accolades for reporting on the business, consumer and labor beats, as well as reporting on the influence of political contributions on public policy. She worked at Common Cause, a nonprofit good-government group, rising to the position of vice president for advocacy, and now lobbies for the Union of Concerned Scientists. "When I wrote to Professor **Helen Fallon** and asked her to give me a blurb for my book, which told the stories of former journalists and explored why they left the profession, her response illustrated her true nature – generous, thoughtful, and scrupulously honest," said Wexler. "She wrote to me: 'I do believe this profession is going to survive these times, though, so if that doesn't fit with your conclusion in your book (which I can't wait to read), let me know and I'll step back!' Fallon did read the book, added Wexler. "In fact, she was the first person outside my family to read it. Her comments were so positive they made me cry. She sent me this book blurb: 'Celia Wexler has written a compelling narrative of these noted journalists that

underscores and illuminates the challenging media environment. Their inspiring stories give hope to all of us who love journalism and realize its importance! Helen is like Point Park – kind and welcoming, but with a strong insistence on academic standards,” said Wexler. “Not only did the University give me a solid graduate education in journalism, it also offered me the help I needed to succeed as a mid-career student, with a young child and a spouse, adjusting to a new job in a new city.” For more information on *Out of the News*, visit: surviving-journalism.com. To hear a C-Span interview with Wexler, visit www.c-spanvideo.org/program/309593-11.



Pioneer Community Day 2013

Point Park students spent hours of their free time on a chilly Saturday to give back, clean up and help out in Downtown Pittsburgh as part of the University's annual Pioneer Community Day. More than 125 Point Park students, faculty and staff took part in activities on April 13 that stretched from an 8 a.m. 5k run on the North Shore to an evening dance in the Lawrence Hall ballroom to raise money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. The mid-day volunteer work, including painting over unsightly graffiti and cleaning out Downtown public gardens for spring planting, was a major focus of Pioneer Community Day, which began two years ago as a day of service. The event is a joint project of the University and United Student Government.

New Trustees

Point Park University announced the election of Darrell E. Smalley and Ryan Stana for membership on its board of trustees:

Darrell E. Smalley is a principal of Ernst & Young LLP with 19 years of public accounting experience. He was admitted to the partnership in July 2010. He serves clients in northeast Ohio, upstate N.Y. and Philadelphia, Pa. and is the Indirect Tax Market Leader for the Pittsburgh, Pa. and Charleston, W.Va. regions. Smalley's clients operate in multiple industries including

manufacturing, consumer products, construction, retail, health care and distribution. Smalley serves on the boards of the Regional Industrial Development Corporation of Southwestern Pennsylvania, the August Wilson Center for African American Culture, NEED and The Poise Foundation. He also serves as the chairman of the board of trustees at Rodman Street Missionary Baptist Church and is a certified member of the Institute for Professionals in Taxation (CMI).

Ryan Stana, named one of the top 50 entrepreneurs in New York City in 2004, is the founder and CEO of RWS

and Associates. Stana is responsible for guiding the RWS creative staff and developing first-class events and entertainment for his clients. Celebrating 10 years of business in 2013, RWS is regarded as one the nation's premier production companies. Stana produces, writes and directs award-winning shows and television events, which have earned numerous accolades including a 2009 EMMY® Award. His productions have been attended by U.S. presidents and have featured celebrities ranging from Vera Wang, Bob Newhart, Pat Benatar and Queen Latifah to the stars of *Sesame Street* and NBC's *The Voice*. Stana's continued commitment to the amusement industry allows him to be an active International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) entertainment committee member and has led RWS to be the country's largest provider of branded stage shows ranging from the children's property *Thomas the Tank Engine* to CBS Television's top-rated *The Amazing Race*. Stana has been on the faculty at New Jersey City University, Dance America and has been a master class instructor for numerous international model and talent conventions. He serves on the board of directors of the Broadway Dreams Foundation - an organization that offers training to anyone who aspires to a career in musical theater regardless of their ability to pay.

Architecture 2030 Districts Summit

Point Park hosted a reception and address that initiated the first national 2030 Districts Summit, presented by the Green Building Alliance (GBA) and Architecture 2030, on Aug. 12 in the Lawrence Hall Ballroom. 2030 Challenge creator **Ed Mazria** delivered the keynote address, part of the GBA's INSPIRE Speakers Series. The founder



and CEO of Architecture 2030, Mazria discussed urban sustainability and the impact of increasing demand for energy to power the built environment. 2030 Districts Director **Vincent Martinez** presented insights into 2030 District operations across the country, including Pittsburgh 2030, and the co-founders of the 2030 District concept, **Brian Geller** and **Brett Phillips** (both of the Seattle 2030 District), provided an update on the project's momentum. Point Park President **Paul Hennigan** and University Architect **Elmer Burger** spoke about Point Park's Academic Village Initiative and the University's commitment to urban sustainability at the Summit.

JA Titan Business Challenge

More than 90 high school students representing a dozen high schools participated in the Junior Achievement of Western Pennsylvania's Titan Business Challenge Grand Championship held at Point Park on May 15. Winning first place and third place in the competition, in which students gain points by managing virtual companies and making effective business decisions, was a team from Ford City High School in Armstrong County. Second place and fourth place awards went to teams from Richland High School, and a team from Rocky Grove High School took fifth place. Prizes for the top winners included Point Park scholarship awards. The JA Titan Business Challenge was sponsored by Point Park, FedEx Ground and First Niagara Bank.

Accounting Careers Awareness

Point Park recently hosted its first Accounting Career Awareness Program, welcoming 22 students from a variety of high schools across the Pittsburgh region to campus last summer. As 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 the field of accounting and its career opportunities. **Edward Scott**, C.P.A., M.B.A, Point Park's George Rowland White Endowed Professor of Accounting and Finance, led the six-day program, which included a full schedule of educational, networking and recreational activities. According to Scott, the major benefits of ACAP are that the students learn about the significant number of well-paying jobs in the accounting field and begin to develop their network with various professionals and organizations. "Students see professionals who look like them and that exposure sparks their interest in the field and lets them know they can become well-paid certified public accountants," explained Scott. Throughout the week, students heard from guest speakers presenting on a variety of topics from financial literacy and accounting careers to public speaking and essay writing.



Graduate Education Programs in Suburban Pittsburgh

Beginning this fall, Point Park University's graduate education department is offering its Master of Arts degree in curriculum and instruction and K-12 principal certificate through off-campus cohort programs geared for teachers and K-12 school personnel. The M.A. in curriculum and instruction degree program will be offered at Upper St. Clair High School while the K-12 principal certificate will be offered at both Upper St. Clair High School and Propel Braddock Hills High School. Students in the M.A. in curriculum and instruction program will gain expertise in developing innovative curriculum for students and the skills to improve the teaching expertise of K-12 teachers. As a result, graduates of the master's program become eligible to seek certification through the Pennsylvania Department of Education in order to obtain curriculum supervisory positions.

Point Park's principal certificate program can be completed in as little as one year. This program provides graduates with the course work and practicum experience necessary to apply for certification through the Pennsylvania Department of Education on the path to becoming a principal at a K-12 school. For more information call 412-392-3808.

NAIA Scholar Teams

The Point Park University athletic department had eight of its 11 varsity sports teams named NAIA Scholar Teams for the 2012-13 academic year, as announced by the NAIA national office on July 12, 2013. NAIA Scholar Teams have a team grade-point average of 3.0 or higher. The Point Park women's cross country team brought home the title of best team GPA in the Pioneers athletic department with a team GPA of 3.50. Women's cross country also had a good year athletically finishing fourth at the

KIAC Meet and sending two individual runners to the NAIA national meet, **Hana Jiraskova** and **Lindsay Dill**. There were a total of 898 NAIA teams recognized as NAIA Scholar Teams across the country. Lee (Tenn.) University women's golf was named the NAIA Scholar-Team of the Year with a national-best team GPA of 3.93. Point Park women's cross country fell in the top 15 percent of all NAIA teams across all sports in the country with its 3.50 team GPA. Also with a very strong year in the classroom was Point Park softball, which came in second in the department with a 3.40 team GPA. Volleyball was close behind at 3.36, and women's basketball and men's cross country were next in a tie at 3.31. The men's cross country team had the highest GPA among the men's sports teams at the school. The other three NAIA Scholar Teams for Point Park were women's golf (3.19), women's soccer (3.17) and men's soccer (3.12).



Point Park President **Paul Hennigan** (center) in the Village Park with the KIAC Commissioner's All-Sports Cup along with Director of Athletics **Dan Swalga** (left) and Dean of Students and Dean of Student Affairs **Keith Paylo** (right) on July 30, 2013. Point Park Athletics claimed the KIAC Commissioner's Cup as the best overall athletic department in the conference for the 2013-14 school year. Photo by Kevin Taylor.



Photos by Jim Judkis.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY EARNS ACCREDITATION

Point Park's Department of Public Safety, established in 2008 by President Paul Hennigan, has become the fifth university in the state to become an Accredited Law Enforcement Agency. The accreditation reflects the Department's commitment to the highest standards of professionalism, according to Police Chief **Jeff Besong**, who was given the task to create a Police department with sworn police officers within the Public Safety Department just two years ago.

"Accreditation proves our diverse department is operating according to the best practices and according to the guidelines established by law enforcement professionals," says

Besong. "Carnegie Mellon, Duquesne, Lehigh and Franklin and Marshall are the only other universities in the state that have received accreditation."

During Besong's leadership, the department has made key advancements, including an increase in the number of police officers (many of whom are students or alumni of Point Park), the creation of a Field Training Officer program, enhanced technology including a new ID card system, and installed IP cameras along with Metis emergency devices that interface with the University's emergency notification system Point Alert. The University has the capability to lock down every campus building

and updated communications and 911 equipment, and has implemented a Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention (SHARP) program as well as an Emergency Response plan and Threat Assessment team to enhance campus safety, according to Besong.

Point Park's friendly and experienced police officers are a familiar sight in the University's downtown neighborhood, whether on foot, on bicycle or in one of the department's well-equipped vehicles. To see photos of the officers' participation in the annual Torch Run for Special Olympics in Downtown Pittsburgh last June, visit: www.pointpark.edu/news.aspx?id=998

OPEN for Business

West Penn Hall Features New Cinema Facilities, Gathering Space and Classrooms

by Cheryl Valyo

West Penn Hall, Point Park University's architecturally distinctive, 13-story building and annex on Wood Street at First Avenue, received much-needed renovations in the summer of 2013. It now features new facilities for the Department of Cinema and Digital Arts as well as an expansive first floor lounge for students, faculty and visitors.

Home to the University's School of Business, which occupies the 11th through 13th floors of the tower, as well as several levels of classrooms, West Penn Hall is in the process of a multi-phase renovation to reconfigure and upgrade interior spaces and improve the elevator system, according to William Cameron, vice president of operations at Point Park.

Many key renovations could not be initiated until various tenants, including the Kaplan Career Institute, moved out of the main tower and adjacent annex at Ft. Pitt Boulevard in the past year, says Cameron. Over the summer, the main entrance to West Penn Hall was repositioned (farther to the right) on Wood Street, the cinema facilities and a digital arts classroom were completed, and a spacious new lobby with vending area now provides much needed indoor gathering space.

New Studios for Cinema and Digital Arts

Cinema and Digital Arts students and faculty now have a flexible production facility, known as Studio Two, on the first floor of West Penn Hall. The space will be used for production work, photography, cinema classes and other activities, according to Nelson Chipman, chair of Cinema and Digital Arts.

On the second floor of West Penn Hall is a 30-ft screening facility to enable cinema and digital arts students to view films and other productions. The renovations include a new classroom equipped with computers and digital tools to support drafting and other creative activities in Point Park's growing animation program. "With these new facilities, we have more than doubled the amount of production space and Computer-Aided Design (CAD) and laboratory space, which will be an asset to our programs," says Chipman.

A New Lounge, Upgraded Elevators

The expansive new lounge will provide much needed space for informal gatherings and special events, similar to the lobby area and gallery of Lawrence Hall, says Cameron.

The elevator situation in the building has been a source of much frustration for students and faculty who previously had to queue in a tiny foyer and outside to wait for elevators to take them to classrooms in the upper floors of the tower. The expanded lobby will alleviate that issue, says Cameron.

The elevators in the tower and the annex will also receive renovations to the cabs, doors and operating software to enable them to work more efficiently. In addition, in the final phase of renovations to commence in the months to come, general-use classrooms now located on upper floors in West Penn Hall will be relocated lower to floors two through five in the building.

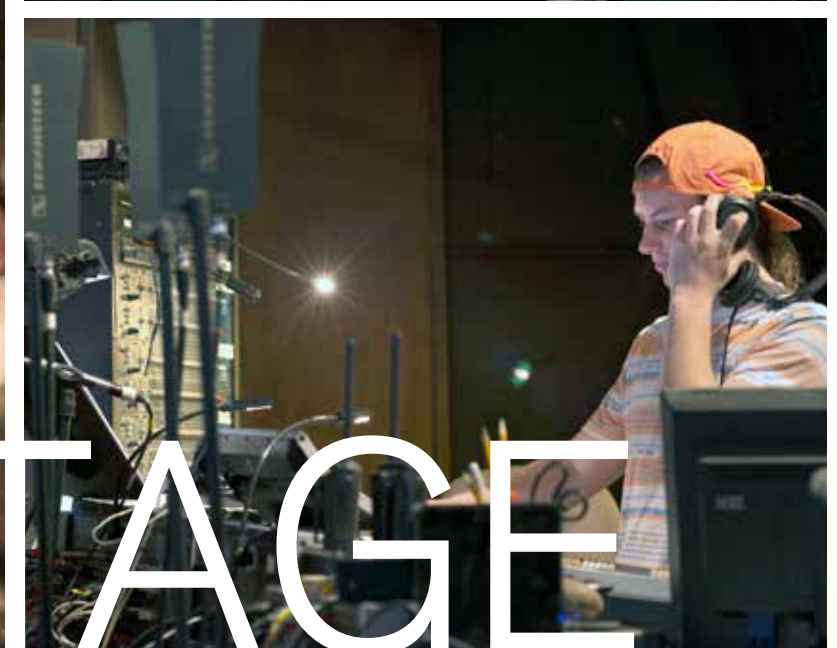
When complete, the relocated classrooms will improve the elevator situation since groups of students heading to and from class around the same time will have a shorter wait time and distance to travel.

"We believe that all of these renovations to West Penn Hall will make a very positive impact on our students, faculty and visitors," says Cameron. "It will greatly enhance that end of campus." ❖



Right: A bird's eye view of West Penn Hall. Below: Renovations to the first and second floors took place during summer 2013. All photos by Chris Rolinson.





SETTING THE STAGE

When audiences attend productions at Point Park University's Pittsburgh Playhouse, what they see on stage represents the work of not only the performers but also dozens of student and faculty artists with expertise in the fields of design, stage management and technical production. "The Conservatory of Performing Arts offers our students a wealth of opportunities with excellent mentorship and professional connections," says Stephanie Mayer-Staley, head of design. "The Playhouse produces about 20 shows per season and each student participates in at least two productions for credit each year, working in a variety of positions. Students work with The REP, the Conservatory Theatre Company, Playhouse Jr. and the Conservatory Dance Company. All of our productions are of very high production values and we produce drama (contemporary and historical), musicals, dance, children's theatre and an occasional opera. Students are mentored by professional artists and practitioners and also get to work with many of the visiting artists - directors, designers and choreographers." Graduates leave with a first-rate portfolio, says Mayer-Staley. "Theatre is a collaborative art form and it is extremely important to learn and know about all of the other disciplines. We make sure that even though our students focus on one discipline; they learn and understand all others." The Point talked with some of the students, faculty and alumni who have pursued their craft behind-the-scenes at the Playhouse:

Text by Cheryl Valyo, photos by Martha Rial.

STAGE MANAGEMENT

"The stage management program is really built to have students dive right in. The first week of freshman year my production experience was already underway as I began rehearsal as an assistant stage manager on a new work," says Alexis Schwartz (COPA '12), who now stage manages productions for such off-Broadway companies as The Public Theater, New York Theater Workshop and Primary Stages. During her sophomore year she worked on a production for The REP, "an amazing experience to learn from an Equity stage manager and work with professional actors. . .the program really allows students to grow and stand on their own. As you receive more and more assignments, you're challenged with new problems to solve and new issues to face. I appreciated that there isn't a lot of hand holding along the way, which really prepares us for the real world. During the production process, you are responsible for no less than what would be expected in a professional company." Schwartz also credits Kim Martin, production manager at the Playhouse and "second-mom" to the stage management students. "Not only did Kim teach us in the classroom, but consistently led by example in every aspect of our education and production. She was a very important mentor to me during my time at Point Park, always listening when I had a problem and giving her best advice. She established a great balance of how to let us figure things out on our own while letting us know she was always there if we needed her. Learning from her is what allowed me to become so confident in what I do. I know that she will be a lifelong mentor and friend."



SCENIC DESIGN

“Classroom theory designs are lovely on paper and should never be discredited. But what Point Park teaches is professionalism,” says Lindsey Mayer (COPA '12) “Other schools may teach design, but Point Park teaches you how to be a designer.” Since her graduation last year, Mayer has worked at Philadelphia’s Walnut Street Theatre as part of their professional scenic art apprenticeship and held a summer position at New York Stage and Film. “The highlight of my time as a scenic design student was being chosen to design for *The REP*,” recalls Mayer. “I was given the opportunity to be the only scenic designer for *The Lonesome West*, directed by Kim Martin. It was my first professional credit as a designer. What I remember most, besides how much fun I had, was feeling like a valued member of that production team. I hold onto that pride every day,” she says. “Steffi Mayer-Staley (pictured opposite center), my set design mentor, taught me curiosity and playfulness. She showed me you can’t be afraid to voice opinions, play with far-fetched ideas, and sometimes be a little silly. In short, she taught me to have fun with my designs while always staying true to [my] artistic integrity.”





COSTUME DESIGN

Kelsey Bower, who with fellow student Patrick Geraci (both pictured at left) helped to design the extraordinary costume for the musical *Chess* that appears on the cover of this magazine, says "it was so fulfilling to see [the costumes] come together piece by piece and to troubleshoot together, and with the dancers, for what needed to be modified to make the dance flow." Bower says she chose Point Park because "it's an up and coming program in a new city to experience. I was especially pleased when I spoke to design and production heads Steffi Mayer-Staley and Aaron Bollinger about the program during my interview. They shared a lot of my background in coming from fine arts and I liked that!" The creative opportunities came quickly, she adds. "I love the hands-on experience. Michael (Montgomery), Don (DiFonso), Joan (Markert), and Cathleen (Crocker-Perry) let us play, and they've really tailored my projects to my interests and strengths. They challenge us. All of the [faculty] in the shop are mentors to me in different ways. I've worked with all of them on various projects and everyone has a unique way of troubleshooting and design detail." According to Crocker-Perry, effective costume designers have "an open mind, willingness to learn, and never stop asking questions." Bower says that "the costume shop is kind of like my big Italian family. Always craziness, always laughter. Sometimes things get tense during 'tech,' but in the end we're all bringing in baked goods and smiling about the next project and the wheel moves on."



TECHNICAL PRODUCTION

Aaron Bollinger is head of technical theatre at the Conservatory. He teaches courses in such areas as hand drafting, computer-aided drafting (CAD), elements of stagecraft, scenery construction, technical direction, technical management and technical design. A specialist in scenic automation, show control and digital media engineering for the stage, he is also the technical director for Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre. Technical theatre falls into three main areas, says Bollinger. The first is craftsmanship, that is, learning such crafts as costume construction, sound engineering, master electrician, carpentry and welding. Those are types of crafts that students learn. The next step in the process is the technical management of those areas, according to Bollinger. "There are many different aspects to technical direction, such as learning how to manage crews, as well as budgets, and managing your time – so that the product comes out not only well but also beautifully and is accepted by the audience," he says. "Finally, technical design is taking these aspects of the craftsmanship – the tools and the equations – and making the process extremely efficient." Students take core courses that give them knowledge of the craft, then they move on into managerial positions, he says, including such roles as an assistant technical director or master electrician [who] have to take the designs and create that work and bring it to life. I feel that technical theatre is an art, but it's the art of reality," says Bollinger. "It's taking a dream that a designer has and making it a reality."

LIGHTING DESIGN

Lighting designer Andy Ostrowski has been an adjunct faculty member for the past 14 years and in that time has mentored many Point Park lighting design students. Many students have had the opportunity to work alongside Ostrowski in his work at such cultural organizations as the Pittsburgh Opera, Pittsburgh CLO and City Theatre Company. "It's an opportunity for them to have a taste of the real-world," says Ostrowski. "One of the great advantages that Point Park provides is the University's location in a major city with a wide variety of arts and culture." The personal attention that Conservatory students receive is another distinct advantage, he points out. "We are very connected to the students and keep in close touch with each of them. That kind of devotion is hard to find." Finally, "another thing that Point Park provides is the opportunity to work on a wide variety of productions during the course of the year. That's a huge strength," says Ostrowski. "Students learn not only from faculty but also from the many outside professionals who come in to work on Playhouse productions." He says he appreciates the close collaboration between the lighting design team and other artists such as the scenic design team. According to recent graduate Lindsey Mayer, "Andy is my lighting design mentor. He taught me how to freelance. It's a hard reality to be birthed from the protective bubble of college and find that the only person who will find you work is you. Andy prepared me for that. His success as a freelance lighting designer reassured me that it can be done, done well, and always with a lot of laughs. He and all of my mentors are my friends and colleagues whom I look forward to working with for many years to come. And I know many of my classmates found these same relationships with other staff members of the Playhouse." ♦



COMING ATTRACTIONS

"We are all very much looking forward to the new Playhouse Downtown. Here at the Playhouse in Oakland we are literally bursting at the seams," says Stephanie Mayer-Staley, head of design. "We are excited about [having] new, larger classrooms and laboratory spaces and state of the art facilities." For example, plans for the new Playhouse include a "construction classroom" that will feature tools that are also used in the scene shop. "With 20 shows per season it [is] crucial to get stagecraft, carpentry and technical direction classes into their own space," says Mayer-Staley. "I am also excited about the new scenic design lab, which will be flexible and shared with the costume design, enabling students and faculty in different areas to work together more closely."

Inside the New Playhouse

During summer 2013, the University took another key step toward the new Playhouse project by briefing the City of Pittsburgh planning commission on Point Park's plans to deconstruct several Downtown buildings to clear the way for Playhouse construction. The plans include preserving and incorporating elements of historic structures such as the former Colonial Trust Co. (now the University Center) and the former Stock Exchange Building on Fourth Avenue, as well as parts of the facades of buildings along Forbes Avenue, into the new Playhouse complex.

Watch for more details about the University's efforts to preserve and enhance the historic character of its Downtown neighborhood, by collaborating with architectural experts from such organizations as Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation and Landmarks Design Associates in planning the new Playhouse and other campus building projects, in the upcoming winter 2014 issue of *The Point*.



Point Extra

To learn more about theatre tech programs, visit www.pointpark.edu/ThePoint



OKLAHOMA! AND MORE

2013-14 Season Features Everything from Classics to Unconventional Productions

Conservatory of Performing Arts students have the unique opportunity to train with Broadway star Patrick Cassidy this fall. Cassidy will direct the Conservatory Theatre Company's opening production, *Oklahoma!*

He is the son of famed movie star Shirley Jones, who played the role of Laurie in the movie production of *Oklahoma!* and began her acting career on the Pittsburgh Playhouse stage. She will attend the opening night performance on Oct. 18. "I'm thrilled to be working with Point Park," says Cassidy, a veteran actor who has performed with his mother in such classics as *The Music Man*, concerts, and many other productions. "Certainly there is a lot of sentimentality connected with *Oklahoma!*, and of course my mother got her start at the Playhouse, so that makes this production special for me."

The Conservatory Theatre Company season also includes a student-devised production of *The Alchemists' Lab*, a rock musical based on the life of President Andrew Jackson, and the classic Irish play *The Playboy of the Western World*.

Robert A. Miller and The REP

The REP, Point Park's professional theatre company, will produce four works, including a world premiere and a Pittsburgh premiere. The season opens on Sept. 6 with *All My Sons* by Arthur Miller, directed by his son Robert A. Miller, distinguished master artist-in-residence at Point Park.

All My Sons, which runs through Sept. 22 at the Rauh Theatre, was Arthur Miller's first commercial success. It chronicles a seemingly All-American family caught up in a struggle between personal responsibility and their duty to the nation.

The REP will also present the world premiere of *Soldier's Heart*, written by Tammy Ryan and directed by John Amplas, Sept. 27–Oct. 13. In the play, a soldier leaves her son behind to defend the

country she loves. When her commanding officer becomes her assailant, she returns home to face her greatest test. On stage this spring is the Pittsburgh premiere of the prize-winning contemporary hostage drama *Heads* by EM Lewis, directed by John Shepard. It opens Jan. 31 and runs through Feb. 16. *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark* is a satire that chronicles the 70-year journey of a headstrong African-American maid and budding actress. Directed by Tomé Cousin, a Point Park alumnus, it runs March 21–April 6.

Petrov Choreographs Romeo and Juliet

The Conservatory Dance Company's 2013-2014 season includes a full-length ballet production of Sergei Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*, choreographed by Professor Nicolas Petrov, who is retiring in December after teaching dance for more than four decades at Point Park. An internationally acclaimed dancer and choreographer with more than 50 years of experience, Petrov choreographed the American premiere of *Romeo and Juliet* at Point Park more than 40 years ago. It was his first production at the school and he concludes his tenure with another memorable production of Prokofiev's famous ballet, Dec. 10–15 at the Playhouse. The Conservatory Dance Company season also includes such annual productions as Conservatory Dance Company at the Byham Theatre, and more.

Playhouse Jr. Presents

Playhouse Jr., Point Park's family and children's theatre company, invites school and community groups and the general public to three engaging productions during its 65th season, which opens with *The Wind in the Willows* on May 7.

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 Pittsburgh Playhouse. ❖

ON STAGE THIS FALL AND SPRING

Conservatory Theatre Company

Oklahoma!
Music by Richard Rodgers and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II
Directed by Patrick Cassidy
Oct. 18–27
Rockwell Theater

Hecuba
By Euripides
Directed by Monica Payne
Nov. 8–24
Studio Theater

The Alchemists' Lab
Written and directed by Gab Cody
Dec. 10–15
Rauh Theater

Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson
Book by Alex Timbers
Music and lyrics by Michael Friedman
Directed by Michael McKelvey
Feb. 21–March 2
Rockwell Theatre

The Playboy of the Western World
By John Millington Synge
April 11–19
Rauh Theatre

The REP
All My Sons
By Arthur Miller
Directed by Robert A. Miller
Sept. 6–22
Rauh Theater

Soldier's Heart
By Tammy Ryan
Directed by John Amplas
Sept. 27–Oct. 13
Studio Theater

Heads
By EM Lewis
Directed by John Shepard
Jan. 31–Feb. 16
Studio Theater

By the Way, Meet Vera Stark
By Lynn Nottage
Directed by Tomé Cousin
March 21–April 6
Studio Theatre

Conservatory Dance Company
Student Choreography Project
Oct. 4–6
GRW Performance Studio

Contemporary Choreographers
Nov. 15–24
GRW Performance Studio

Romeo and Juliet
Choreography by Nicolas Petrov
Music by Sergei Prokofiev
Dec. 10–15
Rockwell Theatre

Conservatory Dance Company
at Point Park University
Choreography by dance faculty
Feb. 21–March 2
GRW Performance Studio

Conservatory Dance Company
at the Byham Theater
April 17–19
Byham Theater (Downtown)

Point Park Connections
April 25–27
GRW Performance Studio

Playhouse Jr.

The Wind in the Willows
Based on the book by Kenneth Grahame
Field trip performances: May 7–30
Public performances: May 10–25

Hush: An Interview with America
By James Still
Field trip performances: May 8–30
Public performances: May 10–25

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee
Music and lyrics by William Finn
Book by Rachel Sheinkin
Field trip performances: May 22–June 6
Public performances: May 24–June 8

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 2013-14 Playhouse season, including subscriptions, tickets and alumni discounts, visit www.pittsburghplayhouse.com.

Global Perspective

Helena Knorr Teaches Students to Become Change Agents in their Communities

By Cristina Rouvalis



Photo by Martha Rial.

Helena Knorr, Ph.D. has been a photographer, basketball coach, consultant and archaeologist. Life has taken her from her birthplace in Mozambique, to residences in Spain and Portugal, to travels in Asia, Africa and beyond. She speaks Portuguese, Spanish, Basque and English.

An associate professor in the School of Business, Knorr now brings her diverse experience to the Organizational Leadership program she founded in 2006. The two-year graduate program helps develop students as leaders and change agents in their communities. "I bring the global perspective and a wish that all of us realize the interconnectedness of our world."

More a facilitator than a lecturer, Knorr has an interactive style that enables students to share their life experiences. "I don't just talk about case studies," she said. "We explain theory, but it has to be connected to their own lives."

Education Transforms Lives

Just as education opened up her world, Knorr uses it to help change the lives of her students. Many are women of nontraditional college age who are doing social work in their communities as they return to the classroom. "They are already leaders, they just need the credentials. It is about finding their own voice and finding self confidence," she said.

After taking Women in Leadership and other classes taught by Knorr, Deirdre Kane felt confident enough to start drafting a proposal for a new corner store in her Lawrenceville neighborhood. Kane wants to sell produce sourced from a community organic farm where she volunteers. The market will serve a community need and will also enable local children to learn how to plant and eat wholesome produce. "I am more of a fearless leader because of her influence," said Kane, who earned a master's degree in organizational leadership in 2013. Knorr's worldview is refreshing, she said. "We are not just a part of our city, state or country. We are part of a bigger picture."

Director of the Organizational Leadership program from 2006 to 2007, Knorr also teaches several courses in the M.B.A. program. The M.A. in organizational leadership differs from an M.B.A. in that it focuses more on leadership, has a strong emphasis on business ethics, and does not require courses in

economics and finance. "Some think it is a soft version of an M.B.A. It isn't," said Knorr, who teaches students that they cannot function in life without math and analytical skills.

Making an Impact

Some class projects turn into nonprofits that make a big impact in the community. Rachel Otieno, a former student, created a nonprofit organization to empower women in her native Kenya. Her brainchild, The Female Assistance Project, provides feminine products and hygiene education to preteen and teenage girls in Nairobi. George Githiaka, also from Kenya, said Knorr's classes allow students to learn from each other. "She truly wants you to do well, not just in your classes but in your life."

Knorr received similar guidance and inspiration from her family. She hails from a long line of strong women. Her mother Isabel Knorr (a social worker and photographer), grandmother Maria Blanca de las Heras, and great grandmother Isabel Elorza emphasized service, social justice and education. Her father Dr. Armando Estrociro and late grandfather Jose Maria Knorr Elorza, an entrepreneur and inventor of Kas (a popular soft drink in Spain), also encouraged her. "They helped me to see that education transforms people's lives." Knorr became the first woman in her big extended family to earn a doctorate (a Ph.D. in human resources from the University of Minnesota).

While inspiring women in western Pennsylvania, Knorr does the same as director of the Global Entrepreneurship Master's Degree for Women program at the University of Salamanca in Spain. Her students hail from more than 20 countries and include community leaders, government officials, ministers, lawyers, politicians, economists, sociologists and aspiring entrepreneurs.

Of all her varied jobs, Knorr considers teaching to be her true calling. "I think I have it in my blood to empower people." ❖



Point Extra

To see an interview with Helena Knorr, visit www.pointpark.edu/thepoint.

From Prague to Point Park

University will host a special gathering of the internationally known Prague Writers' Festival, Oct. 18 -19

The premier international assembly of writers, poets and playwrights known as the Prague Writers' Festival will hold a special gathering in Pittsburgh this fall, hosted by Point Park University.

The Prague Writers' Festival, held in Prague, takes place annually each spring. First held in the late 1970s in London, the Festival was founded by American poet Michael March and originally focused on poetry readings. Since then it has expanded in its scope, importance and visibility among writers of many genres. Past participants have included Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Salman Rushdie, Irvine Welsh, William Styron and Nadine Gordimer.

Author E.L. Doctorow and More

The Pittsburgh gathering of the Festival will feature author E.L. Doctorow in a world premiere reading of his yet unpublished novel *Andrew's Brain* due to be published in 2014. Author of *Ragtime*, *Loon Lake*, *Homer & Langley* and *Billy Bathgate*, Doctorow has won numerous awards and honors, including the PEN/Faulkner Award, the National Book Critics Circle Award and the Pulitzer Prize.

In addition, the Festival will feature Anita Desai, an Indian novelist and the Emeritus John E. Burchard Professor of Humanities at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Eda Kriseova, author of *Vaclav Havel: The Authorized Biography*; and, Egyptian writer, playwright and columnist Hamdy El-Gazzar, author of *Our Revolution: Stories to Fit in the Palm of Your Hand*.

The event will be on Friday, Oct. 18 from 7 – 9:30 pm and Saturday from 5 – 9 p.m. on Point Park's campus. It is free and open to the public.



According to Channa Newman, Ph.D., professor and director of the Global Cultural Studies program and the director of International Programs for the Prague Writers' Festival, "this exceptional gathering is a wonderful occasion to showcase our university and our city, as well as to offer our community a rare opportunity to interact with internationally-recognized writers in a personal and meaningful way."

A Historic Event and Anniversary

This is the first time ever that a Prague Writers' Festival event has taken place outside the city of Prague, according to Newman. It's especially appropriate that it takes place in



Above, clockwise from left: Poet Michael March, founder of the Prague Writers' Festival; Point Park Professor Channa Newman, Ph.D. and author E.L. Doctorow.

Pittsburgh, because 2013 also marks the 95th anniversary of The Pittsburgh Agreement, which paved the way for the creation of the state of Czechoslovakia and was signed just a few blocks away from Point Park's campus in Downtown Pittsburgh by a group of 29 Czechs and Slovaks on May 31, 1918.

The Pittsburgh Agreement declared the intent of the American representatives of Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia, and Czech Silesia to create an independent state known as Czechoslovakia and has been compared to the United States' Declaration of Independence. On October 18, 1918, the primary author of the agreement, T. G. Masaryk, declared the

independence of Czechoslovakia. He was elected the first president of an independent Czechoslovakia in November 1918.

Entitled "Birth of Nations/The Pursuit of Happiness," the two-day gathering of the Prague Writers' Festival at Point Park will include an opening reception for Festival participants, representatives of Point Park, and state, city and civic leaders. The second day of the program will feature author readings (in their native language and in English) as well as panel discussions. ❖

For more information on the festival visit: <http://bitly/pwffregistration>.

COLLEGE COUNSELOR

Joell Minford Guides Families through the University Admissions process

by Cheryl Valyo

Photo by Martha Rial.



◀ POINT to VIEW

Joell Minford understands the ins and outs of the college search process well. After nearly two decades at Point Park, the University's director of admissions spends her days leading a team of counselors and helping high school students and parents navigate the application and admission process. She is doing what she loves to do. After earning her bachelor's degree in communications at Slippery Rock University, Minford got her first taste of the admissions field in her position as a "roadrunner" for a Pittsburgh-based educational institution. Her job involved visiting high schools to make presentations to prospective students. She later spent a short time working for a large bank, but jumped at the chance to join Point Park as an admissions counselor 18 years ago. She found her calling. "I really enjoy connecting students and families with all that Point Park has to offer," says Minford, who has been director for the past 10 years and has gained broad expertise in admissions counseling and enrollment management. She shared some insights with The Point:

If families are new to the college search process, where should they begin?

JM: Among the most basic questions that students need to consider are 'what are you interested in, and what do you want to study?' Generally speaking, by the junior year of high school a student should be thinking about that and begin the college research process. Of course many start much earlier. In addition to parents and family members, students should consult with school counselors and trusted teachers. The search will lead in the direction of schools that offer your desired major(s). Another important conversation you need to have is how to finance a college education. What can your family afford, and what are the financial expectations of the parents, as well as the son or daughter? These days, a college education is a family investment. After exploring these basic issues, visit the websites of the schools you are considering and make a note of key deadlines. When do you have to submit an application, high school transcript or other required material? Requirements vary from school to school. It often helps to create a master calendar to keep track of key dates.

How can students present themselves in the best possible way on their application?

JM: I encourage providing as much extra information as possible. For example, at Point Park the submission of an

essay is optional, but it's helpful to have it so we can get to know a student beyond their test scores and transcripts. We want to hear about what motivates you and makes you who you are. For example, perhaps a student has struggled academically but they work very hard. The admissions essay is a great opportunity to share your own story, challenges and goals.

How can students determine whether a particular college is the right fit for them?

JM: While websites and admissions publications are helpful, I believe you really need to visit to get the 'vibe' of a particular campus. You need to walk through the buildings, meet people, and experience a campus in person to better determine whether it's right for you. In my view, the ideal time to do that is when classes are in session rather than the quieter summer months. After all of the research, ultimately it's a feeling that each person gets that says 'this is [or is not] the right school for me.' Everyone is different. Someone may think they want to attend a big school, for example, until they visit and realize it's too big for comfort.

Why should a student consider Point Park?

JM: I think Point Park offers the best of what many students are looking for. Our urban setting in Downtown Pittsburgh provides internship and apprenticeship opportunities just blocks away, as well as all of the cultural and entertainment attractions of city life, yet our campus has a small town feeling. Our students get to know their professors, University staff and fellow students on a first-name basis. It's the best of both worlds.

What do you like best about your job?

JM: I really enjoy connecting with students and families and sharing with them all that Point Park has to offer. My position is constantly changing, as Point Park continues to grow. Every day is different and brings new challenges. ❖



Point Extra

For more conversation with Joell Minford, including a video interview, visit www.pointpark.edu/thepoint.

ALUMNI CONNECTION ▶



Dear alumni and friends,

By the time you read this letter, summer will be all but a memory. As I write this, however, it's a hot, sunny, humid summer day in Pittsburgh. As you can see from the photo, I just returned from our local pool, Community Swim Club in O'Hara Township, Pa., where my 11-year-old daughter Claudia and I proudly sported our Point Park University t-shirts.

Please remember to send photos of you wearing Point Park gear on

your travels, whether it's at your neighborhood pool or a faraway exotic locale, to be shared with other alumni in upcoming issues of The Point.

Together with the rest of the University's Alumni Association Board, I continue the quest to spread the good word about Point Park as well as build relationships with former, current and future students. I continue to

be in awe of the talent that comes out of Point Park year after year. For example, this year I collaborated with students involved with the School of Communication's new non-profit initiative to produce a video for my employer Sojourner House's April 21 Victorian Tea fundraiser. (Sojourner House is an East Liberty-based residential rehabilitation facility for addicted mothers and their children.) Please note that the students - sophomores, mind you - did a simply outstanding job documenting the testimonials of three Sojourner House graduates. To see the video, please visit www.sojournerhousepa.org.

As always, please stay in touch with Point Park through Class Notes, Facebook or Twitter. Don't forget: Alumni Athletics weekend is coming up Sept. 27 and 28. And remember to take a photo with your fellow alums and submit it for the next issue of The Point! Send to: thepoint@pointpark.edu.

Sincerely,

Susan Orr
President, Point Park University Alumni Association

"Point Park University, where I practiced my academic profession, has grown in size, quality and stability. I would like to think that my labors, sweat and tears provided a foundation for what Point Park has become. Point Park remains a solid academic community where the student continues to be the center. So it is an honor to be in the Founders Society with the surety that future students will be the ultimate beneficiary."

Charles Quillin, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus; Vice President and Dean of Students Emeritus, Point Park University
Member, Founders Society

ABOUT THE FOUNDERS SOCIETY

Established in conjunction with Point Park University's 50th anniversary, the Founders Society recognizes the first 100 alumni, trustees, faculty members and friends to name Point Park University in their wills, trusts or life-income plans.

To learn more about making a lasting commitment to Point Park University through your estate plan, contact Barb Cinpinski at 412-392-4215 or bcinpinski@pointpark.edu, or visit www.pointpark.edu/FoundersSociety

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY
Founders Society

CLASS NOTES ▶

▶ 1960s

Karen Williams Martin (A&S 1965) is co-founder of thrive & seek™ DIGITAL ARTS LEARNING, which focuses on mobile learning, the "gamification of education" and financial literacy-in-life empowerment skills for youth. An experienced entrepreneur who established multiple optical retail stores in Florida, she served as president of Eyewear Artistry-Midtown Inc. and created Morgan LLC for real estate, business investing and management consulting, where she continues as a managing member. Martin has received numerous awards for excellence in business practices and creative innovation, including Small Business of the Year (Venice Chamber of Commerce), Women Owners Network Major Innovation for Advertising, Sarasota South County Woman of Distinction, 20/20 Magazine "Best & Brightest", and Professional Opticians of Florida (POF) Optician of the Year. She is the founding chairman of the Owner/Manager Network for POF, for which she received the President's Award. Karen has served on the board of the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce and as a charter member and chairman of the Chamber's Ambassadors. She also served as secretary of the board of directors for the POF. A dedicated community advocate and volunteer, Martin has tutored many young, at-risk students to greater success through the Homework Assistance Program at Laurel Civic Association. In 2010, she received the prestigious national President's Volunteer Service Award from President Barack Obama. She earned her degree in medical secretarial science at Point Park in 1965.

▶ 1970s

Melvin Gornic (BUS 1973) writes that he is now semi-retired. He is an EA or Enrolled Agent, a tax professional licensed by the Internal Revenue Service.

Ben Mount (COM 1976) received his master's degree in public health from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) in May 2012. He works as director of the Atlantic County (NJ) Division of Public Health.

▶ 1980s

Heather Berman (COPA 1986), a former Radio City Music Hall Rockette, produced a performance of the Colombian recording artist Jontre at the 2013 Dollar Bank Three Rivers Arts Festival last June. The founder and artistic director of HB Productions, she became the North American representative for Jontre in 2012. HB Productions is the culmination of Berman's extensive experience in the entertainment business as an actor, dancer, model, choreographer, producer and manager. She designs each entertainment event through a curatorial process that includes selecting performers from HB'S talent roster which includes ballroom and Latin dancers, former Rockettes, Broadway performers, musicians and other specialty acts who perform at various corporate, private and gala events. Visit www.heatherberman.com.

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gratefully acknowledges
the support of
our donors!

Please visit
the 2012 Honor Roll
of Benefactors at:
www.pointpark.edu/annualreport

Debra Valentine-Gray (COM 1989), IUP's Pittsburgh regional advancement officer at Indiana University of Pennsylvania-Pittsburgh, was named a 2013 Woman of Excellence by the New Pittsburgh Courier at a ceremony last June. Women of Excellence are nominated because they have excelled in positions not traditionally held by African-Americans and women. Among her accomplishments at IUP, Valentine-Gray has stewarded a partnership between the Heinz Endowments and the College of Education and Educational Technology that resulted in the Pittsburgh Promise Plus Program. Prior to joining IUP in 2008, Valentine-Gray served Junior Achievement of Southern California as senior development director and the United Way of Greater Los Angeles as director of resource development. In addition to her nonprofit experience, she has 20 years of experience in corporate marketing and administration.

▶ 1990s

A Call for Support

Friends and family of **Stephanie Lang Bittner** (COPA 1993) and her husband **Rich Bittner** (COPA 1991), both dance graduates of Point Park, have joined together to help support the Bittners as they recover from injuries sustained in a car accident last summer. On June 15, Stephanie and Rich and their young son Cooper survived a violent automobile collision while visiting family in Baltimore. A vehicle crossed three lanes of traffic and struck their car head-on. Stephanie's injuries include a shattered vertebrae and broken ribs. Rich's injuries included a fractured sternum which cannot be surgically repaired and will take months to heal. Fortunately Cooper was properly belted into his car seat and received only a neck abrasion that has healed. A former Radio City Music Hall

Rockette and adjunct professor at New York University, Stephanie is a freelance choreographer, director and longtime member of the staff of Pilates on Fifth in New York City. Rich was due to begin his position as the general manager for Pilates on Fifth just two days after their accident. To express support or make a donation toward out-of-pocket expenses associated with Stephanie's surgery, care and rehabilitation, visit <http://tinyurl.com/bittnerfund>.

► 2000s

Melissa (Dloughy) Bender (A&S '07) writes to share the news that she was honored with Fitness Magazine's Face of

Fitness Reader's Choice Award. Read an interview with her at: Fitness Magazine's website: <http://tinyurl.com/melissabender>.



Shiho Nigai (COM '13), who earned a bachelor's degree in public relations and advertising with a minor in multimedia last May, has accepted a job in promotions and

digital marketing at Trans Cosmos in Tokyo. A native of Tottori, Japan, Nigai completed an internship with the Japan-American Society of Pennsylvania, served as a volunteer for various organizations in the Downtown Pittsburgh community and worked in the Office of International Student Services and Enrollment as a student.

Charlene Bidula (COM '03, BUS '09) has been promoted to manager of communications and new media at the Westmoreland Museum of American Art. She earned two degrees at Point Park: a bachelor's degree in broadcasting in 2003 and an M.B.A. in sport, arts and entertainment management (SAEM) in 2009.

ALUMNUS ROASTS JACK BLACK

Amadeo Fusca (COPA '09) won the "So You Think You Can Roast" national online talent contest, awarding him the opportunity to roast comedian Jack Black at the Friars Club in New York City. On April 5, he joined the stage with comedians Jeff Ross, Sarah Silverman, Ben Stiller, John Cusack and others.



The Pittsburgh native says the experience was "exhilarating and at times very nerve-racking. The event sat 1,800 people, but it wasn't the crowd that worried me as much as the enormous celebrity panel that was my job to poke fun at. Even though my set went very well, it was intimidating at times to look over at some of their faces while I was saying terrible

things about them for the amusement of the crowd. However, I got to meet most of them briefly, and I'm confident that I will run into a lot of these people again and that I have made a very good impression on them."

Now living in New York City to pursue acting, Fusca says "you have to love it, because the majority of chasing your dream is a constant struggle. There is no rhyme or reason to how things work. Put yourself out there, be nice to everybody and hope for the best. You have to love every minute of the highs and lows."

As a result of his experience at the roast, "they made me a Friars Club member, so I have been attending a great deal of their events and mingling with that crowd, trying to solidify my connections there," says Fusca. He also played a supporting role in a feature film, *A New York Heartbeat*, as well as "a couple of short films that I starred in and co-produced. Other than that, I have just been auditioning for everything and anything that comes my way."

LOHR FAMILY TIES INCLUDE POINT PARK



The year was 1972. **Roberta Horn Lohr** (COM 1975) decided to major in journalism at Point Park College because she was impressed with the downtown campus and was captivated by the teaching of journalism professor **Vincent LaBarbera**.

"I was hooked from the minute I met him, and I loved being Downtown," recalled Roberta, who is now senior vice president of marketing at Somerset Trust Company in Somerset, Pa. "The city was our classroom. I have fond memories of all of the journalism faculty, who were very dynamic and very hands-on."

Another life-changing event occurred in her freshman year, when she met her husband-to-be, **B. Wayne Lohr** (BUS 1976), a business administration student at Point

Park. He eventually became an educator and now coordinates state and federal programs for the Ferndale Area School District near Johnstown. The couple raised their family in the small town of Stoystown, Pa.

Fast forward four decades to 2007, when their high school-age daughter **Ellen Lohr** (A&S '11) was searching for the right college. "We encouraged her to consider Point Park and brought her to campus for a tour," says Roberta. "The growth of the campus is very exciting. So many positive changes have been made. The University was great to work with in terms of providing scholarships and the admissions process."

For Ellen, it was also love at first sight. "The city location was fantastic, so different from the small town where I grew up. Everyone was so welcoming. It was the perfect fit for me." She decided on her major after a friend invited her to a lecture by Professor **Robert McInerney**. "He blew my mind!" she says. "I decided then and there to make psychology my major, and I asked Bob to be my advisor. I think I took every one of his classes. I would pay to take them again. The entire psychology faculty, including Professor **Robert Fessler**, who was a teacher when my parents were Point Park students, was just phenomenal."

Now a customer service representative at Somerset Trust, Ellen says "my experience at Point Park taught me how to deal with life in general. I now see the world with a totally different perspective."

David Flora (COM '09) is a production specialist for the Washington Nationals Major League Baseball Organization. He earned his bachelor's degree in communications and broadcasting at Point Park.

Shanna (Murphy) Carrick (BUS '10) has been appointed director of ticketing and development at Pittsburgh Arts & Lectures. She earned her M.B.A. degree in Point Park's Sport, Arts and Entertainment Management (SAEM) program.



Darin Kowalski (A&S '10) won a big amateur tournament last May as he shot an impressive 7-under par to win the 36-hole Western Pennsylvania Mid-Amateur Championship by five shots at Lake View Country Club. Kowalski, who played for the

Point Park men's golf team as a senior in 2009-10, fired rounds of 69 and 68 for a two-round score of 137. All 36 holes were played on Thursday, and Kowalski led a group of three players by three shots after 18 holes.

Minyvonne Burke (COM '11) writes, "I recently graduated from Hofstra University in New York with my master's degree in communications. And I was blessed enough to land a job for an online newspaper as an entertainment writer. I am so excited and owe my experiences at Point Park for helping me reach my goals!"

Pete Bridge (COM '13) and Hannah Frye (COM '12) got married on June 8, 2013 in Sharpsburg, Pa.

Marcy Byrne (BUS '10) writes, "we proudly announce the adoption of our daughter Ava Elizabeth. She was born on February 13, 2013."

Tomeka R. Davis (BUS '00) writes to announce, "I am producing an original play, based on my book, *Cactus Gems*, and I would like to include actors from Point Park,

if possible. I wrote for MTV for my internship while I was attending the University and I had the opportunity [as a student] to perform as an actress as well. I started acting at Point Park and I would like to extend the same chance to beginning actors. You can find more information about my book, *Cactus Gems*, on Barnes and Noble or Amazon websites. Thank you." Davis can be reached at teikonine@gmail.com.

Justine Coyne (COM '09, '12) joined the Pittsburgh Business Times as a reporter in June, 2013. She covers manufacturing and higher education. Coyne has also been a freelance photographer for the past six years, specializing in family portraits, newborn photos, weddings, promotional photos and video for local businesses.

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ON TOP on the Links



Head coach Gabe Bubon (left) and assistant coach Gavin Prosser (right) at the NAIA national tournament in Salem, Ore. Photo by Lori Holmes.

Chris Bowen completing his swing.

Opposite; The Point Park men's golf team poses in front of the NAIA banner at the NAIA national tournament in Salem, Ore., May 14 - 17, 2013. Pictured left to right: Austin Elder, Billy Wivell, Collin Holmes, James Daley, Chris Bowen, and head coach Gabe Bubon. Photo by Lori Holmes.

Men's Golf Team Swings for National Recognition

It took nearly four decades to bring a men's golf team back to Point Park's campus. It took only four years to get the program back on the national stage.

After a brief history of men's golf at the school from 1967-72, including a fourth-place finish at the 1969 NAIA national tournament, the Point Park men's golf program was cancelled after the 1971-72 season. After not sponsoring a team for 37 years, the program was reinstated at the University in the fall of 2009.

And in just four short years, the Pioneers got back to the NAIA national tournament in the spring of 2013 by virtue of winning the Kentucky Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Tournament by 16 strokes April 29 - 30, 2013 in Richmond, Ky.

Competing for Nationals

The Pioneers then traveled to Salem, Ore., for the national tourney, where they placed 22nd of 28 teams. In their first NAIA appearance in over 40 years, the Pioneers missed the cut but it was a rewarding event for a program that had experienced the lowest of the lows over the course of four years.

"Going to the national tournament was a great experience and very rewarding," said head coach Gabe Bubon. "I knew it

would take a little bit of time, and that it wouldn't be easy, but it has worked just how we planned. I told [senior] Austin [Elder] when he signed that we would be competing for nationals by the time he was a senior. And it came true."

Elder, the only four-year member of this past year's team and the No. 1 man the last four seasons, was the first recruit that Bubon signed in the summer of 2009. The team steadily added players around him the next three years to build the program.

The Pioneers' journey to the national tournament at the end of the 2012-13 season started with a victory in their first event of the year – the Allegheny College Invitational on Sept. 16 - 17, 2012.

The win was significant because when the Pioneers went there in 2009, it was their first tournament since the program was reinstated. In their first event in 37 years, the Pioneers finished dead last of 18 teams.

On Top at Allegheny

Fast forward to 2013, Point Park placed first of 15 teams at Allegheny with many of the same schools in attendance. That event is regularly attended by the top NCAA Division II and III

teams in Western Pennsylvania and the surrounding region.

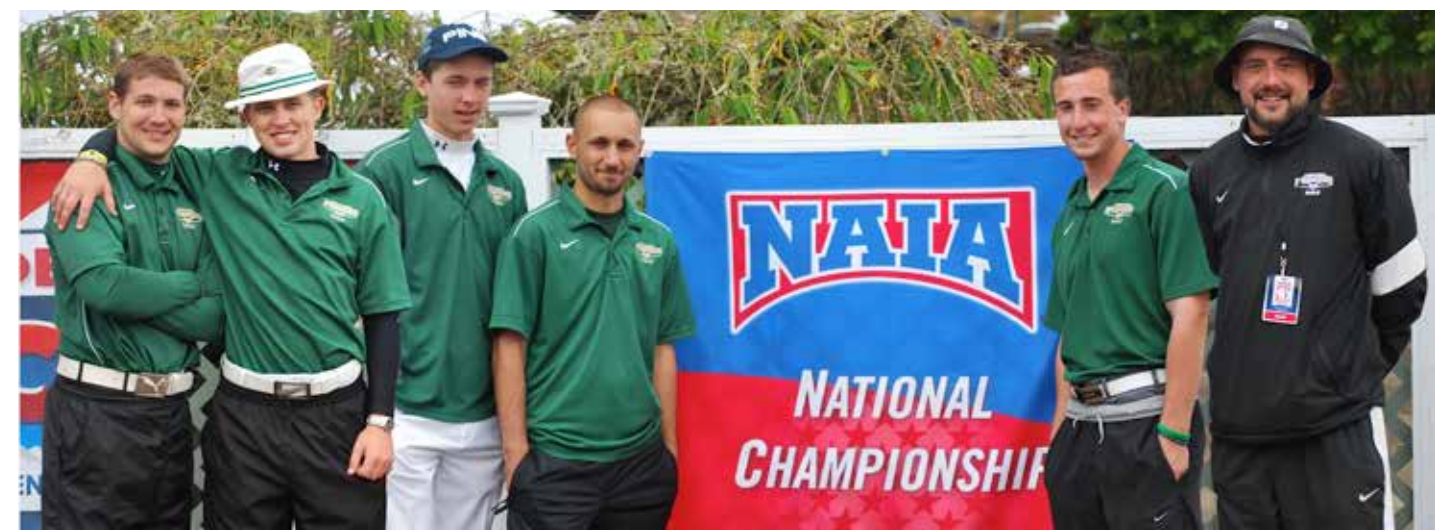
"The win at Allegheny was a big one," said Bubon. "To go from being the worst team there four years ago to winning it four years later shows how much our team has evolved. It has been a weird four years in that way – we've experienced what it was like to be the worst team when you show up for a tournament to being one of the best teams that could win it. It's a great feeling."

For the Pioneers, the victory gave them a taste of winning and set them on their way to a big year. Point Park won a total of five tournaments with the last four coming in a perfect spring season in which the team won all four tournaments it entered. The last was the KIAC Tournament, and that victory earned a bid to nationals.

The first win of the spring season was at the Berea (Ky.) College Spring Tee-Off in March 2013. With all the KIAC teams in attendance for what was essentially a preview of the KIAC tournament at the end of the year, Point Park ran away with the victory by 21 shots.

That Winning Feeling

"The Berea win gave us a ton of confidence," said Bubon. "It gave us



a winning feeling, and after that we knew we had it in us to win the KIAC tournament later in the year."

The Pioneers went on to beat an NCAA Division II field at the Cedarville (Ohio) Invitational, and they also beat an NCAA Division III field at the Carnegie Mellon Invitational. That set the stage for the KIAC tournament, and by then winning had become a habit for the Pioneers.

"You have to get used to winning tournaments," said Bubon. "Once we won a few in a row, anything less than first place was falling short. That carried over to the KIAC tournament, where the guys were very, very focused on winning the title and making nationals."

Point Park's talent was on full display at the KIAC tourney as the Pioneers led by

an amazing 22 shots after the first day of the 54-hole tournament. With the big lead early, Point Park cruised to victory by 16 strokes.

Sophomore Collin Holmes placed second, and senior Austin Elder finished third. Junior Chris Bowen was fifth to give the Pioneers three players on the All-KIAC team. Junior James Daley also finished in the Top 10 with a tie for ninth. Senior Billy Wivell shot a strong 73 in the first round but then had to withdraw due to injury.

Teed-Up for Future Success

At the NAIA national tournament, Point Park was within striking distance of making the cut after the first few days, but too many high numbers sent the Pioneers home after three rounds of the 72-hole event.

"I wish we would've shot better at the national tournament, but it was a great experience," said Bubon. "I felt going in that we could compete for the Top 10 of Top 15, but we didn't get it done. But I think the guys saw that we can compete right with those teams.

"For our seniors Austin and Billy, it was a great way to cap off their careers," said Bubon. "And for the guys coming back, the national tournament appearance is going to go a long way. The bar of expectations has been raised. I know that they will come back hungry wanting to get back to NAIA's again." ❖

Kevin Taylor is director of athletic communications. Photographer Lori Holmes is the mother of student golfer Collin Holmes.



Point Park team poses with the KIAC Tournament trophy April 30, 2013 in Richmond, Ky. (L to R): Austin Elder, James Daley, head coach Gabe Bubon, Billy Wivell, Chris Bowen, Collin Holmes.



Point Park's all-conference honorees L to R: Collin Holmes, Chris Bowen, Austin Elder. Below; Point Park head coach Gabe Bubon helps sophomore Collin Holmes line up a putt at the NAIA national tournament in Salem, Ore. Photos by Lori Holmes.



SPORTS ROUNDUP

► MEN'S BASKETBALL

The men's basketball team made another trip to the conference playoffs and finished the year with a 14-11 record overall, which was good for fifth place in the KIAC. The Pioneers led the nation in scoring at 93.2 points per game, which also set a team record for single-season scoring average. Senior guard T.J. Heatherington was All-KIAC first team, and he ended his career ranked sixth in school history with 1,594 points.

► WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

The women's basketball team won the KIAC Tournament to reach the NAIA Division II national tourney for the second consecutive year. The Pioneers were 25-7 overall to set a team record for wins in a season. Head coach Tony Grenek was named KIAC Coach of the Year, and Ja'Nia McPhatter and Emily Schartner were on the All-KIAC team. Senior guard April Austin ended her career ranking eighth in school history with 1,250 points.

► WOMEN'S GOLF

The women's golf team continued its growth as a program in its fourth year of existence. The Pioneers placed second in the KIAC Tournament. Molly Burns placed second in the KIAC individually and was joined on the All-KIAC team by Caroline Collins and Lauren Martauz.

► BASEBALL

The baseball team made the NAIA national tournament for the second year in a row and ended the year ranked No. 23 in the NAIA Top 25. The Pioneers won the KIAC Tournament with a 39-16 overall record and led the NAIA in team batting average at .341. Jordan

Crowell was KIAC Player of the Year and led the nation with a .441 average. Loren Torres was named KIAC Coach of the Year.

► SOFTBALL

The softball team had a strong season at 31-13 overall, the most wins ever under head coach Michelle Coultas. The Pioneers finished in second place in the KIAC regular season at 22-6 in the conference. Ashley Morran was the KIAC Player of the Year and NAIA Honorable Mention All-American.

PIONEER ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2013

Joe Emanuele - Baseball, 1971-72

Joe Emanuele was one of the great players from the early days of Point Park baseball, an infielder for the Pioneers from 1971-72. His career batting average of .348 over two years ranked eighth in school history at the time of his graduation. He was a math teacher at his alma mater Central Catholic High School for more than 40 years and was also the varsity baseball coach, which included taking the 1979 Central Catholic baseball team to the state championship. Emanuele is a 2001 inductee into the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame and a 2002 inductee into the National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame.

Alisa Favero-Lucarelli - Women's Basketball, 1988-93

Alisa Favero-Lucarelli is the Pioneers' all-time leader in career assists and is also a top-10 all-time scorer at the school. She totaled a school-record 416 assists during her time at Point Park from 1988-93 and also scored 1,180 points to rank 10th in school history. A four-year starter, Favero is sixth in the Point Park record book with 108 games played. Favero was an NAIA scholar-athlete who led the Pioneers to an NAIA District 18 playoff appearance in 1992-93.

Bryan Neal - Baseball, 1994-97

No pitcher in the history of Point Park baseball has won more games or pitched in more games than Bryan Neal. He is tied for the school's all-time lead in career wins with 24 over four years from 1994-97, and is also the outright school record-holder in career appearances with 61 and career innings pitched with 233.2. Currently the pitching coach for Point Park baseball, Neal's staff has regularly ranked among the NAIA leaders in team ERA, including the 2012 team that was ninth in the country and pitched the Pioneers to the NAIA World Series.

Chivas Whipple - Men's Basketball, 2005-08

Chivas Whipple's resume as a three-time NAIA Division II All-American speaks for itself. He is the fourth all-time leading scorer (1,736 points) and sixth all-time leading rebounder (731 rebounds) in program history. Whipple is one of only three players in school history with at least 1,600 points, 700 rebounds, 200 assists and 180 steals. In 2006-07 he was an NAIA Division II First Team All-American who led the Pioneers to a No. 3 ranking in the country and the No. 3 overall seed in the national tournament.

The four will be honored at the 2013 Pioneer Athletic Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony on Sept. 28 in the Lawrence Hall Ballroom. Cost is \$20 per person. To register, visit www.pointpark.edu/athletics/halloffame.

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