

# THE POINT

A Magazine for  
Alumni and Friends of  
Point Park University  
SPRING 2010

## HOTHOUSE FOR NEW WORKS

Ronald-Allan Lindblom  
on Growing Greatness  
at the Playhouse

Woodland Hills  
Students Embrace  
College Now

Pioneers Reach New  
Heights in Volleyball

# POINT PARK UNIVERSITY



Dear alumni and friends,

After a long and difficult winter, we all share enthusiasm at the arrival of spring this year. As I look out my window at Point Park's Downtown backyard, I'm very happy that February's "Snowmageddon" is finally history, and that signs of growth and renewal are everywhere.

One of the signs of our own campus renewal is construction on the Wood Street Corridor. In the months ahead, new trees, lighting, signage and much more will bloom along the University's main street. We're planning a groundbreaking event in September to celebrate this project and our planned corner park. Stay tuned for more details. It's all part of the rebirth of our Downtown neighborhood, which also recently welcomed the opening of the Mon Wharf River Trail next door to campus, and will soon celebrate the completion of a European-style plaza in Market Square.

Another rite of spring is commencement, in which we join our graduates in celebrating their transition to professional life. This year, as Point Park marks its 50th anniversary, we've invited 50 dedicated alumni to participate in the

commencement ceremony – one to represent each year of our history. We're also planning an Alumni Weekend on September 24-26 to commemorate our anniversary with reunions, learning opportunities and more. As I look back with pride and fond memories of the faculty, staff, students and alumni who have shaped my own Point Park experiences, I'm looking forward to this celebration of our common history.

Finally, you'll notice that another area that has experienced some renewal is the design of The Point. This fresh look can also be found in our comprehensive marketing communications efforts, including our admissions materials, social media ventures, and a streamlined Web site. We call it "A Metamorphosis of U," and it's all about celebrating the power of change.

We'll continue to keep you in touch with the changes. Thanks for keeping in touch.

Warm regards,

Dr. Paul Hennigan  
President

President  
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS ▶



**2** Feedback

**2** News and Views

**8** Wood Street Corridor Blooms  
Construction is set to begin on Point Park's main street

**14** Thinking Global  
Channa Newman leads Global Cultural Studies degree program

**16** High School Students Embrace 'College Now'  
Woodland Hills families praise dual-enrollment program

**18** Hothouse for New Works  
Ronald Allan-Lindblom on growing greatness at the Playhouse

**20** Professor's Photo Book Explores State Parks  
Pictorial offers images of wild places in Western Pennsylvania

**22** Honor Roll of Benefactors

**36** Alumni Lead Pens in Assists  
Helping the Penguins meet business, communication goals

**38** Especially for Alumni

**39** Class Notes

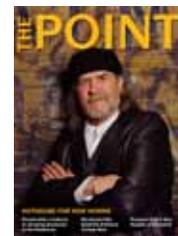
**44** Pioneer Athletics  
Volleyball team reaches new heights

**TALK TO US!**

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

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**On the cover:**

Ronald Allan-Lindblom, dean of the Conservatory of Performing Arts and artistic director of Point Park University's Pittsburgh Playhouse, backstage at the Playhouse in Oakland.

Photo by Martha Rial.

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## Day of Dreams Celebration

Point Park students of various races, ethnicities and backgrounds filled the Lawrence Hall lobby on Jan. 18 to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The Day of Dreams celebration, sponsored by Point Park's Black Student Union, Honors Student Organization and the Office of the Provost, offered a full day of events, including speeches, networking, food and reflection. Among the speakers was **Sala Udin**, president and CEO of the Coro Center for Civic Leadership, who described his involvement in the civil rights movement during the 1960s. He challenged students to reflect on their own dreams and leadership qualities. "What's the next great American revolution? Am I looking at someone in this room who will lead it? Martin Luther King was once sitting at a university, and no one knew that they were sitting next to a future leader. Is the next leader in this room?" Udin asked. As part of the Day of

Dreams celebration, students were invited to post their own dreams on a "Dream Wall" on display in the Lawrence Hall lobby. Everyone was also invited to take part in a "Poverty Luncheon" of unsweetened iced tea, soup, and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. Other speakers during the Day of Dreams celebration were **Richard Adams**, special assistant to the president for diversity and equity at the Community College of Allegheny County; state Rep. **Jake Wheatley**, D-Hill District; and **Marsha Ellis Jones**, senior vice president and chief diversity officer for PNC Financial Services. Donations benefited NEED, a Pittsburgh-based organization that provides scholarships to help further minority education.

## FEEDBACK

Dear Editor,

Today in the mail I received the Winter 2009 issue of the Point. I'm an M.B.A graduate of Point Park and I was reading the magazine like I always do. When I looked at the headline of the alumni profile of Douglas M. Anderson, I realized I knew this person very well, but had not been in touch with him for more than 20 years. Doug Anderson is my former boss, the person that gave me my start in my career in our [shared] hometown of Jamestown, N.Y. I give him a lot of credit, and over the past 23 years I have thought of him often. I left Jamestown to work for the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County, where I have worked for the past 23 years. I'm doing very well. After reading the Point article about what Doug has done over the past 20 years, I'm very proud of him. As a fellow graduate

of the University, my Point Park education has helped me be a good public servant too. I wish Doug well and extend my thanks and appreciation to him for the opportunity to work together for four years. I remember those years very well.

**Paul G. Kosko, M.B.A. (BUS 1999)**  
Superintendent of Programming and Accounting, Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County

### Heard on Facebook

"Proud to be a former Point Park employee, graduate, member of the alumni committee, and a trustee. Point Park is really making a name for itself!"

—November 24 at 6:59p.m.  
**Juanita Balliard Carter (A&S 1979)**

"Great question on our wall: What are the 5 best qualities of Point Park University?"  
—November 18, 2009, at 6:46a.m.

**Point Park University via @irishgirl1984 on Twitter:** @PointParkU Great teachers, great friends, nice places to sit and study, great computer labs, discounted theater tickets... this list goes on.

**Point Park University via @jmladow on Twitter:** @PointParkU best qualities? small classes, experienced professors, location, internship opportunities and networking possibilities."

*(Search for "Point Park University" and "Point Park University Alumni" on Facebook!)*

## Professional Advancement

**Tatyana Dumova**, Ph.D., associate professor of digital media in the School of Communication, has been appointed editor of a new interdisciplinary scholarly journal, the *International Journal of Interactive Communication Systems and Technologies (IJICST)*. This peer-reviewed journal focuses on a broad spectrum of existing and emerging Internet-based technologies, their applications, functions and services. The journal is an official publication of the Information Resources Management Association and is housed by IGI Global. IJICST seeks to explore multidimensional relationships between technology and contemporary society with the purpose of broadening the interdisciplinary body of knowledge pertaining to various aspects of interactive communication systems, platforms, components, devices, interfaces, tools, and techniques. Dumova's research concentrates on the social implications of information and communication technologies and the role of technology in teaching and learning. She recently lead-edited the two-volume *Handbook of Research on Social Interaction Technologies and Collaboration Software: Concepts and Trends*.

**Archish Maharaja**, Ph.D., and **Mohammed Sidky**, Ph.D., presented papers at the annual conference of the Northeastern Association of Business, Economics and Technology (NABET) in State College, Pa., last October. Maharaja presented a paper on the *Use of the Electronic Health Record in Private Medical Practices*. Sidky presented a paper titled *When the Center Fails: Perspectives on The End of Globalization as We Know It*. Maharaja, whose research activities are concentrated in health care administration and management and information technology (as it applies to health care), also made a presentation at the World Health Information Technology Conference in Arlington, Va. last November. The conference featured speeches by former U.S. President Bill Clinton and former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, as well as leaders in the health care industry.

**Tim Hudson**, Ph.D., dean of the School of Communication, addressed the Joint Regional Conference of the Broadcast Education Association in Cincinnati on Oct. 17. In his presentation *Not Necessarily the News*, Hudson dis-

cussed ways to instill and preserve traditional principles such as accuracy, investigation and objectivity in multimedia journalism classes, especially in context of the current online and cable news atmosphere. Other conference speakers addressed various changes in the media industries, often focusing on the uncertainties surrounding future business models. According to Hudson, newspaper, television, advertising and Web media executives spoke of "optimism, apprehension, excitement, dread, hyper-localism and confusion." Despite industry perplexity, Hudson was encouraged to note that, based on the various assessments and predictions, Point Park's School of Communication seems to be moving in the right direction, updating its highly regarded programs in Journalism, Broadcasting, Public Relations and Advertising with more opportunities to learn digital media production and interactive media techniques. "Our new major in Digital Media is a future-oriented degree program that also helps us infuse Point Park's traditional majors with innovative classes and ideas," said Hudson.

**Dane S. Claussen**, Ph.D., professor and director of graduate programs and faculty development in the School of Communication, has been named a visiting professor at IE University in Spain, where he presented three lectures last November. At the IE Business School campus in Madrid, he presented *How the United States Leads Corporate Communications Education Worldwide, and Why That's Still Not Good Enough* to DirCom, Spain's largest association of corporate communications and other public relations professionals. He also presented a lecture on *Mass Media: The 'Other' Most Mismanaged U.S. Industry (Besides Airlines & Autos)* to the faculties of the IE School of Communication and IE Business School. He presented a third lecture, *Storm und Drang: Myths and Realities of Today's U.S. News Media*, to undergraduate communication and business students at IE University's main campus in Segovia. While in Spain, Claussen consulted with the IE School of Communication dean and faculty about the school's curriculum; possible academic accreditations, student recruitment strategies, and potential faculty and/or student exchange programs between Point Park and IE University. A Fulbright Specialist, Claussen is editor of *Journalism &*

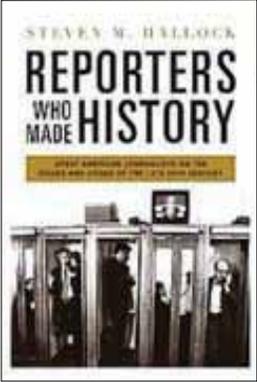
*Mass Communication Educator*, the international, refereed, quarterly journal published by the Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication.

**Andrew Conte**, a reporter for the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review and founding director of the Point Park News Service, received the top investigative reporting award from the National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ), with fellow Trib reporter **Luis Fabregas**, for a series of articles based on a four-month investigation examining liver transplant programs nationwide. The series "Transplanting Too Soon" detailed how hundreds of patients underwent transplants when they didn't need them. Published in March 2008, the three articles detailed the lack of federal regulation of the quality of livers used for transplants and the substantial fees hospitals collect when the procedures are performed in their facilities. According to the Tribune Review, the series prompted calls for a change in the allocation rules for transplants. "Wonderful works, such as yours, not only make us proud, but also do much to help fulfill our mission," the NAHJ said in announcing the award.



Steven M. Hallock, Ph.D.

**Steven M. Hallock**, Ph.D., assistant professor of journalism at Point Park, is the author of the recently published *Reporters Who Made History: Great American Journalists on the Issues and Crises of the Late 20th Century*. The book looks at a series of extraordinary chapters in the American story through the eyes of 10 giants of journalism: Helen Thomas, Anthony Lewis, Morley Safer, Earl Caldwell, Ben Bradlee, Georgie Anne Geyer, Ellen Goodman, Juan Williams, David Broder, and Judy Woodruff. Taking each of



Hallock's book

these journalists in turn, Hallock focuses on his or her work in the course of a single decade, drawing on the author's interviews with the journalist, archival research, memoirs and critical studies. These exemplars of the

best postwar American news reporting never took the easy path of simply restating policies and uncritically regurgitating press releases, according to Hallock. Instead, their skeptical, independent and searching methods of investigative and analytical journalism actually influenced the course of the very events they covered and significantly shaped our understanding of our national past. Published last November by Praeger Publishing, the book offers a comprehensive index – helpful for

pinpointing specific issues, events, and stories from the era. For more information, visit [www.greenwood.com/catalog/A2197C.aspx](http://www.greenwood.com/catalog/A2197C.aspx)

**Karen Hall** has been appointed director of e-Learning in the Office of the Provost. "Karen will lead the University's e-Learning and distance education programs and courses, working closely with the faculty, staff and administrators to cultivate the development and application of e-Learning experiences," said **Karen McIntyre**, Ph.D., vice provost and dean of faculty. "In collaboration with a faculty committee, she will provide training opportunities to faculty and ensure that Point Park meets the assessment standards required for Middle States Accreditation. This is a collaborative position with the Information Technology Services team to determine resource needs and best apply these resources."

**Scott Wise**, instructor in the Conservatory of Performing Arts, directed *Jane Eyre* at Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre (PICT) last December. Wise, who also founded and

served as artistic director of the Pittsburgh International Folk Theatre, previously directed *Pride and Prejudice* and James Joyce's *The Dead* at PICT.

**Heather Starr Fiedler**, Ph.D., assistant professor of digital media and founder and general manager of PittsburghMom.com, raised more than \$600 worth of diapers and wipes for low income mothers through her first Pittsburgh Diaper Drive. Fiedler said she initiated the charitable drive based on an idea from Professor **Helen Fallon**, who had read about a similar project in New Hampshire. "I owe Helen the credit for inspiring me to do it," said Fiedler. "It was a great feeling dropping off a whole SUV full of diapers to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank."

**Marcia M. Sturdivant**, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Humanities and Human Sciences Department, was honored with the award for Civic Leadership at the Ronald H. Brown 2009 Leadership Awards Gala held by the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh.

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Sturdivant was acknowledged for her more than 15 years of service with the Office of Children, Youth and Families and for her work with African American children. “[Social services] is difficult work but it is so rewarding when you help someone,” Sturdivant said. “As an African American you have a responsibility to help your own community.” President of the Black Child Development Institute – Pittsburgh Affiliate, Sturdivant is an expert in program administration, policy development and evaluation and cultural competency. She lectures extensively on both the local and national level on child maltreatment, racism and its effect on child development, family group decision making, spirituality and culturally-based intervention strategies.

**Bill Moushey**, assistant professor in the School of Communication and director of the Innocence Institute, has been named to the advisory council of the Pennsylvania Prison Society, the oldest such institution in the United States, founded by Ben Franklin and others more than 200 years ago. The advisory council is composed of a “small group of prominent individuals” who will work to “monitor the \$60 billion a year criminal justice system.” The council also will help the Philadelphia-based Prison Society in its effort toward “expanding our visibility and influence in the public policy arena.”



Bill Moushey

**Portia K. Weston**, Ph.D., professor in the Department of Humanities and Human Sciences, was named a board member of Focus on Renewal, a social services agency serving the people of McKees Rocks and Stowe Township.

### Soul Food Social and Jazz Classic

The Black Student Union presented *The Soul Food Social: Jazz Classic* on Dec. 2 in the Point Park University ballroom. The program featured keynote speaker **Candi Castleberry-Singleton**, chief diversity officer of UPMC, who discussed the importance of diversity and inclusion. In addition, **Patte Terrell**, an outstanding jazz vocalist from the Pittsburgh area, performed a jazz concert with her band. According to Black Student Union President **Kevin Carter**, the organization “serves as a representative body to foster the needs and concerns of minority students at Point Park. This year we are geared toward maximizing the diversity and inclusion efforts of the University. We plan to provide mind-stimulating events, lectures and programs that will enhance the cultural awareness on campus and in students.”

### Snowflake Ball Serves Worthy Cause

Point Park students got a chance to have a formal evening out, enjoy a holiday river cruise – and raise money to help children who have brain tumors. This year’s Snowflake Charity Ball, held Dec. 3 aboard a Gateway Clipper riverboat, raised more than \$1,300 for Team Brother Bear, an organization founded by Point Park student **Addison Brasil**. The nonprofit group strives to make a positive difference in the lives of children who have been diagnosed with the illness. For Point Park students and their dates, the evening included dinner, dancing to the DJ’s lively sets, and a silent auction of items including gift cards to Downtown establishments. The Snowflake Charity Ball was sponsored by the Campus Activities Board.

### Specter, Donovan Visit Point Park

Point Park welcomed U.S. Sen. **Arlen Specter** and U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary **Shaun Donovan** to campus



Arlen Specter

Nov. 24 for a discussion session with more than two dozen community leaders from across Western Pennsylvania. The University was pleased to host the meeting, which gave Specter and Donovan an opportunity to talk about issues of local interest and hear the views of Western Pennsylvania leaders. Point Park President **Paul Hennigan** gave opening remarks, welcoming the group to campus. Point Park is a leader in urban development efforts for Downtown Pittsburgh as the University implements its Academic Village Initiative, a \$244 million campus and public space enhancement plan. Academic Village projects are already transforming the University and having a major impact on Downtown Pittsburgh, with additional elements of the plan slated to take shape during 2010 and beyond.



Bridget Mancosh accepts Trane Energy Efficiency Award.

### University Receives Trane Energy Efficiency Award

Officials from Point Park, Trane Inc. and the Green Building Alliance gathered Nov. 19 to acknowledge the University’s achievements in energy efficiency through the renovation of the Lawrence Hall Dance Complex, which earned the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) GOLD certification. Tim White, Trane general sales manager, presented the Trane Energy Efficiency Leader in Education Award in recognition of the University’s commitment to energy efficiency and sustainability in selecting high performance infrastructure systems for the building. **Bridget Mancosh**, senior vice president of finance and administration at Point Park, was on hand to accept the award. “The Dance Complex was the first key to our Academic Village Initiative, a project which will transform the University and have a major impact on Downtown Pittsburgh,” said Mancosh. “It represents our commitment to environmental stewardship, and it represents a culture of

learning for the University community with respect to environmental responsibility." The Academic Village Initiative is comprised of two key elements – the Student and Convocation Center/Wood Street Corridor and Point Park University's Pittsburgh Playhouse – that will provide students with academic support areas, green space, recreational areas, residential options, riverfront access and state-of-the-art theater facilities. Point Park is one of just two universities in the nation to receive the Trane Energy Efficiency Leader in Education Award.

**Student Wins Renaissance Scholarship**

**Miles Ritenour**, an advertising and public relations major who graduates in 2010, has been named Renaissance Scholar of the Year by the Pittsburgh chapter of Public Relations Society of America. He was presented with a cash scholarship at the PRSA Renaissance Awards banquet Jan. 21 at the University of Pittsburgh University Club. Ritenour bested nominees from about 20 area colleges and universities to receive the competitive scholarship. The judges noted his dean's list/Alpha Chi grades, leadership in Point Park AdFed and PRSSA, editor posts in student media, and community service with such organizations as the American Diabetes Association, Red Cross, Downtown Partnership, South Side Local Development Corporation and City of Pittsburgh Ethics Hearing Board. According to **Robert O'Gara**, professor and acting chair of media studies, "Miles Ritenour is a superb example of Point Park's commitment to student success and service to our communities and professions. It's a Renaissance Scholarship for a Renaissance student!" Ritenour was also recently named a virtual intern at WordWrite Communications.



Miles Ritenour



Volley for Vision

**Volley for Vision**

The Point Park volleyball team raised nearly \$5,000 in its second annual Volley for Vision event Oct. 31 during an American Midwest Conference match versus Houghton at Greentree SportsPlex. All proceeds benefited the Association for Retinopathy of Prematurity and other Related Diseases (ROPARD), an organization dedicated to eliminating the problems of low vision and blindness in children related to premature birth and retinal disease. The inspiration for Volley for Vision is Point Park Coach **Mike Bruno's** three-year old daughter, Cassie, who was born 15 weeks premature in November 2005. Cassie survived a courageous, 114-day fight in Magee Women's Hospital and Children's Hospital, and her courage has been an inspiration to the Pioneers' volleyball team. As a result of Cassie's premature birth, she suffered retinopathy of prematurity and is legally blind. **Cassie Bruno** is a student at the Western Pennsylvania School for the Blind, and she joined several of her classmates at Volley for Vision.

**Starmakers on Stage April 17 at Convention Center**

Don't miss *Starmakers 2010*, Point Park's annual gala fundraiser for the Conservatory of Performing Arts. Ron and Pat Violi are honorary chairs of the April 17 event at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center Spirit of Pittsburgh Ballroom. The University will present the prestigious Performing Arts Partnership and Achievement award to **Violet Gallo**. Proceeds benefit COPA and scholarship programs. For information and tickets, visit [www.pointpark.edu/ces](http://www.pointpark.edu/ces) or call 412-392-4200.

**Business Plan Contest Gives Students Real-World Challenge**

Students taking Point Park's Introduction to Business course fall term got a taste of real-world competition in what is shaping up as an annual highlight in the School of Business. They also learned the power of french fries in a tough marketplace of ideas. More than a dozen teams from two sections of BMGT 101 participated in this year's Business Plan Competition, and seven teams advanced to the final round of judging. Ideas ranged from a discount book of budget-friendly activities around Pittsburgh to a Downtown commuter lounge with basic accommodations. But in the end, the winning concept was built upon the love of nearly every college student's life – affordable fast food. "This project was very interesting because we had to come up with something that's never been done before," said **Allen Fullum**, a sophomore accounting major and member of the winning team, Poppin' Fries. "We asked ourselves what is it that Pittsburgh doesn't have? And then we realized there are no vending stands." The winning team, which consisted of Fullum and classmates **Ahmad Alsadi**, **Alesia Wachinski** and **Erin Caffee**, felt a french fry vending stand concept had good potential. From their perspective, college environments provide a steady demand for fast, cheap food, and the market for street vending is virtually untapped in Pittsburgh. For the contest, they needed more than just a gut feeling about their idea. They needed market data. "We worked so hard," said Wachinski, a junior majoring in business management. "The group met every week. We used the Internet for initial research, and we did our own market research and analysis. We had to apply the things we were learning in class to a real-life situation." After weeks of work refining ideas, gathering data and polishing their concepts, the 14 teams presented their plans in class, with Associate Professor **Elaine Luther** challenging the relevance and viability of each proposal. From there, seven teams advanced to the final competition in the George Rowland White Theater, facing five judges and about 40 observers. "I think we felt comfortable with our material," said Caffee, a sophomore majoring in sport, arts and entertainment management. "Dr. Luther had already made us think about the plan, so we were able to anticipate questions that would come from the judges." The Poppin' Fries group was excited



Members of the Poppin' Fries team took first place in the Business Plan Competition. From left: Allen Fullum, Alesia Wachinski, Erin Caffee and Ahmad Alsadi, with Associate Professor Elaine Luther.

that the judges saw value in such a simple idea – and that they each received a \$100 bookstore gift card for winning the competition. To view the winning presentation, visit [www.pointpark.edu/Academics/Schools/Business/Features/BusinessPlanContest](http://www.pointpark.edu/Academics/Schools/Business/Features/BusinessPlanContest).

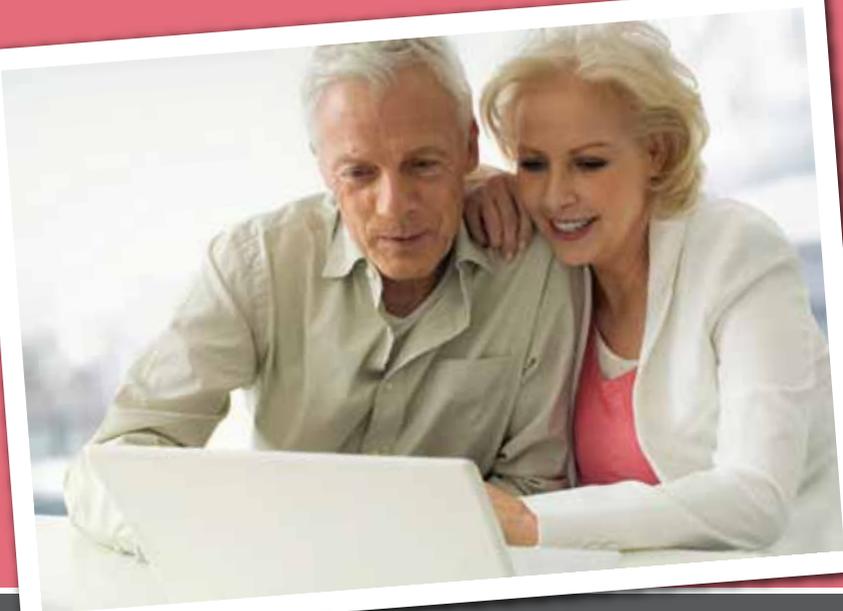
### Innocence Institute Presents Art Exhibit in Lawrence Hall Gallery

The Innocence Institute of Point Park University presents the work of renowned Pittsburgh artist **Daniel Bolick** in his exhibit, *Resurrected After Exoneration*, which opened March 2 in the Lawrence Hall Gallery and remains on public display until April 2. *Resurrected After Exoneration* is a series of dramatic portraits depicting men who have been exonerated for crimes they did not commit. Some of the men were released from prison as a result of the help of organizations such as the Innocence Institute, which investigates claims of wrongful convictions. "All of their stories are unbelievable," explains Bolick, who interviewed these men while preparing the project. "You could not write fiction as astounding as what these men's realities are. I'm trying to bring out more of a gut feeling as to what these men experienced. I attempt to paint emotions: anger, bitterness, hope, acceptance and salvation." The paintings are also part of the Innocence Institute's inaugural Justice

Through Journalism gala March 24, featuring noted author **John Grisham**. Proceeds from the gala benefit the Innocence Institute of Point Park University.

### Writers Series Presents Brigid Pasulka

The Point Park Writers Series presented a lecture and master class by author **Brigid Pasulka** on campus Feb. 15-16. The descendant of Polish immigrants, Pasulka arrived in Krakow in the summer of 1994 with no contacts, no knowledge of the language, and only a vague idea of Polish culture. She quickly fell in love with the place, learned Polish, and decided to live there for one year. An award-winning short story writer, *A Long, Long Time Ago* and *Essentially True* is her first novel. Pasulka is a graduate of the Program for Writers at the University of Illinois and teaches English at a magnet high school in Chicago.



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# A New Look for Point Park's Main Street

by Cheryl Valyo

The Wood Street Corridor, Point Park University's main street, is set to bloom with new trees, lighting, signage, paving and much more.

An 18-month construction project to revitalize the streetscape along Wood Street will get under way this summer and is expected to be complete by the end of 2011.

The University was awarded a \$3.95 million grant from its Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative for the upgrades

and enhancements. The grant was the largest of 50 awarded throughout the state and will fund such improvements as new trees, milling and resurfacing of the street, installation of accessible sidewalks and curbs, the addition of distinctive pedestrian-scaled street lighting and new and efficient signaling systems at the intersections with the Boulevard of the Allies and Third Avenue.

With the help of a grant from the Heinz Endowments, the University engaged GAI Consultants Inc., a Pittsburgh-based

engineering firm, to design the streetscape improvements, which will extend from Fort Pitt Boulevard to Third Avenue.

According to Elmer Burger, University architect, the streetscape will complement design plans for the urban park that will be built at the corner of Wood Street and the Boulevard of the Allies. Architects for the park are Tasso Katselas Associates (TKA) Inc. and Klavon Design, both Pittsburgh-based architectural firms.

# Wood Street Corridor to bloom with trees, lighting, signage and more

## Frontier Elms will line Pioneers' campus

One of the most literal signs of growth along Wood Street will be the addition of many new Frontier Elm trees, a variety that thrives in urban environments while providing lovely bark and foliage, says Burger.

"We worked with Pittsburgh's arborists and the city tree program to select the Frontier Elm for Wood Street," says Burger. "It was chosen because it is an urban hearty tree that will also provide a distinctive look for the University neighborhood. These trees will be deep green in the summer and bright red in the fall, which will look beautiful lining the street."

Wherever the infrastructure permits, the University is using an environmentally-friendly, Silva Cell system to plant the trees, says Burger. Silva Cells are plastic crates that create an underground frame for the roots of urban trees. The planting system bears traffic loads, catches additional rainwater, and offers more rootable space that allows urban trees to grow into large and beautiful specimens.



Frontier Elms, an urban hearty tree that provides brilliant red foliage in the fall, will line Wood Street.

## Improved lighting, street surfaces and safety

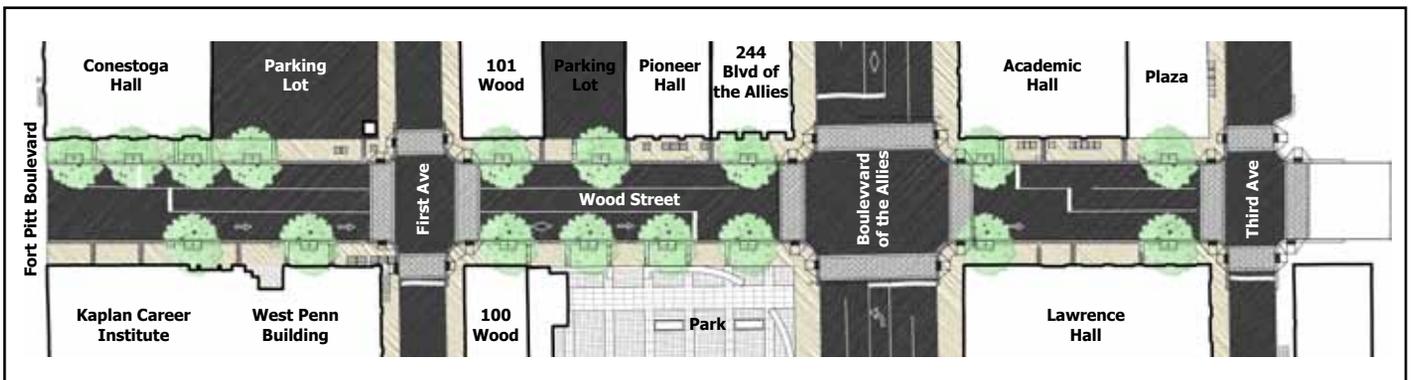
The planned lighting includes two different types. Intersections with traffic signals will have a tall post-and-square fixture, "because those posts hold the arms that hold the signals," says Burger. The signaling at the intersections will include timed boxes and sound devices for increased safety.

Dark green or black post lights, featuring acorn-shaped lamps, will line the other parts of the street and are similar to those found in nearby Market Square, says Burger. "We'll also be using energy-saving LED fixtures."

The sidewalks will feature exposed aggregate concrete in warm brown. Granite curbs at the street corners will provide improved accessibility and will be engraved with both street names and Point Park University. Crosswalks will feature stained concrete that has been scored in a decorative pattern. The new tactile surfaces along the sidewalks and street will also boost safety for pedestrians, says Burger.

Finally, the construction will enable the extension of fiber optics for Point Park's offices and classrooms under the Boulevard of the Allies, to replace the wireless system currently in place.

The upgrades to the Wood Street Corridor will not only provide a pleasant environment, says Burger, "but it will be one of the first visual cues that visitors are in the University's neighborhood – someplace special."



Architectural plans for Wood Street Corridor project.

# Director and Choreographer Rob Ashford to Speak at Commencement 2010

by Cheryl Valyo



Rob Ashford  
Photo courtesy BroadwayWorld.com

When Rob Ashford (COPA 1983) delivers the commencement address to Point Park University's Class of 2010 on May 1 at Mellon Arena, he will emphasize the importance of "the journey."

"We're all very goal-oriented, and that's great," says Ashford, who is director and choreographer of the Broadway revival of *Promises, Promises*. "But you have to take everything in along the way. One of my main messages to graduates will be to take time to focus on the journey itself, which can be as rewarding as achieving your goals."

Ashford's own journey has taken him from the small town of Beckley, W.Va., to the dance studios of Point Park, and eventually to the stages of London, Broadway and beyond. Along the way he has earned a Tony Award, a Creative Arts Emmy Award, and numerous other honors and nominations for his work.

Ashford, who will receive an honorary doctor of humane letters degree, was "pleased and honored" to receive President Paul Hennigan's invitation. His parents, Larry and Kathy Davis, will attend the commencement ceremony. "It will be a thrill to have my parents there. They have been so supportive in everything I have wanted to do," he says.

Ashford originally enrolled in Washington and Lee University with plans to become a lawyer, but "the theater bug" intervened. While performing in summer stock during a college break, he was asked to step in for a dancer who hadn't shown up for rehearsal. "It came very naturally to me. I just loved dance," says Ashford, whose innate ability impressed the company's dance captain, Point Park alumna Toneta Akers. She invited Conservatory of Performing Arts (COPA) professor and former director of dance Ron Tassone to attend a performance, and Tassone in turn invited Ashford to study at Point Park.

"At Point Park, I got a lot of encouragement and pushing, and I really appreciated that," says Ashford. "It was truly a professional atmosphere. I learned early on that to get ahead in this profession you have to work hard – and get lucky."

After graduation, he eventually moved to New York City and soon made his Broadway debut in the Lincoln Center revival of *Anything Goes* with Patti LuPone. Performances in *Crazy for You*, *My Favorite Year*, *The Most Happy Fella*, *Victor/Victoria* and *Parade* followed.

Ashford's first opportunity to choreograph was *Kiss of the Spider Woman* in Buenos Aires. After that, he and good friend Kathleen Marshall collaborated on the choreography for the 1999 revival of *Kiss Me, Kate*. Ashford went on to become choreographer for *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, for which he won a 2002 Tony Award. He was also nominated for *The Wedding Singer*. In 2007 Ashford choreographed *Curtains* on Broadway and earned another Tony nomination.

In London, Ashford has choreographed *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* for the Royal National Theatre and *Guys and Dolls* at the Piccadilly Theatre. In recent years he directed *Parade* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*, both at London's Donmar Warehouse, where he is now an associate director.

Ashford has maintained close ties to Point Park and credits Joe McGoldrick, director of artistic recruitment at the Conservatory of Performing Arts, with keeping him in touch, and with steering many talented artists his way.

"I think it will be thrilling and exciting to come back to the place where I spent my student years," says Ashford. "I'm looking forward to it."

Broadway's original three-martini musical is about to get a whole new twist.

Sean Hayes

Kristin Chenoweth

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Directed and Choreographed by Rob Ashford

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Rob Ashford, director and choreographer of the new Broadway revival of *Promises, Promises*, joins longtime friends Joe McGoldrick (left) and Ron Tassone (right) of the Conservatory of Performing Arts at a Point Park alumni event in New York City.

## ▶ United Nations Executive Shealagh Gopaul To Speak at Graduate Hooding Ceremony

Shealagh (Mihm) Gopaul, director of administration for the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and a 1976 graduate of Point Park, will speak at the master's degree hooding ceremony and commencement at 9 a.m. May 1 at Mellon Arena. She will also receive an honorary doctor of humane letters degree.

A Pittsburgh native, Gopaul earned a dual degree in dance and history at the University. She oversees the OCHA administration for New York, Geneva, and 30 country/field offices. She has been serving at the senior level in the UN and the World Health Organization for nearly two decades and has worked in the areas of finance, strategic/program planning, resource mobilization, budgeting and human resources management.

An accomplished classical ballet dancer, Gopaul has performed with the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and with Civic Light Opera and remains an active supporter of the arts in New York City.

## ▶ 50 at 50 Celebration

As part of the University's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, an alumnus or alumna representing each class that has graduated over the past five decades (since the University began awarding degrees in 1960), will participate in the main commencement ceremony at 1 p.m. at Mellon Arena.

They will join in the academic procession and occupy a place of honor at the ceremony. Later that day, the participating alumni will take part in a special reception with University administrators and faculty members, including many retired and former faculty members who helped build the University over the years.

"Our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year is a unique opportunity to celebrate the University's history, which is very much alive today," says President Paul Hennigan. "We want to recognize the contributions of the many individuals who have played a role in the evolution of Point Park. Commencement is an ideal time to salute the classes of students who have passed through over the years, and bring generations of University people together."

For photos of Commencement 2010, be sure to check out the fall issue of *The Point* and visit [www.pointpark.edu](http://www.pointpark.edu).



Andrew McNeil, a financial aid counselor, grabs a file in the central welcome area of the renovated Student Financial Services offices on the first floor of Thayer Hall.



Danauta Fox, Perkins Loan coordinator at Point Park, provides financial aid information to a student.



View of the renovated entrance and reception area for Student Financial Services.

# Making Education Affordable

by Cheryl Valyo

## Student Financial Services assists students and families in streamlined offices in Thayer Hall

As Point Park's Academic Village continues to grow, some of the most important updates and renovations have taken shape inside the walls of the University's existing buildings.

A case in point is the streamlined offices of Student Financial Services on the first floor of Thayer Hall on Third Avenue. This area previously housed three business functions – Financial Aid, Student Accounts and the Office of the Registrar – in a cramped warren of outdated offices.

When the Office of the Registrar moved to more spacious and functional digs on the ninth floor of Thayer last year, the renamed Office of Student Financial Services (comprised of Financial Aid and Student Accounts) had an opportunity to reorganize and update the space in order to better meet the needs of the students and families they serve, according to Betty Davis, senior director.

"We saw an opportunity to not only upgrade the appearance of our office space, which had been very run down, but to truly integrate the Financial Aid and Student Accounts functions in order to better serve our students and families," says Davis. "This is an important point of contact with the University. It's critical that we present our very best face to our customers — students and parents."

### An improved experience for visitors

The new offices provide a spacious and welcoming entrance area in which visitors are easily directed to the particular staff member who can provide the assistance they need. The renovations also boosted privacy and security for financial transactions and financial aid records, says Davis.

"It has just transformed the entire office and our ability to function. We're already seeing a payoff in terms of more effective, efficient interactions among staff members in Financial Aid and Student

Accounts. Overall, the appearance of our space now matches the highly professional services we provide here to students and families."

### Providing options and answers

When students or parents contact Student Financial Services, they have an issue that must be resolved, says Davis. The goal is to help them make the right connections to address their concerns, which is part of an overall, comprehensive effort to communicate affordable strategies for paying for education.

The staff of Student Financial Services makes every effort to provide grants, scholarships and financial aid options to every student who needs them, according to Davis. 98 percent of Point Park students receive some form of financial assistance. The University also offers various payment plan options.

The University's financial aid counselors work closely with students and parents to explore options, answer questions and develop the right financial aid package. "We're committed to making education affordable and we're here to help," says Davis.

They have also developed other communication tools such as a new letter series for families, as well as typical financial aid scenarios (based on family income and student academic goals) that can be useful in exploring options. "We want to provide information to parents and students earlier and more often," says Davis. The University also recently launched an innovative, online financial aid calculator as a helpful tool in financial aid planning.

Visit [www.pointpark.edu/financialaid](http://www.pointpark.edu/financialaid) to try out the financial aid calculator and to learn more about scholarships, grants and loan opportunities at Point Park. The Financial Aid Office can be reached at 412-392-3930.

# Connecting to Cultures Worldwide

## Global Cultural Studies degree program expands horizons for Point Park students

By Camille Downing

A hunger for knowledge is at the root of the academic experience at Point Park University. The quest begins within the walls of the University, but extends far into the community, the country and the world as students study and appreciate the differences that make each person unique, but more importantly perhaps, the students also focus on the aspects that unite humanity across the globe.

This awareness, appreciation and connection with others is the foundation for the Global and Cultural Studies program that has been developed under the direction of Channa Newman, Ph.D. A Point Park professor for 43 years, Newman has a contagious passion for universal principles of justice and equality. The program offers “a multifaceted view of the United States and other regions of the world through a scientific and human centered prism.”

This global prism involves lessons in history, world systems, cultures and languages to help students understand different ways of life with insight into global contemporary situations, which, despite distinct differences, tend to be, in many aspects, similar. The seed for the new degree program was planted more than six years ago when Newman developed a pilot introduction course that focused on the critical analysis of

contemporary society with an emphasis on better understanding the dynamics of power and privilege. The class was a great success, says Newman, as students pushed past their limited experience to understand their own culture and those of other peoples around the world.

The new undergraduate degree program has grown with the hiring of several professors and the development of a full range of “outside the box,” interdisciplinary courses. One of the most controversial courses is Newman’s longstanding class, “Wealthy White Males,” which examines the power elite structure in the United States.

“The program is very cutting edge in many ways,” explains Newman about presenting courses that make students venture outside of their comfort zone. “Our goal is to not water things down, but to provide a rigorous curriculum rooted in disciplines that take a broad view of the big picture. We aim to empower the students by providing them with the means to become globally competent.”

The new curriculum includes courses in global issues, politics, anthropology, languages and various theoretical approaches to understanding our world. Students welcome the opportunity to learn-in depth-such challenging global perspectives.



Photo by Christopher Rolinson

“Taking these kinds of classes really opens your mind, not only to new experiences but also to new ways of thinking about and viewing the world,” says Eric Probola, a junior. “Once you learn about the world in these classes, you are more likely to take note of your own place in the universe and make a difference in the world.”

The only university to offer Global Cultural Studies as a cross-disciplinary program, Point Park has attracted a number of new educators. For example, Shubh Mathur, Ph.D., recently joined the Global Studies faculty, which is comprised solely of full-time professors with doctoral degrees. Drawn by the innovative nature of the program, Mathur will teach courses on such topics as human rights, gender, South Asia and refugees.

“I think it is vital for our students to be able to understand and engage with the larger world, to be able to place their lives and work in a global context, and to be committed and engaged global citizens,” notes Mathur. “It’s critical in the evolution of American higher education to bring the world to our students and vice versa in a meaningful way.”

Newman would agree with this philosophy as she continues to develop this unique program, which also includes site-specific and course-based study abroad experiences.

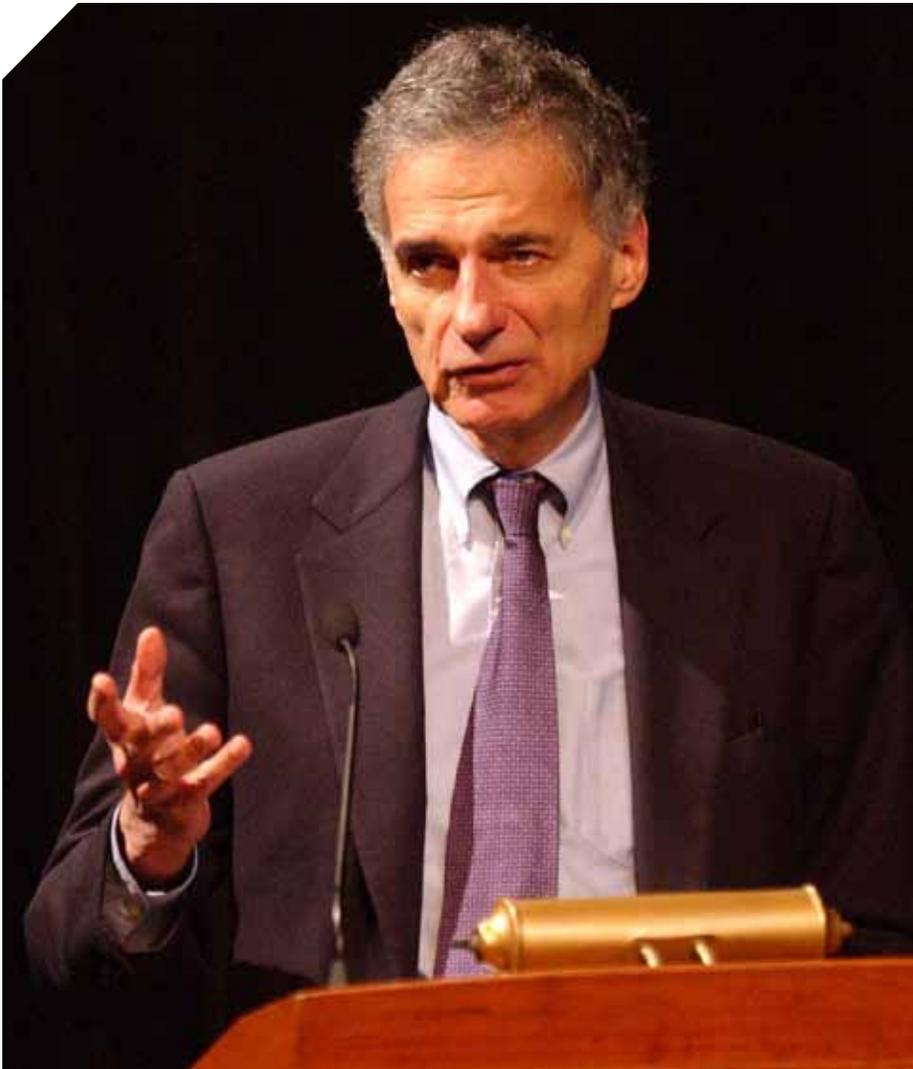


Photo by Tom Bell

Opposite page and below: Channa Newman, Ph.D., leads Point Park's new Global Cultural Studies degree program. Newman has led groups on cultural tours of France for the past several decades.

At left: Global Cultural Studies regularly hosts distinguished lectures by such speakers as activist Ralph Nader, who visited campus last fall.



## BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

With a goal of guiding students to reach beyond their own backyard to learn more about the world around them, the Global and Cultural Studies program offers opportunities to learn outside of the traditional classroom setting. Examples include:

### ▶ **Study Abroad**

Students have the opportunity to travel outside the United States for two-week courses to learn more about various cultures and their impact. Past visits have been to France, and in 2010 students will travel to Spain, led by Dwight Hines,

Ph.D. In 2011, students will travel to the Middle East, led by Robert Ross, Ph.D. Future sites may include Africa, India, Ireland and Latin America.

### ▶ **Lecture Series**

Prominent speakers, such as former Harpers Magazine Editor Lewis Lapham, have journeyed to Point Park to address important global issues. In 2009 the Global Cultural Studies program sponsored An Evening with Ralph Nader, who spoke to a packed crowd about his lifetime commitment to democratic citizenship. Plans are under way to

sponsor other acclaimed speakers who have demonstrated interest in the program and in deepening students' knowledge of the world.

### ▶ **French Trip Reunion**

Did you participate in one of Point Park's student trips to France? The University is planning a Sept. 25 reunion of alumni who traveled to France (with Professor Channa Newman), as part of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary weekend. Contact the Alumni Office at 412-392-4750 for more information.

# College Now Brings High School Students into Point Park Classrooms

by Nancy Commella

**Woodland Hills families embrace dual-enrollment program with blood, sweat and cheers**



- 5:45 a.m.** Alarm clock rings.
- 7 a.m.** Arrive at high school. Take school bus to Point Park. Attend three-hour English class. Lunch. Take bus back to school. Finish high school classes.
- 2:10 p.m.** Dismissal bell rings. Wrestling practice. Home. Dinner. Three hours of high school and college homework.
- 11 p.m.** Bedtime.

That is a full schedule for any person, but for 17-year-old Donovan Smith, a senior at Woodland Hills High School (WHHS), eight miles east of Pittsburgh, he would not have it any other way. The cross country and rugby athlete is one of 40 Woodland Hills High School students participating in the College Now program at Point Park University. Another 25 are expected to enroll in fall 2010.

"I think it's good that I have the opportunity to come to college while I'm still in high school my senior year so I'm more prepared whenever I graduate. I feel like I have an advantage over my other classmates or other seniors because I've already seen how college is, and I'll have credits." Donovan will graduate high school with 12 college credits in spring 2010, all at no financial cost to him or his family.

"We wanted to take advantage of dual enrollment . . . so students could have credit for high school classes and college classes at no expense to the parents to thank them for their tax support," says WHHS Principal Daniel Stephens in explaining one of the reasons the school district wanted to implement the program. College Now, open to a limited number of qualifying juniors and seniors, is funded primarily by the University, the school district and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The University has also received a \$5,000 grant from the Buncher Family Foundation and a \$5,000 grant from the Dominion Foundation to support a unique mentoring aspect of the dual-enrollment program that pairs current Point Park students with Woodland Hills High School participants.

That value is not lost on Donovan's mother, Shelly. "If I could only have had that opportunity when I was in school. I explained to [Donovan] how hard it is [to pay] for tuition. This is like a blessing in disguise."

Why would Point Park make a significant investment in College Now? "It makes us a good neighbor," says Stanley Denton, Ph.D., assistant professor in the University's School of Arts and Sciences. Community engagement is one of Point Park's guiding principles, which is one reason Denton took the idea of College Now to his colleagues when he was approached by Woodland Hills School District Superintendent Walter Calin-



Opposite: Point Park Assistant Professor Stanley Denton, Ph.D., speaks with Woodland Hills families at the College Now orientation at Point Park last November. Left: College Now student Monte Chapman and his mother, Juanita.



ger, Ph.D., in July 2009. Denton also says the program is a creative way of recruiting.

This type of recruiting helps a student such as 17-year-old Gabrielle Lewis, a Woodland Hills senior, who entered College Now in January. "I thought it would be a good advantage for me and help me figure out what college is all about." Gabrielle's mother, Stephanie, feels there are many advantages for her daughter, who has been singing in a competitive choir since third grade. "She does so well in music, and that's what she wants to major in, and I know this school has some programs, so that's an added advantage."

Any disadvantages? Not disadvantages, but definitely some sacrifices, according to the teenagers in the program. "I've sacrificed a lot of my time in completing my school work, the college work. Sometimes it's hard," admits 16-year-old Monte Chapman, a junior in his second semester of College Now, who also participates in track, band and Bible study. It is a sacrifice his mother, Juanita, told him will lead to his success when he attends college fulltime. "I completed my education as an adult ... I said, 'You'll know what it's like; you'll know how to study already.'"

The data supports Juanita's belief. Dual-enrollment programs exist in 42 states with positive outcomes reported for participating students, including: 12 percent are more likely to enter college within seven months of graduating high school; 11 percent are more likely



to continue with college the second year; and there is a 12 percent greater likelihood that students who had not anticipated obtaining a bachelor's degree will graduate with one.\* Students, parents, schools, and ultimately, society, benefit. As Dorothy Moyta, the mother of 17-year-old senior Madeline (who is interested in psychology) says, "It seemed like a win-win situation."

\*Swanson, Joni L. "An Analysis of the Impact of High School Dual Enrollment Course Participation on Post-Secondary Academic Success, Persistence and Degree Completion." University of Iowa, College of Education, May 2008

Above right: Gabrielle Lewis and her parents Stephanie and Rockwell talk with Woodland Hills School District Superintendent Walter Calinger (standing). Donovan Smith and his mother, Shelly. Photos by Jim Judkis.

Ronald Allan-Lindblom

## Hothouse for Original Works

by Colleen C. Derda

Ronald Allan-Lindblom has produced, directed and acted in more than 500 theater productions, produced international dance events and directed at drama festivals around the world. The Conservatory of Performing Arts dean and Pittsburgh Playhouse artistic director is on sabbatical. Before taking a leave to work on various creative projects, he took some time to talk with The Point:

### Why do you place a priority on producing and exporting new works?

**RL:** Pittsburgh has a unique voice, yet for the most part it is a theatrical importer. So one of our missions, particularly for our professional company, is to produce and export Pittsburgh product. Often 50 percent of our season represents new works. For example, *A Moon to Dance By*, by Thom Thomas, directed by Edwin Sherwin and with Jane Alexander, premiered here. It then moved to the George Street Playhouse and was nominated by the American Theatre Critics Association for the ACTA/Steinberg New Play Award, which honors new scripts produced outside of New York City. In the last 10 seasons, we've had six plays that have been published, including those by local playwrights Tammy Ryan and Amy Hartman. Hartman's *The Chicken Snake* was also nominated by the American Theatre Critics Association for best new play outside of New York. And we are an incubator of new works not just for the professional company. In recent years the Conservatory Theatre Company produced Marcus Stevens' *RED* and Michael Rupert's *Streets of America*

and this year produced a new musical, *Time After Time*, with Broadway's Gabriel Barre directing. Our world premieres in dance include *The Bench* by Kiesha Lalama-White and *The Snow Queen* by Doug Bentz.

### How do these efforts support the Conservatory's academic programs?

**RL:** Being a laboratory for new works is part of our mission and helps strengthen the national reputation of the Conservatory and the University. It also puts us in the position of acquiring [theatrical] property. It's much healthier for a theater to rely on than box office. The other advantage is the national level of guest artists here. Students work with these people and get to know them. And because the Conservatory is made up of professional artists who train artists, students see their teachers at work outside the classroom. Networking is essential. There is an old theater saying: there are only seven people in the business and you work with those same people over and over again. There is truth to that.

### How many productions does Point Park stage each year?

**RL:** I don't think there is a more aggressive performing arts program anywhere. We do 18 main stage productions for theater and dance each year. We do 235 performances in a 214 day academic year and that doesn't include special events such as Starmakers, one-acts and other fundraisers. It's really staggering.

### Does the Conservatory have any new degrees in the works?

**RL:** Our non-performance areas are growing. For example, we now have a screenwriting concentration. We are developing a new degree in dance pedagogy. We are looking at an M.F.A. in costume design. And we plan to offer an M.F.A. in screenwriting. All within the next five or six years.

### Tell us about some of your future plans for the Conservatory and the Playhouse.

**RL:** The need for new performance space is clear. As sentimentally attached as I am to this building, nothing here is designed for function. One theater was once a beer hall. Another theater was originally a synagogue. We've done an amazing job with the facilities, bringing in professionals and bringing educational theater to the community. Yet there is no question the Conservatory has outgrown this space educationally, professionally and aesthetically. We need a performing arts facility that matches the work of our students, faculty and professional guest artists.

### Point Extra

For more conversation with Ronald Allan-Lindblom, visit The Point online at [www.pointpark.edu/News/ThePoint](http://www.pointpark.edu/News/ThePoint)







# Professor's Photo Book Depicts Beauty of State Parks

By Christine Zapinski

## Pictorial offers images of wild places in Western Pennsylvania



After earning his master's degree in journalism and communication and joining the School of Communication faculty in 2004, Christopher Rolinson created a course on nature photography to give his photojournalism students an experience outside the urban environment of Downtown Pittsburgh.

On class outings to state parks throughout the region, his students shot terrific photos of the Western Pennsylvania's natural beauty. Rolinson took his own

camera along and soon found himself with a growing collection of gorgeous outdoor images.

Five years later, Rolinson has published a handsome fine art photography book of stunning pictures taken in state parks in Western Pennsylvania, from Erie County to the Maryland border. The book, *Our State Parks, Western Pennsylvania*, has 92 photos ranging from well-known spots like Cucumber Falls in Ohiopyle State Park to lesser know locales like the Allegheny Islands State Park.

"I wanted to show these places in Western Pennsylvania that are still considered wild," he explained. Accompanying the photos is first-person text in which Rolinson describes his visit to each scenic spot. Michael Caggese, a long-time acquaintance of Rolinson's, served as editor.

To get photos from so many state parks, Rolinson took his camera wherever he went, from class trips to professional assignments to family outings. He shot the oldest photo in the book during a 2004

assignment for the Associated Press on garbage dumps in state forests. The forest ranger took him to dump sites but then said, "I want to show you some other things." From that day came the book's photo of Sproul State Forest.

In addition to shooting the photos and writing the text, Rolinson handled the book's layout. Now that it's published, he's doing his own marketing. At presentations and exhibits, his introduction always mentions his faculty position at Point Park and the School of Communication.

To preview or purchase *Our State Parks*, visit the book's Web site at <http://bit.ly/ourstateparks>.

Opposite, from left: Andrew Christopher and Maxwell Gray join their dad, Christopher Rolinson, in Keystone State Park. Photo by Jesse Colaizzi. Other photos courtesy of Christopher Rolinson. From left: The shoals at Allegheny River Islands State Park, Allegheny County. Hell's Hollow at McConnell's Mill State Park, Lawrence County.

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## Thank you!

# POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

## 50 Years Young



Alumni, faculty and friends  
share campus memories

In 2010, Point Park University celebrates its 50th anniversary. In the Winter 2009 issue of *The Point*, we asked alumni and friends to share their campus reminiscences and memories. Here are some of the stories they shared:

### 1969 grads walked on water at commencement

"In 1969, Point Park College held commencement on the American Wind Symphony's converted coal barge, the original Point Counterpoint, on the Allegheny River. Construction on Three Rivers Stadium was under way. Point Park President Arthur Blum presided over the ceremony and our commencement speaker was Stewart L. Udall, who served as Secretary of the Interior during the Kennedy administration. It was extremely hot that day. The audience was seated on the shore and we walked up a gangplank and onto the barge to receive our diplomas. I was among nine who received a bachelor's degree in mathematics and computer science. I especially appreciated the size of Point Park, as well as the diversity of the student body and the faculty. The professors valued our input. We all knew that we were part of building Point Park. We used to say that we were real 'Pioneers.'"

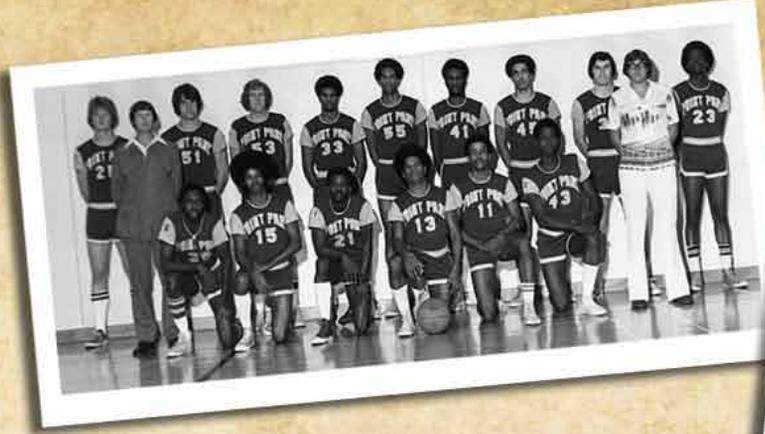
—John Yugovich (A&S 1969)  
Verona, Pa.

### From Panama to Point Park

"In 1964, Point Park opened its doors to students from different countries as part of a venture to become more international. The school offered a half scholarship to international students with high academic averages. I came to Point Park from Panama, and there were scholarship students from other countries in Central America, South America and Europe. We were offered the opportunity to live with families in neighborhoods such as Squirrel Hill, where Point Park's founder Dr. Dorothy Finkelhor lived. I became friends with her daughter Naomi and stayed with the Finkelhors. In exchange for room and board, we agreed to provide babysitting services. It was a wonderful experience for getting to know the American culture and become part of a community. We received very personal attention. I studied accounting and went on to become a licensed clinical psychologist in California. My years at Point Park were wonderful and very enriching."

—Nida Fernandez, Ph.D. (A&S 1966)  
Newport Beach, Calif.





**Father and son recall dedicated faculty, quality academics**

"I was a certified public accountant and I started teaching accounting classes at Point Park in 1962. It was still a junior college at that point. Over the 19 years I taught at Point Park, I also served as chairman of the business and accounting department during various periods. As a teacher, I think you try to give people [the skills] you have that they can use in the future. I'm 83 years old and have run into people who recognize me as 'Mr. Altman.' Those former students are in their sixties today. After the many years that have passed, it's nice to see that we have successful alumni and they are contributing back. However, if not for the efforts of that core group of faculty and administrators and students in the early years, there wouldn't be an institution today. If you're an idealist and you want to achieve something you're going to feel pride when it becomes successful, even many years later. Point Park has come a long way. I think it's done a lot for the city of Pittsburgh."

—Ralph Altman  
North Hills, Pa.

**"If not for the efforts of that core group in the early years, there wouldn't be an institution today."**

"I attended Point Park from 1972-1976, graduating with a bachelor's degree in mathematics and a minor in computer science. A "cross registration" program enabled me to take a half dozen computer courses at the University of Pittsburgh. My experience was that Point Park had an exceptional faculty, every bit as good as Pitt's. The biggest advantage was that the Point Park professors were available and approachable. I received an excellent education, which has allowed me to compete very well with some well-educated and bright folks from very prestigious colleges and universities. I currently have a lead position of a team that administers engineering computing environments for the Nuclear Fuels Division of Westinghouse Electric Company. Without the solid education I received, I could not have advanced to my current position. If Point Park is even half as good as it was during my attendance, I wouldn't hesitate to recommend it to anyone today."

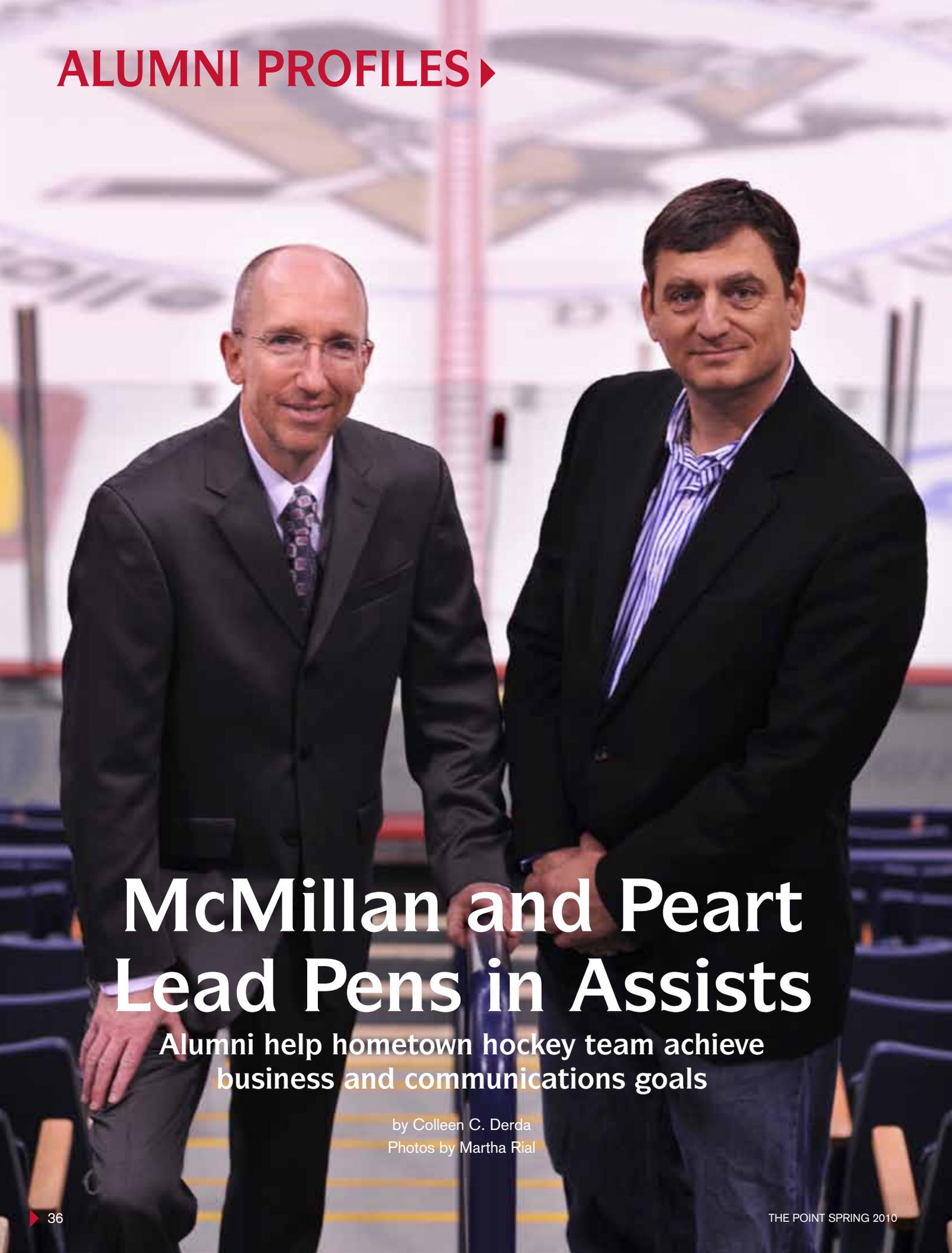
—Duane Altman (A&S 1976)  
Penn Hills, Pa.

**An academic legacy**

"In 1965, I was completing my doctorate at the University of Pittsburgh when I noticed a job posting in Pitt's Geology department. Point Park was seeking someone to teach two new courses in physical geology and historical geology. I interviewed, was soon offered a full-time position teaching physics and other courses, and have been here ever since. These days, I mainly teach courses in civil engineering technology. When I started, I had only a few students and Point Park had only two buildings. It was family-type atmosphere, and we got to know everyone well. For example, the Finklehors invited faculty and their families to summer picnics at their farm in the Laurel Highlands. Over the years I have known first and second generations of Point Park students. Today, as I watch Point Park expand and build its Academic Village in Downtown Pittsburgh, I realize that what's truly important is not the cover of the book, but what's inside. The reason we exist is to provide strong academics. That's why we're here."

—John J. Kudlac, Ph.D.  
Professor, Earth Sciences & Engineering Technology



A photograph of two men in business attire standing in what appears to be an arena or stadium. The man on the left is bald, wearing glasses, a dark suit, a white shirt, and a patterned tie. The man on the right has dark hair, is wearing a dark suit jacket over a blue and white striped shirt. They are both looking towards the camera. The background is slightly blurred, showing the structure of the arena.

# McMillan and Peart Lead Pens in Assists

Alumni help hometown hockey team achieve  
business and communications goals

by Colleen C. Derda  
Photos by Martha Rial

## David Peart, Vice President, Business Partnerships

David Peart (COM 1984) credits Point Park's culture, which is steeped in practical experience, with launching his career. The Pittsburgh Penguins executive says the hands-on learning environment that benefited him in the early 1980s will also serve his son, who plans to start a Point Park education this fall.

As the team's vice president of business partnerships, David Peart creates sponsorship opportunities for founding partners of the new Consol Energy Center. He returned to Pittsburgh in 2009 after 15 years in revenue generation, marketing and venue planning for sports and entertainment facilities across the country.

Peart accepted the opportunity, "almost too good to pass up," to work with the Penguins again



and be a part of the Consol Energy Center project. His experience with new facilities includes American Airlines Center in Dallas, Reliant Stadium in Houston and the San Francisco 49ers' proposed stadium.

Peart says his work in sports-related fields started back at Point Park, where faculty and alumni worked hard to get students practical experience. "I had an internship my sophomore year that was the direct result of an individual, a couple of years ahead, who was actively helping to bring students into business."

The opportunity gained him a job at KQV Radio in production of Penguin games. He moved to the team when it took radio rights in-house, and he worked in corporate sales during the early 1990s and two Stanley Cup championship seasons. During this time, Peart obtained a master's in public management at Carnegie Mellon University and started working for SMG, where he sold sponsorships for arenas, stadiums, convention centers and other venues in the company's western region. He later served as a vice president with Southwest Sports Group and professional teams, including the Dallas Stars, Houston Texans and San Francisco 49ers. He recently he ran his own consulting company.

Peart is planning for six to eight founding partners at the Consol Energy Center. The long-term, seven-figure deals will allow companies to sponsor entry gates, concourses and other

"landmark" areas and to host interactive exhibits, such as a planned all-time team zone and hall of fame. He says that economic conditions continue to limit traditional sponsorship categories, and that his team must seek nontraditional sponsors and develop new ways to create value for companies that invest. "Here in Pittsburgh, we're fortunate that sports are such an important part of the region." Peart notes that the city has been more resilient than other parts of the country and that the only sports naming rights deal completed in an 18- to 24-month period was the Consol Energy Center.

He hopes to involve Point Park students in the new facility and provide opportunities for them to "experience some of the things we have to offer here."

## Tom McMillan, Vice President, Communications

Like all Pittsburgh hockey fans, Tom McMillan (COM 1978) has experienced the Penguins' highs and lows. From disappointing finishes in the 1980s, back-to-back Stanley Cup championships of the early 1990s, the team's near bankruptcy, Mario Lemieux's ownership, the 2004-05 lockout, Sidney Crosby's arrival, the start of the Consol Energy Center construction, and the 2008-2009 Stanley Cup championship, McMillan has seen it all – from several vantage points.

A Pittsburgh native and hockey fan since childhood, McMillan experienced the team's ups and downs as a newspaper writer, columnist, editor, freelancer, radio talk show host and team executive.

"Years ago I didn't foresee being a team's vice president of communications," says McMillan.



Looking back, he says his years of diverse media experience led to the job, which he started in 1996. The Point Park journalism graduate says he tells students that they must be open to all kinds of experiences because they never know where those will lead. It's advice he remembers from Vince LaBarbera, who headed the journalism program during his Point Park years, but something students – then and now – aren't always ready to hear.

"I expected to be working for a newspaper for 25 years. And I wanted to be a columnist until I

actually did the job." Things don't always turn out as planned, says McMillan, and many jobs related to sports are not necessarily what people expect them to be. So his advice to students also includes learning as much as possible about a range of jobs, preparing for long hours and knowing you will rarely be sitting and enjoying watching games. "For game seven in Detroit, I probably saw live about seven minutes of action," he says.

McMillan doesn't hesitate to share the full range of emotions he's experienced over the years working in hockey. He recently spoke to a facilities and venue class in the Sports, Arts and Entertainment Management program, talking about his work with the media, answering students' questions and soliciting opinions.

The Penguins are known throughout the National Hockey League and professional sports for connecting with young

fans. McMillan says the team is aggressive in using focus groups, student offers, special events, Web site innovations and new media to engage college students and to build its fan base of both passionate and casual followers. Point Park students recently presented a study to the team's marketing department. "We value students' viewpoints," says McMillan.

The Pittsburgh Penguins have the fastest-growing team brand in the NHL and one of the fastest-growing team brands in all of professional sports, according to a Forbes analysis in 2009. The magazine also recognized the team for the most-visited NHL Web site in the United States and for its local television ratings.



Dear fellow alumni,

Point Park has much to celebrate in 2010! This year marks the University's 50th anniversary, and it's a great opportunity to come together to celebrate our common history and all that has been accomplished over the past five decades. On September 24-26, we'll be hosting an Alumni Weekend that will provide plenty of opportunities to reunite with friends, classmates and former teachers. You'll also be able to explore new subjects and bolster your skills in our mini-university sessions that will be offered that weekend. You won't want to miss it! For details, stay tuned to our Web site at [www.pointpark.edu/Alumni](http://www.pointpark.edu/Alumni) and visit our Facebook page (search for Point Park University Alumni).

When I look back over my own Point Park experience, including my service as president of the Alumni Association Board of Directors,

one of the things I am most proud of is the dedication of my fellow board members. This group has devoted countless volunteer hours toward the development of key programs such as the Pioneer Alumni Recruitment Program (PART), in which alumni can help prospective students make a connection with Point Park. They also help guide the development of special events such as our annual holiday party, and so much more. Our volunteer board represents the best of Point Park's past and the exciting growth in our future. Here's to our next 50 years of Point Park pride!

John Taormina (A&S 2000, MBA 2001)  
President, Alumni Association Board of Directors

## DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE EXTRA BENEFITS OF BEING A POINT PARK ALUMNUS?

- Discounts on community classes offered by Point Park
- Free access to the University's Office of Career Development
- Discounts on Liberty Mutual auto, home and renter's insurance
- Discounts on medical, long-term care, dental and pet insurance
- Access to select University facilities such as the Library and Recreation Center
- Access to the many events sponsored by the Office of Alumni Relations

Visit [www.pointpark.edu/Alumni/BenefitsandServices](http://www.pointpark.edu/Alumni/BenefitsandServices) to find out about these benefits and more!

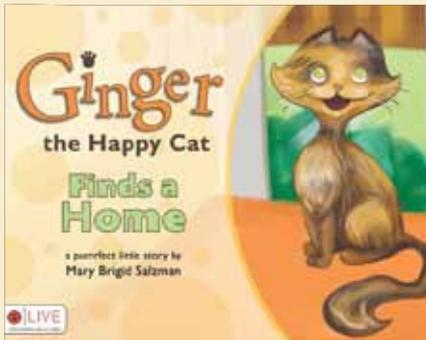
**POINT PARK**  
UNIVERSITY



# CLASS NOTES ▶

## ▶ 1980s

**Peter Wentzel** (COPA 1982) has joined Media Rights Capital as head of production finance, overseeing film, television and digital production. MRC's recent theatrical releases include *Bruno*, *The Invention of Lying*, *The Box* and *Shorts*. Wentzel previously completed engagements at Disney/ABC and Warner Bros. He recently completed wrapping M. Night Shyamalan's latest film, *Devil*, and *The Adjustment Bureau* starring Matt Damon and Emily Blunt.



**Mary Brigid Salzman** (BUS 1985, 1999, 2004) is the author of the children's book *Ginger the Happy Cat Finds a Home*, published by Tate Publishing and Enterprises in 2009. "When I adopted Ginger from Animal Friends, I never dreamed that I would be rewarded with 20 fabulous years together," said Salzman, who lives in Canonsburg, Pa. "Ginger's spirit encouraged me to put pen to paper and I hope it will encourage you to adopt a pet from an animal shelter or from right off the streets." The story follows Ginger and her shelter friends as they await real families and real homes. Salzman is donating proceeds from the book to the Caryl Gates Gluck Resource Center at Animal Friends, a Pittsburgh organization dedicated to "ensure the well being of companion animals, while ending overpopulation, abuse and unwarranted euthanasia," according to their Web site, [www.thinkingoutsidethecage.org](http://www.thinkingoutsidethecage.org). Salzman's book is in bookstores, or can be ordered at [www.tatepublishing.com/bookstore](http://www.tatepublishing.com/bookstore).

**Rose Marie Quattrocchi McKain** (COM 1982) is the new assistant vice president of the startup campuses department at Education Management Corporation (EDMC),

where she has regulatory responsibility for the establishment of all new schools. She previously served as assistant vice president for international regulatory affairs and compliance at EDMC.

**Tim Estiloz** (COM 1982) has been accepted as a member of the Broadcast Film Critics' Association, which honors Hollywood's top stars for their best performances in film in the Critics' Choice Awards, televised annually from Hollywood, Calif.

**Jana Pail** (COM 1989) is in-house legal counsel to the Chapter 13 Standing Trustee for the Western District of Pennsylvania, where she represents the Trustee in U.S. Bankruptcy Court. Jana received her law degree from the University of Pittsburgh in 2001.

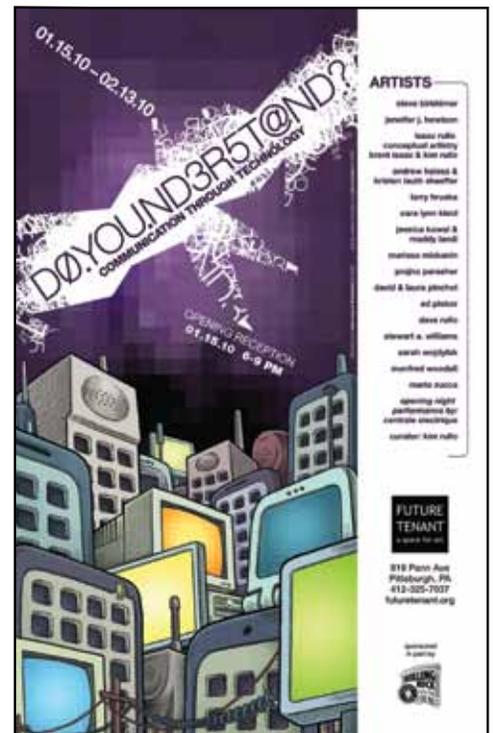
**William B. Fogle** (A&S 1983), a lieutenant colonel (retired) in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, co-founded Vali Cooper International LLC in March 2009 with three fellow retired Army officers. Fogle, who earned his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering technology at Point Park, serves as executive vice president of VCI. After serving 21 years in the Army, he relocated to Louisiana. He and his wife have three children.

**Michael Mauer** (COM 1984), a veteran of operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm has been selected for induction into the Southwestern Pennsylvania Veterans Hall of Fame. Mauer was honored for his outstanding service to the community and to fellow soldiers. As quartermaster for VFW Post 914 since 2003, Mauer organized several welcome home events for veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and secured grants to fund these activities. He also was selected as a National Aide-De-Camp by the VFW in 2006. While on active duty, he served as an Army photojournalist. He was named noncommissioned officer in charge of the U.S. Central Command's command information office, which served more than 500,000 troops assigned to the first Persian Gulf War. For his efforts, he was awarded the Joint Service Commendation Medal by Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf. He also received one of the Army's highest journalism honors for writing, the Keith L. Ware award. Following his military service, Mauer worked in

the financial services industry, including the credit department of Kaufmann's department stores and PNC Bank. He is now employed as a housing counselor with the Mon Valley Initiative in Homestead. An avid runner, he has participated in each official 10 kilometer running of the Richard S. Caliguiri City of Pittsburgh Great Race since 1997. He also competed in the relay portion of last year's Pittsburgh Marathon. Mauer and his wife, Marsey, who earned her bachelor's degree in business management at Point Park in 1984, are parents of two daughters. The couple will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary in November 2010.

## ▶ 1990s

**Kimberly (McCarty) Rullo** (COM 1996) served as guest curator for Future Tenant's winter show, which ran last January and February and explored the way people communicate with each other through technology. *Do You Understand? Communication through Technology* featured the work of 20 Pittsburgh-area artists (recruited by Rullo) who used a variety of media to explore the modern complexities of human communication in a "faceless" age. Rullo is a graphic designer with clients in southwestern Pennsylvania



Kimberly Rullo curated *Do You Understand? Communication Through Technology* at Future Tenant last winter.

## CLASS NOTES

and beyond, including Trail Behind, a Lake Tahoe, Calif.-based company that specializes in design for iPhone applications. She is also a conceptual artist and partner at Isaac Rullo Conceptual Artistry, with fellow Point Park alumnus **Brent Isaac** (COPA 1994). Their projects have been exhibited at such venues as the Andy Warhol Museum, the Meter Room, the Blue Ruin Gallery and the Southside Works, and their work has been featured in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review and Pittsburgh's City Paper. She is married to **David Rullo**, who also studied at Point Park. The couple has a four-year old son, Jackson.

### ► 2000s

**Elizabeth Simmons**, (COPA 2003) performed in the play *Hysteria* Oct. 7 through Nov. 1 at the Rep Stage in Columbia, Md. ([www.repstage.org](http://www.repstage.org)). She worked for the last two years in Los Angeles, appearing in several television and film productions, including *Parks and Recreation* (NBC), *Family Jewels* (AFI), *The Last Hymn* (USC), and *Undercover History-Atomic Bomb* (National Geographic Television).

**Marcus Stevens** (COPA 2003), an actor and playwright, performed in *Forever Plaid* at Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera in October 2009. Last August, he played the Barber in *Man of La Mancha* at Sacramento Music Circus, and prior to that he appeared in *Forbidden Broadway's Greatest Hits* at Philadelphia's Walnut Street Theatre in May and June 2009. Stevens also wrote *Making a Scene for 25 Years*, the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust's 25th Anniversary Gala, which premiered last October.

**Megan Rummel** (BUS 2003) is the new regional representative for Butler County for U.S. Rep. Kathy Dahlkemper, D-3rd. Previously, Rummel served as legislative assistant to state Rep. Jaret Gibbons, D-10th. She was based in Slippery Rock and managed outreach for Gibbons. Rummel earned her M.B.A. from Point Park.

**Charlene Bidula** (COM 2003, BUS 2009) is a communications specialist with the Westmoreland Museum of American Art in Greensburg, Pa.



Stacey Enyart with students

**Stacey Enyart** (COPA 2005) is the owner and artistic director of Suncoast Dance Theatre in Lutz, Fla. A Florida native, she founded the strictly technique-based dance facility in 2008. Students range in age from 3 to adult. Enyart has studied with many companies and choreographers, including Point Park Professors **Ron Tassone** and **Nicolas Petrov**, Michelle Assaf, Cleveland San Jose Ballet, Savion Glover, Kenneth Laws, Mia Michaels, Ballet Met, Margaret Morrison, David Parsons, Gill Stroming and Tim Veach. She has also performed for Celebrity Cruises, and traveled from British Columbia, down the west coast, through the Panama Canal, across the ocean, up the Baltic and down the Mediterranean seas. In addition to performing, Enyart has choreographed for numerous companies throughout the United States, the U.K. and Scotland. Visit [www.suncoastdancetheatre.com](http://www.suncoastdancetheatre.com).

**Amy Lutz** (COM 2002) reports that "after spending the past six years anchoring in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina, I am finally closer to home. In September 2009 I accepted a job as morning and noon anchor at WSYX-TV in Columbus, Ohio. I anchor five hours a day, but love every minute!"

**Matthew Decort** (A&S 2005) is the new owner of Matthew R. Decort Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Inc. in Portage, Pa. He purchased the former Beck Funeral Home last November. A native of Portage and the great grandson of a funeral director, Decort told the Johnstown Tribune Democrat that he became interested in the business through his grandmother. The funeral business is about developing relationships with families, accord-

ing to Decort. "Funeral directing is something I've always wanted to do. When someone comes into the funeral home, I want them to feel like a name and not just a number." The son of Portage District Judge Galen Decort, he received his bachelor's degree in professional studies – funeral services at Point Park.

**Ken Murphy** (A&S 2007) has been appointed supervisor of facilities for the Butler Health System. He joined Butler Memorial Hospital in 1980 as a heating, ventilation and air conditioning technician. He has been working with Butler Memorial's Office of Organizational Excellence. Murphy holds a bachelor's degree in professional studies from Point Park. He lives in Summit Township with his wife Donna and two children.

**Michele Langbein, Ph.D.** (BUS 2002, 2005), an assistant professor in the School of Business and director of the Saturday Fast Accelerated Business Program at Point Park, successfully defended her doctoral dissertation, *The Effects of Age and Experience on Levels of Leadership Practices of Nontraditional Undergraduate Management Students*, last November at Robert Morris University. Langbein earned her Ph.D. in the Instructional Management and Leadership program at Robert Morris.

**Justin LaBar** (COM 2009), a multimedia producer and reporter for the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, was honored by the Trib for his Web reporting on stories ranging from news and features to sports. LaBar, who received a record number of nomination votes in his category, was presented with the award by publisher Richard Scaife. The award also recognized increased traffic and hits related to the viewing of videos on TribLIVE.com. LaBar became a full-time member of the newspaper in August 2009. He began reporting for the Trib on a freelance basis earlier last year when he covered the Super Bowl.

**Robin Abramson** (COPA 2003) was named 2009 Performer of the Year by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette for her performances in *Blackbird* and *Mary's Wedding*, both at City Theatre in Pittsburgh. The Post-Gazette's Christopher Rawson wrote that Abramson "displayed extraordinary emotional range. In Stephen Massicotte's comi-tragic *Mary's Wedding* last



Braden Moran and Robin Abramson in *Mary's Wedding* at City Theatre. Photo by Suellen Fitzsimmons.

spring, Abramson played a young Canadian bride of about 20 who, glowingly transparent with both goofy love and frantic fear, watches her new husband (a touching Braden Moran) go off to World War I. Telling her own story, she also plays all the others in her retrospective imaginative version of his fate. Then [last] fall, in David Harrower's harrowing *Blackbird*, she played Una, 27, who comes back after 15 unhappy years to confront the middle-age man who had raped her when she was 12... Una is composed of both need and fury, as tormented and opaque as Mary is loving and luminous. Together, they made for an astonishing dual demonstration of truthful, heart-stirring acting." According to the Post-Gazette, "Abramson is one of the youngest to be named PG Performer of the Year. Just 28, she grew up in Monroeville and acted at Gateway High School before going to Point Park University, where she played in *Three Sisters* and *Floyd Collins*. Since graduating into the professional ranks in 2003, she has done *The Sisters Rosensweig* and *Fiddler on the Roof* at the Jewish Theater of Pittsburgh and *Othello* for Unseam'd Shakespeare." She appeared in *Outlying Island* at City and played the title role of Tammy Ryan's *FBI Girl* for Playhouse Rep.

## DROP US A NOTE!

Visit [www.pointpark.edu/classnote](http://www.pointpark.edu/classnote) to share your news.

### In Memoriam

**Stephanie S. Polink Page** (COPA 1976, BUS 2008) of Greensburg, died Jan. 23, 2010, in UPMC Presbyterian in Pittsburgh. She was 54. Born in Uniontown, Page was the daughter of the late Steve A. Polink and Mary L. Nepa Polink. One of the university's first jazz dance majors, she was a devoted champion of the Renal Support Network and a dedicated advocate of the Wellness and Education Kidney Advocacy Network (weCAN). She also worked tirelessly as a volunteer HOPEline operator and speaker for PEPP. Memorial contributions may be made to SS. Cyril and Methodius Catholic Church in Fairchance, Pa., or the Center for Organ Recovery and Education (CORE) in Pittsburgh.

**Laurence Paul Dunbar Gaines Jr.** (COM 1988) died November 10, 2009, from complications of a stroke he experienced earlier last year. He was 43. The stroke caused partial paralysis to his left side and affected his speech, but Gaines fought back and had returned as executive producer of the nationally syndicated *Bev Smith Show* just before his death. According to his obituary in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Gaines became well known as "the witty, skilled, indispensable producer of radio talk shows hosted by Bev Smith, Doug Hoerth and Lynn Cullen, among others. "Laurence was a rare breed in this business," Smith said. "There was nothing I asked of him that I didn't get. I'd ask him for a needle in a haystack and when I got behind the microphone I had that needle. That's what made him special." Doug Hoerth said he was blessed to have worked with Mr. Gaines from 1993 through 1998 on WTAE-AM radio. Gaines became Hoerth's sidekick, often speaking on air, wittily conversing with the host or doing his dead-on impersonations. At perfect moments, he would punctuate Hoerth's monologues with sound-effects ranging from movie dialogue to songs to horns and buzzers. "They were five of the happiest years of my life," Hoerth said of his time working with Gaines. "Laurence was the one of the most talented people I worked with in my 30 years in radio, one of the most talented people in broadcasting."

**Cindy Komarinski** (BUS 2000), associate professor at Westmoreland County Community College, is one of eight culinary professionals from across the United States recently selected to serve as an apprenticeship regional trainer by the American Culinary Federation Education Foundation. Komarinski, who has taught culinary arts and hospitality program courses for the past 11 years at WCCC, was selected for her involvement and contributions to the American Culinary Federation Education Foundation (ACFEF) Apprenticeship Program. She and the seven other apprenticeship regional trainers will serve in a volunteer capacity, visiting apprenticeship sites across the country to provide guidance on how to implement new initiatives resulting from a \$481,200 U.S. Department of Labor grant awarded to ACFEF. The grant-funded initiatives include incorporating green, eco-friendly and sustainable practices for the industry and the development of 10 interim credentials. Currently, the ACFEF has 60 apprenticeship programs throughout the United States with 689 registered apprentices, including 65 WCCC baking and pastry and culinary arts apprenticeship students. The apprenticeship

programs, which are developed in cooperation with local American Culinary Federation (ACF) chapters, foodservice establishments and local colleges, provide on-the-job training and educational components and conclude with an associate degree in culinary arts or pastry arts. Komarinski holds two professional ACF credentials: certified chef d'cuisine and certified culinary educator. In addition, she has earned an associate degree in culinary arts from WCCC, a bachelor's degree from Robert Morris University, an M.B.A. degree from Point Park, and certificates of competence in baking and food management, production and service from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Twice recognized by her local ACF Laurel Highlands Chapter for contributions to the profession, Komarinski received its Chef of the Year Award in 2006 and its President's Award in 1996. Active within the ACF Laurel Highlands Chapter, Komarinski is currently serving her second term as president and previously held the offices of vice president and treasurer.



# Keeping Alumni Connected with Point Park

by Tammi Kaufman

**Alumni Relations team helps alumni stay in touch with each other, current students and the University**



The Office of Alumni Relations team is working harder than ever to connect with the more than 18,000 graduates of Point Park University. Manager John Pine, Associate Manager Kelly Clawson and Graduate Assistant Kyle MacDonald work together to plan national and regional networking events, coordinate volunteer programs and maintain student opportunities to help connect alumni with the University.

In addition, through social media technologies, alumni can have instant access to updates on campus events and activities. Nearly 800 people have already signed up as fans of the Alumni Relations Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/pointparkalumni](http://www.facebook.com/pointparkalumni).

"Our main purpose is to engage people with the life of the University and the life of other alumni. We are helping to create and sustain lifelong relationships with the University," says Pine. He and his staff share a commitment and enthusiasm for higher education.

Since joining the Office of Alumni Relations in 2006, Pine has made it a priority to find ways to connect with alumni. During the 2009-2010 academic year, he and his staff have arranged events in 17 cities across the country to enable alumni to share their experiences, reconnect with other alumni and learn about what's happening at the University. Pine also coordinates events held locally in and around the Pittsburgh area, honoring alumni for both civic and professional achievements.

"It is a pretty interesting job because we are trying to do a lot of different things for many, many people. We are not necessarily fundraisers for the University. We hope that our alumni will contribute to the University and help sustain it, but our main purpose is to

engage people with the life of the University, with current students and with each other," says Pine.

Before coming to Point Park, Pine gained experience with student housing and study-abroad programs. He earned his undergraduate degree from Bridgewater State College in Massachusetts and a master's degree in higher education administration from the University of Georgia.

Clawson earned her undergraduate degree in communications and marketing from the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown and her master's degree in journalism and communication from Point Park. Clawson joined the Office of Admissions in 2002 and moved to the Office of Alumni Relations in 2009. One of her main duties is coordinating the University's PART (Pioneer Admissions Recruitment Team) program, which connects alumni with prospective students. She also assists with alumni networking events and says she is in a unique position to help bridge the gap between being a student and alumnus.

"It's really important to create an outreach situation so that there is a cycle. That is, while you are a student you begin to build a relationship with the University and when you graduate that relationship continues," says



Clawson. "We have a lot of alumni who have had such great experiences at Point Park that they want to come back to the University. They want others to have the same experience."

MacDonald joined the Alumni Relations Office as its first graduate assistant last August. He assists Pine and Clawson and serves as coordinator of student outreach activities. MacDonald coordinates the activities of the Green and Gold Society, a group of 16 outstanding students who serve as ambassadors for the University at various events and activities. "It has been a great experience for me to work in Alumni Relations," he says. "While I enjoy working with the students the most, working with the alumni at various events has been a great experience as well."

MacDonald is pursuing his master's degree in student affairs in higher education at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He will serve as graduate assistant through the end of his studies in May 2011.

Opposite, from left: Kelly Clawson, John Pine and Kyle MacDonald in the Office of Alumni Relations in Patterson Hall. Photos by Jim Judkis.

## Pioneers Reach New Heights on Volleyball Court

By Kevin Taylor

The Point Park University volleyball team had an historic season in 2009, and the Pioneers were just a few points shy of putting the program on the national stage for the first time.

The Pioneers had a final record of 32-8, and although they narrowly lost in the finals of the American Midwest Conference tournament, they had the best season in school history.

Had the Pioneers pulled out the victory in AMC championship match, they would have earned a trip to the NAIA tournament, something that only a few dozen teams in the country can claim.

Regardless, Point Park set new highs in nearly every team accomplishment on its way to an outstanding season.

"It was a great season for us, and I am very proud of what the ladies accomplished," said Mike Bruno, who

completed his fifth season as head coach of the Pioneers. "Our kids played hard, and they were out there playing for each other and having fun. That's what we preach, and they bought into that."

The Pioneers set a school record for consecutive victories with 15 straight wins in September. Point Park finished the regular season strong by taking a 10-match winning streak into the conference tournament. The Pioneers won two playoff matches, including an upset of top-seeded Mt. Vernon Nazarene in the semifinals.

"We upgraded our defense this year, and we had a balanced attack on offense," said Bruno, who has a record of 220-140 in 10 years as a head coach. "It was a complete, team effort from a very cohesive group. Overall, we were a pretty young team that had some great, veteran leaders.

## ▶ FALL ROUNDUP

### ▶ Women's Soccer

Angela Olivieri and Ashley Goodsell earned third-team all-conference honors for the Pioneers. Olivieri, a forward, finished her career as a four-time All-AMC pick and the program's all-time leading scorer with 38 goals. Goodsell, a junior, transferred to Point Park this year, and started every game at midfield. Senior defender Erica Mikolay earned all-conference honors for a third time, and was named an NAIA Scholar-Athlete. Joining Mikolay as honorable-mention All-AMC choices were junior defender Jo Jo Altebrando and sophomore goalkeeper Liz Velez.

### ▶ Men's Soccer

The Pioneers had a relatively young team that featured several freshmen and transfers. Five underclassmen were

named honorable-mention all-conference, including sophomore goalkeeper Zeke O'Donnell, who was second in the nation in saves. Freshman forward Francis Tabi and sophomore defender Shane Lucas were the team's leading scorers, and they were All-AMC honorable-mention selections along with freshman forward Matt Anecchiarico and freshman midfielder Phil Malle.

### ▶ Men's Cross Country

Reuben Rono, a sophomore from Kenya, and Dylan Grunn, a freshman from Honesdale, Pa., were the top performers for the Pioneers. Rono's best performance came at Walsh when he placed ninth with a personal-best time of 27:57. Grunn's best time of 28:24 at Waynesburg was eight seconds off the school's freshman

record set by Rono. Both runners broke 29 minutes in four meets. Junior Jared Ferree, the team's top runner in 2007, battled injuries this year but was named an NAIA Scholar-Athlete.

### ▶ Women's Cross Country

Sophomores Lindsay Dill and Sarah Austin turned in a strong season for the second-straight year, and they made up the team's top runners along with veterans Makenzie Smith, a senior, and Carina Jollie, a junior. Austin finished 11<sup>th</sup> at Waynesburg to lead the Pioneers to a fourth-place showing. Dill was Point Park's top finisher in five of seven meets. Smith, a captain, was a standout runner for four years, and Jollie turned in a personal-best time at the conference meet.

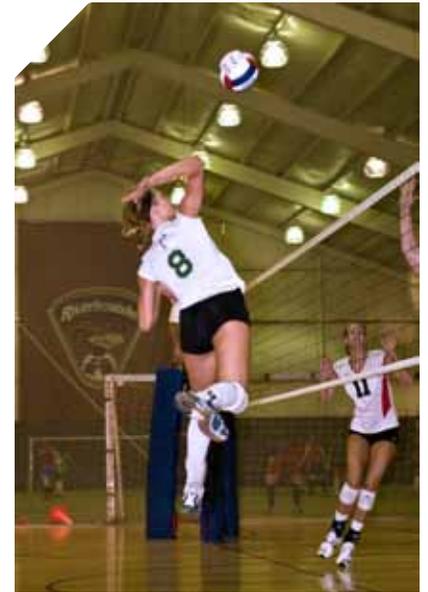
Among the long list of team achievements, the Pioneers set school records for wins in a season and consecutive victories. Also, they were undefeated at home and were the champions of four regular season tournaments.

Senior captain Megan Lamens joined fellow captain Rachel Roddy, a junior, on the all-conference first team. Lamens also earned honorable-mention all-region honors. Freshman Lindsey Oberacker earned a spot on the All-AMC second team and the All-AMC freshmen team.

"We got some valuable playoff experience, and I know we can build on that in the future," said Bruno. "They got a taste of what it's like to compete in the conference tournament, and they came really close to going to nationals."

"In the past, when I would explain to them what it takes to get to nationals, it was just words. Now that they've been so close, it is something real."

*Kevin Taylor is director of athletic communications at Point Park.*



Senior captain Megan Lamens led the Pioneers to a 32-8 record in 2009

The Point Park volleyball team gets focused in a pre-match huddle.



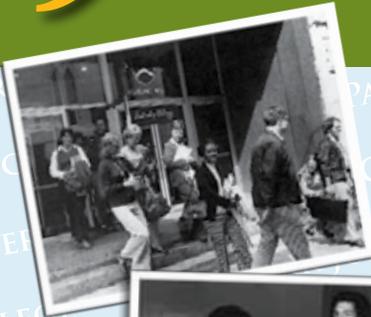
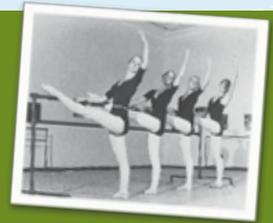
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