

THE POINT

URBAN QUAD

New Park Brightens Downtown Campus

Branding the Bison:

A New Look for Pioneer Athletics

HONORS PROGRAM

Boosts Student Achievements





Dear alumni and friends,

As we welcome 2012, I want to wish each and every member of the Point Park family a very happy new year. 2011 marked many significant accomplishments for our University community, and we're confident that the year ahead will be even better.

The University reached a key milestone in 2011: completion of a rigorous self-study and evaluation process to meet the reaccreditation requirements of the Middle States Commission of Higher Education. We are proud to report, thanks to the hard work and dedication of our faculty, staff and students, that the University has achieved full reaccreditation.

Known as Point Park Excellence, that self-evaluation process endures as the University's continuous improvement program, which focuses in particular on assessment of student learning. In the world of higher education, the term "academic excellence" refers to ongoing quality improvement. We have used the Middle States evaluation process as a guide for our strategic initiative of Academic Excellence. This involves measuring how well we're achieving student learning outcomes and using those baseline measures to set goals. I believe, as a result of our strategic planning and our preparation

for the Middle States reaccreditation process, we are much farther along in assessing our student learning outcomes than we have ever been.

Another point of pride for the Point Park community has been the official opening of our new Village Park, which took place last September. It's been a joy to see the overwhelmingly positive reception the park has received and to see so many students, faculty, staff, alumni and neighbors come together in this beautiful new outdoor center. The Village Park clearly has already become a key space for Point Park and our neighborhood, just as we expected it would. We look forward to the opening of a new restaurant in the park, Osteria 100, later this spring.

We invite you to stop by to enjoy the park and new restaurant, and take a closer look at all the ways in which Point Park is transforming our Academic Village and the Downtown community.

Hope to see you in the neighborhood.

Warm regards,

Dr. Paul Hennigan
President

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On the cover:
The new Urban Park at the Academic Village shines as the campus community joins together for a fall concert. Photo by Jim Schafer.

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TALK TO US!

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

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This policy affirms Point Park University's commitment to nondiscrimination, equal opportunity and the pursuit of diversity. Point Park University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, ancestry, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information, marital status, caregiver status or familial status in the administration of any of its educational programs, activities or with respect to employment or admission to the University's educational programs and activities. This policy is in accord with local, state and federal laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and the Pittsburgh Human Relations Act. Inquiries regarding these regulations, policies or complaints of discrimination should be referred to the human resources officer, telephone number 412-392-3952. Inquiries regarding Title IX and the Title IX regulations should also be referred to the senior vice president, academic and student affairs, as the Title IX coordinator, or deputy coordinators, the human resources officer or the dean of students.



Photo by Tom Bell.

Pioneer Hall of Fame

The Pioneer Athletic Hall of Fame inducted five members for the Class of 2011 in a ceremony on Oct. 9. This brings the total number of honorees to 45 individuals and one team.

The Hall of Fame Class of 2011 included **Ryan D. Ellis** (Baseball and Men's Soccer, 1997-00), **DeVaughn Halsel** (Men's Basketball, 1996-98), **Lara Lang** (Women's Basketball, 1990-94), **Michael D. Smith** (Baseball, 1997-00) and **Oli Theodorsson** (Men's Soccer and Basketball, 1995-97).

Ellis, from Munhall, Pa., was NAIA Honorable Mention All-American for the baseball team and also an NAIA All-Region

player in men's soccer. He still holds the school record for single-season hitting at .477 in 1999. He hit .405 for his career to rank fourth in school history.

Halsel, from Pittsburgh, was an NAIA First-Team All-American in 1996-97 when he led Point Park to the NAIA Final Four. He averaged 21.9 points and 13.4 rebounds per game during his career. He went on to play professional basketball in Europe for eight years and two more in the CBA.

Lang, a native of McDonald, Pa., ranks third in school history with 1,681 career points and fifth with 874 career rebounds. The power forward holds the Point Park record for games played and led the team to its best record of 19-12 as a senior in 1993-94.

Smith, from Thornhill, Ontario, is Point Park's all-time leader in home runs, hits, runs and RBIs. His 41 homers are 14 more than the next closest alum, and his 197 RBIs rank 28 better than any other Pioneer player. Smith led Point Park to its 10th NAIA World Series in 1998.

Theodorsson, a native of Iceland, was an NAIA All-Region performer in men's soccer and also an important starter on Point Park's trip to the men's basketball Final Four in 1996-97.

Professional Advancement

Michele L. Langbein, Ph.D., assistant professor and director of the Saturday Fast program in the School of Business, presented a paper on "The Importance of Green Business Practices and Sustainability" on Sept. 12 at the Robert Morris University Sustainability Conference.

Rochelle Z. Klein, assistant professor and coordinator of music education/Core, is the author of a feature article in *Clavier Companion*, an international piano teaching magazine. She profiled her former professor, pianist-pedagogue **Louis Nagel**, with whom she reconnected at the National Conference for Piano Pedagogy. At the Pittsburgh Playhouse, Klein served as music director/pianist for the Conservatory Theatre Company's 2011 production of *The Time of Your Life*.

Andrew Conte, assistant professor of journalism and director of the Point Park News Service, is the author of *Breakaway*, the top-selling hockey book on Amazon since the book's launch in fall 2011. Nielsen BookScan ranked it among the top sports books in the United States and among the top books of any kind sold in Pittsburgh. *Breakaway* tells the dramatic inside story of the Penguins' rise from bankruptcy to a new arena and from last place to winning the Cup. Learn more at www.breakawaypenguins.com.



Kiesha Lalama, assistant professor of dance, has created more than 30 works to date. She recently choreographed for the film *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, starring Emma Watson, which was filmed in Pittsburgh, the stage production *Dora the Explorer Live!*, as well as the National

High School Musical Theater Awards on Broadway. Lalama also served as choreographer at the TEDx Conference at Nemaocolin Woodlands last November. Point Park performers included student dancers Taylor Knight, Ebony Cunningham and Jenna Smith and drummers Gordon Nunn and Charles Hall.



Lindblom (left) and Miller. Photo by Jim Judkis.

Ronald Allan-Lindblom, associate vice president and artistic director of the Conservatory of Performing Arts and acting dean of the School of Communication, made a presentation on *The Umbrella Man*, Point Park University's original stage and film project, at the TEDx Conference at Nemaocolin Woodlands last November. TED conferences bring together presentations that focus on the power of ideas. Lindblom co-presented with **Bob Miller**, director of *The Umbrella Man* and a distinguished master artist-in-residence at Point Park.

Michael Essad, technical director, and **Joan Markert**, costume supervisor, both members of the staff of the Pittsburgh Playhouse at Point Park University, fabricated "Tamatebako," an al fresco art installation in Market Square on Oct. 27. Part of a multi-faceted project presented by the Mattress Factory, the fabric installation was designed by Japanese artist Yumi Kori.

Christopher Rolinson, associate professor of photojournalism, was named one of Pittsburgh's 40 Under 40 honorees in the November 2011 issue of Pittsburgh Magazine. Winners are chosen based on their passion, commitment, visibility, diversity and overall impact on the region.



Photo by Patricia Rolinson.

The Global Cultural Studies program faculty launched a series of lectures last fall. **Robert Fessler**, Ph.D., professor and acting dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, initiated the series on Oct. 11 with "Why Can't You See Things My Way? The Psychological Dynamics Underlying the Development of Cultural World Views." **Robert Ross**, Ph.D., assistant professor of humanities and human sciences, presented "Waiting for War (and Other Strategies to Stop Gentrification): The Case of Ras Beirut" on Nov. 8. Coming up this spring: **Dwight Hines**, Ph.D., assistant professor of humanities and human sciences, will speak about "The Anthropology of Modernity: The Colonization of Consciousness and the Consciousness of Colonization" on Feb. 14, and Professor **Channa Newman**, Ph.D., will discuss "The Genealogy of the Honors Movement in American Higher Education" on March 13. All lectures-6 p.m. in the J VH Auditorium in Thayer Hall.

Suzanne E. Miller, Ed.D., who retired last spring as a professor of education, published a peer-reviewed paper with the University of Oxford. Her study involved the use of children's books to help students distinguish between leaders and bullies. Miller told the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, "with so much emphasis in the schools now on trying to instill more civility and combating bullying,

FEEDBACK

Dear Editor,
I very much enjoyed Kevin Taylor's article on basketball coaches Jerry Conboy and Bob Rager in the fall 2011 issue of The Point.

It took me way back. I'm a Point Park grad (Journalism and Communication 1971) and it makes me a little weepy to realize that so much time has passed. However, the situation was just as these two great coaches described it. Coach Conboy gave Point Park legitimacy and Coach Rager, as one of Conboy's early star recruits, was one tough player.

It was fun to see them pictured together (they both look great) and to know – with history as my evidence – these two men are indeed pillars on which the basketball program was built. There were others, of course, but they are just names on a page to people who weren't around back then: Bill Long, Don Dudley, Larry Anderson, Al Harris, Ed Josefoski, Bob Metz. I only wish you could have seen them as young men, barely more than teens.

Thanks for the trip down memory lane. Cheers,
Dan Pie (COM 1971), Chandler, Ariz.

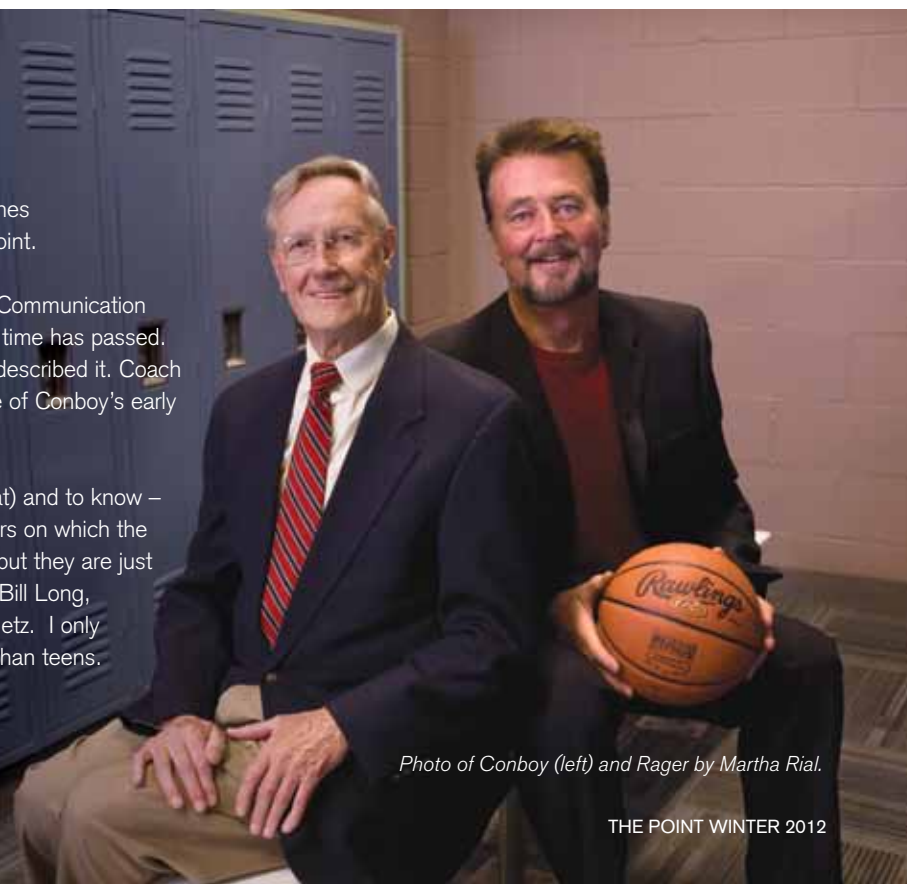


Photo of Conboy (left) and Rager by Martha Rial.

contemporary, student-selected literature is a great resource for teaching children respect for one another and providing them with the necessary foundation for getting along in society." Miller continues to serve as an adjunct professor.

Bob Rager, Point Park men's basketball head coach, was the featured speaker at Steel Valley High School's Commencement Ceremony on June 3. Rager is a native of Munhall, Pa., and he graduated from Munhall High School in 1969.

Ryenn Micaletti is the new assistant coach for the Point Park University women's basketball team. A former captain of the Seton Hill University team, Micaletti was recruited by **Tony Grenek**, who was hired to lead the Pioneers in

May. Micaletti helped Seton Hill to a 22-7 record in 2010-11 and a trip to the NCAA Division II national tournament.

Shirley Barasch, professor emerita in the Conservatory of Performing Arts, composed the world premiere of "Bassoon on the Moon" on Oct. 22 at St. Andrews Church in Highland Park, Pittsburgh. Performed by R. James Whipple, an artist/lecturer at Carnegie Mellon University, the bassoon premiere was part of "An American Travelogue" presented by the Tuesday Musical Club.

New Board Member

Peggy T. McKnight was elected as a member of the Board of Trustees last August. McKnight is active as a community volunteer for many non-profit

organizations in Pittsburgh. She is involved with Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, serving on the Individual Gifts Committee and the Women's Committee; Associates and Decorative Arts Committee for the Carnegie Museum of Art; and as a member of the Inner Circle for the Warhol Museum. McKnight also serves on the Board of Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and currently chairs the Individual Gift Committee. She also spearheaded the fundraising effort to establish Gilda's Club in Pittsburgh and continues to serve on its Advisory Committee. McKnight, who graduated from Tufts University with a bachelor's degree in psychology and a bachelor's and master's degree in occupational therapy, is a hand therapy and rheumatology consultant.



Photo by Matthew Brudnok.

Remembering 9/11

Point Park marked the 10th anniversary of 9/11 with a week of public events September 5-11, 2011. The University took a cross-disciplinary approach to the commemoration and highlighted themes that included respecting cultural differences, recognizing personal responsibility and valuing urban living. "Living and studying in a dynamic urban campus presents Point Park students with a unique opportunity to engage in lively debate about issues of cultural differences and personal responsibility," said **James H. Thomas, Jr.**, Ed.D., of the office of academic and student affairs. Public events Sept. 5-11 included a display of photos by **Scott Spangler**, a Point Park journalism and mass communication graduate and former Pittsburgh Tribune-Review photographer, who was one of the first photographers at the crash site in Shanksville, Pa. Faculty from the School of Business and global cultural studies program participated in a panel discussion. A candlelight vigil ended the week on Sept. 11.

Pittsburgh Center for Sports Media and Marketing at Point Park

The Pittsburgh Center for Sports Media and Marketing in residence at Point Park University presented a seminar on "Penguins & Pirates: The Power of Sports Branding" on Sept. 22 in the Student Center. Panelists included **Frank Coonelly**, president of the Pittsburgh Pirates, **David Morehouse**, CEO of the Pittsburgh Penguins, and **Corky Hall**, CEO of Stellus Consulting. The Center also presented "ESPN: Sports

Programming and Platforms Seminar" on Nov. 15 in the Lawrence Hall Ballroom. **Sean Hanrahan**, senior vice president of marketing solutions for ESPN, and **Rosalyn Durant**, general manager of ESPNU, were the featured panelists. The new center is led by Point Park alumni **Mike Fetcho** (COM and A&S 1978), owner of ISM USA (Integrated Strategic Marketing) and **Tom McMillan** (COM 1978), vice president of communications for the Pittsburgh Penguins. On Dec. 1, Fetchko and McMillan collaborated with the Career Development Center to present "How to Score the Interview," another learning opportunity for students.

Agriculture Secretary Visits Campus



Photo by Chris Rolinson.

Point Park welcomed U.S. Secretary of Agriculture **Tom Vilsack** to campus on Sept. 16. He gave a public address in the University's new Urban Park about the country's employment challenges. A Pittsburgh native who served as governor of Iowa, Vilsack was in town to promote President Barack Obama's American Jobs Act proposal. "It's great to be back in Pittsburgh," Vilsack told the crowd, which included many students and faculty members as well as news media. "I'm here today, and I thank Point Park University, to simply talk to you about the most urgent need this country faces, which is the need to put people back to work," Vilsack said. He cited the new park, which transformed the corner of the Boulevard of the Allies and Wood Street,

as an example of a project that provided much needed jobs.

International Environmentalist Presents Lecture

International environmental activist **Vandana Shiva**, Ph.D., traveled from India to Pittsburgh to speak at Point Park on Nov. 2. Students, faculty and staff packed the GRW Theatre to hear the physicist and dedicated defender of the environment discuss the importance of biodiversity, organic farming, farmers' rights and the de-privatization of water. Shiva has been named one of the top seven most powerful women in the world by Forbes magazine and has authored

more than 20 books. She also has received the Alternative Nobel Peace Prize and the Sydney Peace Prize for her commitment to social justice. "Dr. Shiva ... really spoke to the environmental aspect of what Point Park's global cultural studies program is all about," said

Holden Holden, a senior global cultural studies major.

Creating Sustainable Communities

Point Park hosted the Creating Sustainable Communities Conference on campus on Oct. 7. The event featured presentations that promote green infrastructure, healthy communities and low-cost land management practices that balance human needs with natural resource protection. The keynote speaker was **Tom Murphy**, senior resident fellow with the Urban Land Institute and former mayor of Pittsburgh.



SUPPORTING THE JOURNEY...

Make a life-changing journey possible for deserving students with your unrestricted gift to Point Park University's Annual Fund or designate your gift to one of the University's four schools: Arts and Sciences, Business, Communication, Conservatory of Performing Arts.

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Marvin Hamlisch at Point Park

The Conservatory of Performing Arts welcomed **Marvin Hamlisch** as Distinguished Master Artist in Residence for the 2011-12 academic year. The renowned composer and conductor presented two workshops for students during the fall semester and will present a third workshop in January.

Hamlisch hosted "The Art of the Audition" on Oct. 17 in the George Rowland White Performance Studio in the University's dance complex. Musical theatre majors **Elle DeMaria, Leah Fox, Jaron Frand** and **Connor Russell** had the unique



Ronald Allan-Lindblom (left) with Hamlisch.

opportunity to audition in front of Hamlisch and receive his feedback on how to make the most of an audition.

Fox said it was an amazing privilege and experience. "I am one to always go for a challenge, and in my lifetime, he is the most notably famous person I have ever performed in front of in person." Frand said he was grateful for the opportunity to receive feedback from a composer, a point of view actors don't often get to hear. "I had a great time. I got the chance to sing four different pieces for him, and I even sang one of his own



From left: students Connor Russell, Leah Fox, and Jaron Frand with Hamlisch. Photos by Martha Rial.

songs! I think the best part of the whole experience was leaving the workshop with a Marvin Hamlisch-approved audition package."

On Dec. 13, Hamlisch presented "The Works and Imagination of Marvin Hamlisch" at the Rockwell Theatre in the Pittsburgh Playhouse. The final workshop for students, to be held on Jan. 27, will focus on the composer's work for film. "I've been impressed by the caliber of the students at Point Park who are interested in theater. I hope that my knowledge [is] of benefit to them," said Hamlisch.

Hamlisch's life in music is notable for its versatility as well as substance. As a composer, he has won virtually every major award: three Oscars, four Grammys, four Emmys, a Tony and three Golden Globe awards. For Broadway he wrote the music for his groundbreaking show, *A Chorus Line*, which received the Pulitzer Prize, as well as *They're Playing Our Song*.

He is the composer of many motion picture scores, including his Oscar-winning score and song for *The Way We Were* and his adaptation of Scott

Joplin's music for *The Sting*, for which he received a third Oscar. His scores for films include original compositions and/or musical adaptations for *Sophie's Choice*, *Ordinary People*, *Three Men and a Cradle*, *Ice Castles*, *Take the Money and Run*, *Bananas*, and his latest effort *The Informant!*, directed by Steven Soderbergh.

Hamlisch holds the position of principal pops conductor for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Pasadena Symphony and Pops, Seattle Symphony and San Diego Symphony.

He was musical director and arranger of Barbra Streisand's 1994 concert tour and television special, *Barbra Streisand: The Concert* (for which he received two of his Emmys).

Hamlisch has said he believes in the power of music to bring people together. "Music is truly an international language, and I hope to contribute by widening communication as much as I can."



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For a confidential consultation, contact Barb Cinpinski at 412-392-4215 or email bcinpinski@pointpark.edu

www.pointpark.edu

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

Point Park *Night at the Symphony*

You're invited to attend Point Park University's Night at the POPS! with Marvin Hamlisch on Friday, Jan. 27, 2012. The evening will feature the PNC POPS! concert "Marvin, Dave Koz and the Movies," followed by a complimentary dessert reception with the University community, Hamlisch and Pittsburgh Symphony musicians.

This special night also features the All-Star College Chorus, eight of whom are Point Park students. Grammy-nominated saxophonist Dave Koz will join Hamlisch and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in a concert featuring memorable songs from the silver screen, including Mr. Hamlisch's own Academy Award-winning song, "The Way We Were."

For more information, including how to reserve your tickets at a special price call (412) 392-4819 or visit www.pittsburghsymphony.org/pointpark.

NEW FACES ON CAMPUS

Point Park Welcomes 13 New Faculty Members

Maggie Johnson is a visiting professor and director of community outreach in the Sport, Arts and Entertainment Management (SAEM) program in the School of Business. Johnson holds a master of arts management (M.A.M.) degree from Carnegie Mellon University. A talented jazz artist, she has more than a decade of experience in nonprofit management, including work with the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council. Visit: <http://tinyurl.com/maggiejohnson>.

Edward Strimlan, M.D., is a full-time visiting professor and coordinator of the Forensic Science program at Point Park. The former chief forensic investigator for Allegheny County's Office of the Medical Examiner, Strimlan brings real stories and years of experience conducting more than 2,000 death scene investigations into the classroom. He talks about his extensive CSI background and transition to full-time teaching here: <http://tinyurl.com/edwardstrimlan>.

Matthew Pascal, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of mathematics. He comes to Point Park after teaching mathematics at various universities including West Virginia University, Towson University and American University. Pascal earned a bachelor's degree from Duquesne University, a master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh and a doctorate in mathematics education from American University. Learn more: <http://tinyurl.com/matthewpascal>.

Steve Cuden is an assistant professor in the cinema and digital arts department. He is a writer-director-producer who holds an M.F.A. in screenwriting from

the University of California Los Angeles. During three decades in Hollywood, he wrote dozens of teleplays and screenplays for such productions as *X-Men*, *Iron Man*, *Unleashed*, *The Mask*, *Gargoyles*, *Beetlejuice* and *RoboCop*. Cuden also co-created the Broadway and international stage hit, *Jekyll & Hyde*, *The Musical*. Visit: <http://tinyurl.com/stevecuden>.

Deborah Stephen is visiting assistant professor of accounting in the School of Business. A certified public accountant (CPA), she holds a bachelor's degree in secondary education from Kansas State University and an M.B.A. from West Virginia University. She has served in the roles of general practice supervisor, corporate accountant, president/controller and accounting teacher. Visit: <http://tinyurl.com/debbiestephen>.

Kathleen Puskar, Ph.D., is associate professor of mechanical engineering technology. She was previously on the faculty at California State Polytechnic University and held postdoctoral scholar positions for the University of Pittsburgh and the University of California. She has worked as a computation fluid dynamics analyst and vehicle design engineer. Puskar earned a master's degree from Northwestern University and a doctorate from Carnegie Mellon University. Visit: <http://tinyurl.com/kathleenpuskar>.

Deirdre Maitre is an assistant professor of cinema and digital arts. She received her M.F.A. from Temple University and began her career as an assistant Avid editor at Philo Television in San Francisco. Since then, she has worked on many documentary and narrative projects throughout North

America. Maitre also freelances on commercial and non-profit videos and has served as post-production supervisor on Deron Albright's feature film *The Destiny of Lesser Animals*.

Garfield Lemonius is assistant professor of dance. He holds bachelor's degrees in dance and education from York University and he earned an M.F.A. from Southern Methodist University. His career includes performing as a principal dancer with the Dallas Black Dance Theatre touring in Europe, across the United States and in Canada; the film *Blues Brothers 2000*; solo performances in Vienna, Austria; and guest performances with companies across the U.S., Canada and Europe. Visit: <http://tinyurl.com/garfieldlemonius>.

Janice Glunk, Ed.D., is assistant professor of education and field supervisor of student teaching. She was previously the superintendent at Steel Valley School District. She has served in such positions as teacher, director of curriculum and instruction and coordinator of literacy and federal programs. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees and a reading supervisor certificate from Duquesne University and a doctorate in education from the University of Pittsburgh. Learn more: <http://tinyurl.com/janiceglunk>.

Robin Cecala, Ph.D., is a visiting assistant professor in the School of Communication. She was previously an instructor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Southern Mississippi, where she earned her doctorate in mass communication. She also taught at the State University of New York at Fredonia, where she earned her bachelor's degree. She holds a master's degree in multimedia technology from

Duquesne University. Learn more: <http://tinyurl.com/robincecala>.

Thom Baggerman, Ph.D., is assistant professor of broadcast journalism. He was previously assistant professor in the Department of Communication at Capital University, a visiting instructor at the University of Pittsburgh and a part-time faculty member at Robert Morris University. Baggerman has worked at various television stations, including WTOV-TV, where he was operations manager and director/producer/production technician. Learn more: <http://tinyurl.com/thombaggerman>.

Michael McKelvey, D.M.A., is associate professor and head of private voice in the Conservatory of Performing Arts. He previously served as coordinator of music and director of musical theatre at St. Edward's University in Austin. In Texas he worked extensively as a director, composer, producer, choral conductor, performer and voice teacher. He also serves as the artistic director of SummerStock Austin and D.M. Productions, and is an artistic associate with Penfold Theatre Company. Learn more: <http://tinyurl.com/michaelmckelvey>.

Jehnie Reis, Ph.D., is a visiting assistant professor of history in the Department of Humanities and Human Sciences. She previously taught French-American relations and accelerated academic writing at the University of Virginia, worked at the Boulder Historical Society in Colorado, and studied abroad at the Université de Paris IV. She earned a bachelor's degree in history and French from Tulane University and a master's and doctorate in modern European history from the University of Virginia. Learn more: <http://tinyurl.com/jehniereis>.



Lewis (left) and Washington. Photo by Jim Judkis.

Transition and Transformation

Anne Lewis Succeeds Nancy Washington as Board Chair

Point Park announced last August that Anne Lewis was elected by the Board of Trustees to serve as chair of the Board, where she will lead the University's capital campaign to support its Academic Village Initiative.

Lewis succeeded Nancy D. Washington, Ph.D., who was elected as chair in 2008 and continues to serve as a trustee. "It's an exciting time for Point Park. We are on an upward swing," said Washington, a longtime educator and faculty emerita at the University of Pittsburgh. "I look forward to staying involved, particularly in academic and student affairs."

Lewis, who is board chair and co-owner of Oxford Development Company, is passionate about youth-centered projects and has spearheaded development efforts for the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, Fox Chapel Country Day School and Shady Side Academy.

"Point Park is changing the landscape of Downtown Pittsburgh," said Lewis.

"The Academic Village Initiative focuses on addressing students' needs and will enhance the academic and social experiences of the University's growing population. I am excited to be part of that positive momentum."

Lewis co-chairs the Pittsburgh Promise fundraising committee and is honorary chair of the Children's Museum's Connect Capital Campaign. She is a board member of the United Way of Allegheny County, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, Child Watch of Pittsburgh and The Fred Rogers Company.

"Point Park is where the academic world 'rubs shoulders' with the real world. Our Downtown location puts us where the action is –and allows us to interact more closely with the people in business, the nonprofit community and government," said Lewis. "It gives our students a better view of the career world, and it enables Downtown workers to take advantage of learning opportunities that only a University can offer."



village green

Photo by Jim Schafer.

New Urban Park at the Academic Village brightens Downtown campus

With drums, student dancers and the crackle of fireworks, Point Park University opened its new Urban Park at the Academic Village Sept. 14 before a large audience representing the many partnerships – local elected officials, state legislators, philanthropic foundations, labor unions – that helped make the \$6.6 million project a reality.

by Christine Zapinski



Photos by Tom Bell

"Today we are here to thank you and to celebrate the official opening of the Village Park," University President Paul Hennigan said.

The new park sits at the intersection of the Boulevard of the Allies and Wood Street, in the heart of campus. It features a glass stair tower, a dramatic water feature and an elegant colonnade. River Birch trees and plantings provide a vibrant green space among the nearby buildings and streets. The open design is intended to create a welcoming outdoor space for the University community.

"Today is a fantastic day," Point Park senior Anthony Costulas, president of United Student Government, told the morning audience. "It is our hope this park will unite the members of the Point Park community and become a common ground for all."

Funding for the park came from a variety of sources, including a \$3.5 million state grant supported by the Allegheny County Legislative delegation, and many of those legislators attended the unveiling ceremony. Support also came

from Pittsburgh foundations, including a \$2 million grant from the Heinz Endowments for a number of campus projects, among them the Urban Park design.

An 'Incredible Transformation'

At the ceremony, State Rep. Paul Costa, a graduate of Point Park who sits on the University's Board of Trustees and serves on its faculty – offered words of heartfelt congratulations. "I can't tell you how proud I am ... to be standing here today," Costa said, looking around at the park, previously a parking lot and before that, a gas station. "The transformation is just incredible."

"I can't tell you how proud I am to be standing here today, the transformation is just incredible."

–State Representative Paul Costa

Additional speakers included Janet Sarbaugh, senior director of the Arts and Culture Program at the Heinz Endowments, State Senator Wayne

Fontana, Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl, Allegheny County Executive Dan Onorato and Rich Stanizzo, business manager of the Pittsburgh Regional Building Trades Council.

Announcing Osteria 100

At the opening ceremony Hennigan also announced that the University is partnering with two local restaurateurs, Chuck Hammel and Tom Trimm, to open a new eatery in the first floor of the Point Park building adjacent to the park. The pair currently operate Cioppino Restaurant and Cigar Bar, and Osteria 2350, both in the Strip District.

Throughout the fall, the attractive park setting drew Point Park students, faculty, and alumni together for a variety of events, including a concert series and party for alumni during *Back to the Burgh* weekend Oct. 7-9.

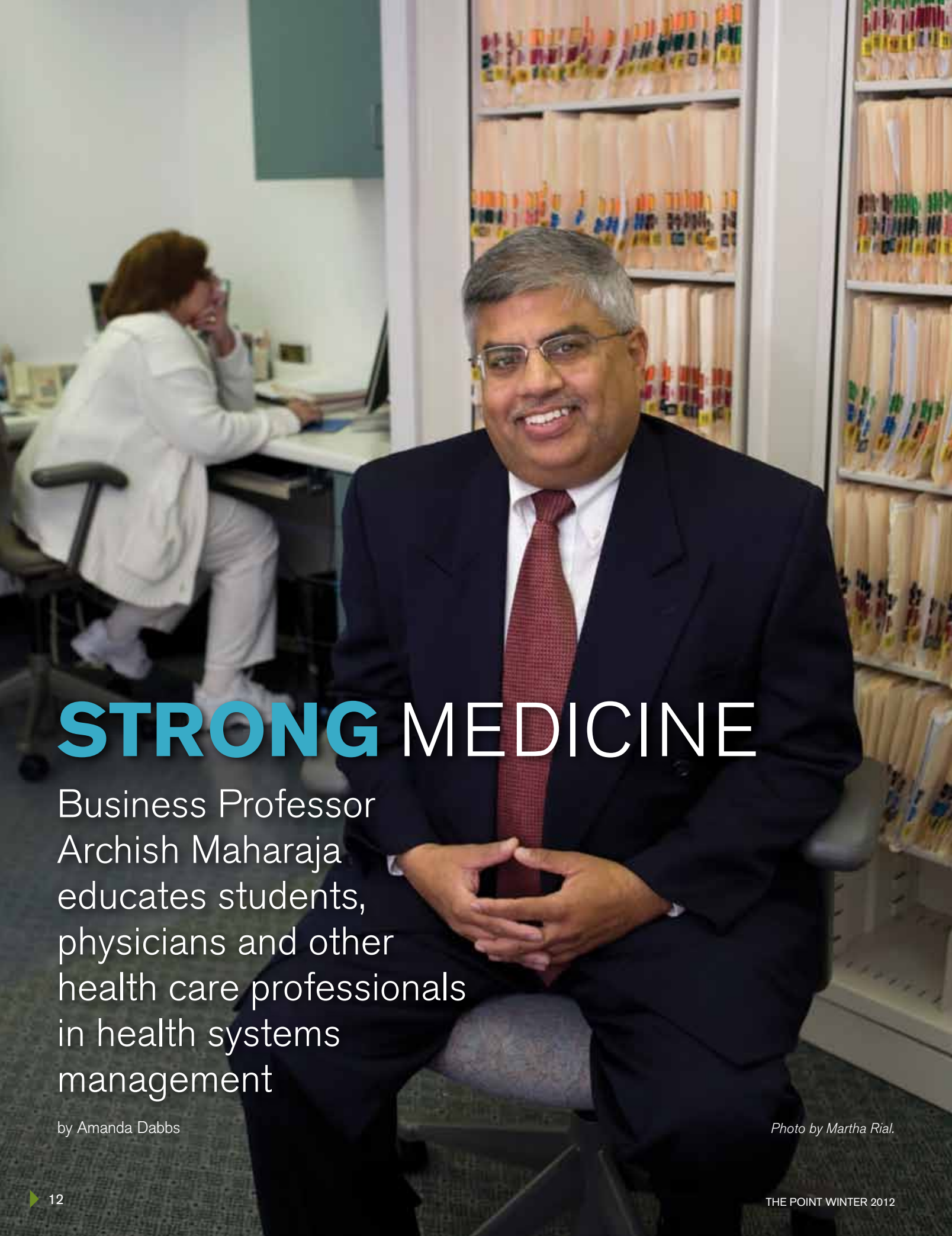
Opposite above: a day in the life of the new park. Below left and right: the park opening celebration on Sept. 14.

Point Extra

Watch a video at www.pointpark.edu/The Point

Photo by Jim Schafer.





STRONG MEDICINE

Business Professor Archish Maharaja educates students, physicians and other health care professionals in health systems management

by Amanda Dabbs

Photo by Martha Rial

Archish Maharaja, Ed.D., C.P.A., assistant professor of business management and M.B.A. program director, heads the health systems management concentration available within Point Park's M.B.A. program. He has diversified professional experience, from working at a Fortune 500 company and several smaller accounting and medical businesses to forming his own CPA and consulting firm concerned primarily with physician practices. His industry experience includes working as a manager and accountant, serving as a financial advisor on a corporate and personal level, and as a health care administrator and physician practice manager. Maharaja also provides consulting and management services to individual and multi-specialty physician practices, as well as larger health care entities. His research activities are concentrated in health care administration and management and information technology as it applies to health care. He recently talked with The Point:

The Pittsburgh-based global health enterprise UPMC has been locked in a protracted battle with Highmark, the region's largest provider of health insurance. Depending on the outcome, it's possible that many consumers may have to switch health care providers and/or turn over their medical records to another insurer. How can patients prepare for this type of situation?

AM: Patients should be prepared for these changes by knowing how to obtain their medical records. To start the process, patients first need to call

their primary care physician's office and request a release of all their records. Due to HIPAA, before the office releases the records, the patient will first need to sign a form authorizing release of his or her medical records. After this, the patient should ask the office, "Are there any records you have not given me?" and follow up with any specialists he or she has seen, labs where blood work has been done, etc. It is important to do this since many primary care physicians do not have complete medical records and often have only a summary of what has

Make sure the premium you are paying matches what your health needs are now.

been sent to them from labs, specialists, etc. During the transition, the two most important things a patient needs to think about are maintaining quality and continuity of care. When picking a new physician, patients can check out www.healthgrades.com, although it is not 100 percent objective. I also suggest calling primary care physician offices for references and getting referrals from family and friends. In addition, I recommend patients schedule a preliminary meeting with their potential new physician.

Are there any safeguards built into the system to ensure privacy during this kind of switch, other than HIPAA?

AM: No, HIPAA is the main privacy mandate. Everyone is doing a good job preserving privacy.

Is there a good or bad way to go about switching insurer carriers to not only ensure privacy but to make sure you are getting the best value for your dollar, as well as the best care?

AM: Patients, especially those who have an existing health condition, need to make sure the insurer is meeting or exceeding their needs. Healthy individuals need to find out what is convenient for them and which insurer will provide the best advice and coverage in terms of maintaining their health. Make sure the premium you are paying matches what your health needs are now. Buying insurance is often a package deal and depends on what you need. Often it is based on "you get what you pay for." Before electing the insurance plan, read the entire contract carefully to find out what services are covered and what may be excluded. ❖

Point Extra



For more conversation with Arch Maharaja, visit www.pointpark.edu/the-point.



Employee Development

New Center for Management Excellence is a resource for Pittsburgh's business community

by Cheryl Valyo

Professionals and employees throughout Western Pennsylvania will have the opportunity to build their skills for success through a variety of learning opportunities presented by the newly established Center for Management Excellence (CME) at Point Park University.

"Our vision is to be Pittsburgh's premier provider of management-level business education," says Point Park University President Paul Hennigan, Ed.D. "With our presence in the heart of Downtown Pittsburgh, we believe that the new Center for Management Excellence will serve the

University's mission, and our region's business community, extremely well."

By providing diverse education opportunities ranging from workshops, webinars, coaching and leadership assessment programs, "I believe that the Center is truly going to be a gateway between the University and the business community," says Karen McIntyre, Ph.D., senior vice president for academic and student affairs and dean of faculty.

The training opportunities provided through the Center can be custom designed to meet the needs of a particular business, including certificate programs, and may eventually provide a foundation for obtaining credit toward a degree, says McIntyre. The Center will tap into the expertise of faculty throughout Point Park's four schools, including the School of Business.

"The Center supports our sense of what it means to be a dynamic urban university by responding to the needs of the business community and making businesses familiar with the resources available at Point Park," according to McIntyre.

Customized Training

"The goal of the Center for Management Excellence is to support participant development and career plans in a customized approach of personal success," according to Rex P. Gatto, Ph.D., executive director of the Center.

Many employee development programs address leadership training at the executive level, he says, but the CME will serve employees at all stages of career development – from entry level to executive. "Our primary goal is to help people focus on their careers and give them the skill sets that will enable them to be successful," says Gatto.



On the job with Gatto (left) and Cermak.

Photos by Martha Rial.

The founder and president of Gatto Associates, LLC, he built a consulting practice "dedicated to helping people in the workplace to enhance productivity through a better understanding of themselves," Gatto explains. As a behavioral scientist and counselor, he has helped people at all levels of their careers, through training programs, one-on-one and group counseling.

As a consultant and lecturer, Gatto has worked with business people throughout the United States and Canada. He has presented for many professional organizations and received an outstanding speaker citation from the American Society of Training and Development. As a "change interventionist," he has written and presented for business teams and corporations with the aim of helping people to achieve an enriched and productive work life.

Gatto holds an undergraduate and master's degree in education from Duquesne University, a master's degree in counseling psychology from Norwich University, a Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh, and Pennsylvania certifications as an educator and supervisor of curriculum and instruction.

He is a member of the board of the Pittsburgh Human Resources Association (PHRA).

The CME also plans to sponsor a speaker series and will leverage YouTube and social media channels to reach out to area employees and employers, according to Jeff Cermak, manager of operations for the new Center.

Range of Resources

Both Gatto and Cermak say they are excited by the opportunity to build an outstanding employee development center in the heart of Downtown. "Through the Center for Management Excellence at Point Park, the University not only serves the region's professionals by providing excellent business education but also offers the full range of resources available through all of its four schools and many departments, including psychology, education, journalism and much more," says Gatto.

"This is a very exciting opportunity to innovate and to educate employees at all levels, from graduating students at the start of their careers to those in the executive suite." ❖

WITH HONORS

Honors Program Enhances Learning Experience for Top Students

University course work is always a challenge for students at Point Park. But one group of students has taken their study to a higher level by participating in the Honors Program, which is designed to enhance their academic experience as they seek intellectual and personal growth.

by Camille Downing

Honors students at the Pittsburgh Zoo.



Developed by P. K. Weston, Ph.D., English composition and literature professor, the Honors Program cultivates a motivated community of learners to not only experience more rigorous studies but also to move beyond the traditional classroom to participate in community service and leadership activities. This combination of coursework and community involvement provides a depth of study beyond the conventional expectations of collegiate education.

Currently there are 295 honors students enrolled throughout the University, according to Helen Fallon, director of the Honors Program. High school or transfer students who have earned a 3.5 QPA and scored more than 1700 on the SAT or 25 on the ACT test are automatically admitted into the program when they are accepted to Point Park. Other students may apply for admission either upon enrollment or after they begin their studies.

Honors classes focus on in-depth study that includes a variety of course materials, discussions and assignments in small, intensive classes that allow one-on-one time with professors. The classroom experience is enhanced with lectures by guest speakers, field trips and creative and interactive assignments.

"The thing that appeals to me most about the Honors Program is the individual attention from the professors and the community service," says Carleigh Dettore, psychology and biology major and president of the Honors Student Organization. "I like that the program is extremely flexible; all of the professors and program directors are very accommodating and want to see you succeed."

In addition to honors level courses, traditional classes can also be "honored" as students collaborate with faculty on

additional individual projects and work to enhance the learning experience. Credits are given for core honors section classes, independent studies, upper level or contract courses. Students may also complete a thesis or honors final project. Students who complete 18 credits receive an honors certificate in addition to their diploma at graduation.

Outside of the classroom, students are expected to participate in activities offered through the Honors Student Organization, including community service projects, as well as leadership and mentoring opportunities.

Students learn to "pay it forward" through volunteer activities with events like the Pink Feet Race for the Susan G. Komen

where she believes the Honors Program experience will help her to become a "compassionate and caring physician."

The program also offers networking opportunities with real-life practitioners and potential employers. Students, who are members of the National Collegiate Honors Council, attend and present their work at regional and national honors conferences, where they benefit from meeting other honors students and their professors.

Ultimately, the Honors Program sets the stage for students as they prepare for further study or careers after graduation. Graduate schools are drawn to honors-level students, according to Fallon.



Helen Fallon, director of the Honors Program, with students. Photos by Chris Rolinson.

Foundation and the Great Race for Pittsburgh's Citiparks. On campus, the group has been instrumental in coordinating activities for Martin Luther King commemorations.

Students venture outside of Pittsburgh for an alternative spring break every year that helps others in need. Past trips have included volunteering at nonprofits in New York City and working with Habitat for Humanity in New Orleans.

Dettore has seen first hand how intense classroom instruction works hand-in-hand with the community service projects. Her plans are to attend medical school,

The enhanced program of study has led to many graduates continuing on to graduate school, including Mark Frantz who has found he is much better prepared for the increased expectations at this level. A 2010 Biology graduate, Frantz is currently studying biology in the masters program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

"The Honors Program work is really helping me now as I am expected to conduct rigorous research," explains Frantz. "I developed great academic merit for life because of my full undergraduate experience." ❖

Branding the Bison

Pioneers mascot takes center stage in new athletics logo

The Point Park athletic department has launched a new logo to represent the school's sports teams. Showcasing Point Park's longtime mascot as well as the Downtown Pittsburgh skyline, the logo now serves as the brand identity for the Pioneers' 11 varsity teams and the athletic department as a whole. It was created by A to Z Communications, a Pittsburgh-based marketing, advertising and design firm.

"The process to identify our athletic brand has been exciting," according to Point Park Director of Athletics Dan Swalga. "Over a period of 18 months, we consulted with many parts of the University, including students, student-athletes, faculty, staff and alumni. With this new athletic brand identity, I feel we have been able to tie into the storied past of Point Park, as well as the strength of the present."

The logo prominently displays the school name as well as the nickname for the sports teams – Pioneers. A central figure is Point Park's longtime mascot, the Bison, first used as a school mascot in the 1967-68 school year, the first year of intercollegiate competition versus four-year institutions. Also prominently displayed is the Downtown Pittsburgh environment of which Point Park is a part. In the back left are iconic

pieces of the Pittsburgh skyline, and in the back right are two central pieces to the Point Park campus – Lawrence Hall and Academic Hall. Included is the pedestrian bridge above Wood Street. The shape at the bottom of the logo is representative of the bastions of Fort Duquesne and Fort Pitt, which were once located in the area now known as Point State Park. The University derives its name from nearby Point State Park, located at the meeting place of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers. ❖



1968

About the Bison

The Bison became a mascot for the school in 1967 when the Alpha Phi Omega fraternity teamed with the Varsity Club to acquire a live bison. The bison was named Black Diamond II in reference to the Black Diamond bison on the reverse side of the U.S. nickel at the time. It was kept at South Park and was a featured attraction at parades on the Boulevard of the Allies, as well as at sporting events.

Black Diamond II was widely popular at Point Park and was a source of pride for the entire school. Although Black Diamond II eventually passed away, the Bison image remained a symbol of school spirit with the introduction of a Bison mascot costume. The Bison mascot remains a fixture at the school at present day. The Point Park cheer leading squad was reintroduced in 2009, and the Bison is used by the team to promote school spirit. The Bison also makes public appearances, like the ones he made during Point Park's 50th Anniversary Celebration, fall of 2010.



Text by Kevin Taylor. Vintage images courtesy of the Point Park University Archives. At right: Students enjoy Spirit Week in October 2011.





Photos by Martha Rial.

RESCUE HERO

As a young boy, Robert Lee Skertich would hang out at the fire station, watching his father and the other Etna firefighters race out to douse a burning building or rescue a motorist from a tangled wreck. He never doubted that he would be a volunteer firefighter too. Public service was part of his DNA.

In the past 30 years, Skertich has amassed one public service credential after another – chief of Hampton Township Volunteer Fire Department No. 1, EMS coordinator for Allegheny County, deputy commander of a federal disaster medical assistance team in Haiti and chief operating officer for the American Red Cross.

But Skertich's career advanced not only because of excellent performance in the field, but also because he took one college course after another until he earned a doctorate in public policy.

Now director of the public administration and undergraduate organizational leadership programs at Point Park, he is helping fellow firefighters, emergency medical technicians, disaster managers and other public officials to learn the skills of fundraising, budgeting and managing their personnel.

While Point Park's business school has offered a bachelor's of science, associate degree and certificate in public administration for years, fall 2011 marks the first time

that students can earn all 18 credits for the certificate online, appealing to the erratic schedules of many emergency workers.

"When you go through fire academy, there is nothing about budget and fundraising. It is all about ladders and hoses," Skertich said. "Then there is the other side of running an organization – government regulations, managing

personnel and fundraising." Emergency workers, he said, are starting to see how formal business training can help them move up in an organization.

Roy Cox, district chief of Pittsburgh's Bureau of EMS, was glad he earned a bachelor's in public administration from Point Park in 1991 before going on for a master's and doctorate.

"I work with a bunch of people who wake up at 3 a.m. to respond and are happy to be faceless day-to-day heroes."

–Business professor Rob Skertich

"Your credentials validate your experiences," he said. "If I say, 'I am an emergency worker,' okay. But if I say that I have a bachelor's in public administration, it gives me credibility. It exposed me to different mindsets and individuals."

Cox has personally taken federal emergency courses taught by Skertich. He said emergency workers, some of whom were nervous about returning to the classroom, could really relate to the down-to-earth professor.

"He is not a stuffed shirt. He is a golf-shirt, Hawaiian-shirt personality. He is

one of us," said Cox, an adjunct professor of criminal justice and intelligence studies at Point Park.

Skertich, 48, knows about juggling a job as an emergency worker with college class work. After graduating from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, he earned both a master's and doctorate in public policy from the University of Pittsburgh.

In addition to his stellar credentials, Skertich has been tapped by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to serve as deputy commander of Pennsylvania's Disaster Medical Assistance Team. In January 2010, the group traveled to Petionville, Haiti, to set up a temporary hospital on a golf course where more than 30,000 displaced Haitians were living in tents.

"It was the worst disaster I ever saw," said Skertich, who supervised medical personnel and operations during the trip. "But these people were very appreciative of American help. It was a real lesson in resiliency."

For all his management roles, he remains a firefighter at heart, responding to 15 to 20 calls a month and passing his love of the job on to his son, also a firefighter. According to Skertich: "I work with a bunch of people who wake up at 3 a.m. to respond and are happy to be faceless day-to-day heroes. ❖"



Point Park alums Daniel Johnson and Dustin Fitzharris talk about achieving Broadway dreams and transitioning from Pittsburgh to the Big Apple



by Dustin Fitzharris

Daniel Johnson, a 2010 musical theater graduate of Point Park, was in a New York PNC Bank branch withdrawing the remaining of his savings. He couldn't believe how much money he had spent in just one month of living in New York to pursue his dream of performing on Broadway. Nervous about how he was going to make it through, his phone rang. It was Roundabout Theatre asking him if he wanted an ensemble role in the Broadway revival, *Anything Goes*, starring Joel Grey and Sutton Foster. Upon

hearing the news, he jumped up and down in the middle of the bank. Security came running over to him and asked if everything was all right. Johnson, 23, yelled, "I'm going to Broadway!"

Dustin Fitzharris earned a degree in education at Point Park in 2002, went on to receive a master's degree in journalism at Columbia University, and is now a writer for ABC television in New York City. He caught up with Johnson (whose stage name is Daniel J. Edwards) on a

rainy, fall Monday—his only day off. They discussed Dan's New York adventures, his memories of Pittsburgh and why he chose Point Park:

Dustin Fitzharris:
What was your audition like for *Anything Goes*?

Daniel J. Edwards: They hold all of you in a waiting room. You get a number and then you wait. This was a dancer's call, so they call maybe 30 of you in a room. Then you dance for them, maybe four at

Opposite: writer Dustin Fitzharris (left) and dancer Daniel Johnson (Edwards) in New York's theater district. Above: the dancer in front of the Stephen Sondheim Theater, home of the Tony Award-winning revival of *Anything Goes*. Both photos by Charles Moss. The cast of *Anything Goes*, led by Sutton Foster. Photo by Joan Marcus.

a time after you learn the combination, and then they decide from there.

You graduated in 2010. How soon after graduation did you move to New York?

As soon as I graduated I was lucky enough to catch Pittsburgh CLO's [Civic Light Opera] *Miss Saigon*. I did that. They did a mini Toronto tour, so we went there for the month of July. Right after that I went home [Manistee, Mich.] for a month, and then I decided to move because it was getting boring at home.

Once you moved to New York, what were your first experiences like?

A little crazy. I come from a really small town and in a big city there are so many people, and it's easy to get lost. Doing the auditions and constantly trying to find work was great. As soon as I got this job I had about three months to do nothing, so I worked at Game Stop for three months to pay my rent.

Since being in the show, what has been the most memorable experience?

That's hard. There are a lot. Opening night was just fantastic. The first rehearsal was just an amazing beginning. The most memorable night, even though it

was the fastest, was the Tony Awards. Just how speedy it was and how amazing it was to be on that stage. And winning the Tony for Best Revival.

Growing up in Michigan, did you ever imagine you'd be performing on the Tony Awards?

My goal was when I was 40, I would've liked to have been on Broadway, but that was it.

Why did you choose Point Park?

I went to Wright State [Dayton, Ohio] for a year, and it just wasn't working out. I didn't really like the environment. So, I was looking for a new school, and I heard about this amazing dance program. I don't consider myself the best dancer, but it's fun. I heard it was an amazing school, an amazing city, right in the center, and I never really lived in a big city before, so I wanted to give it a try.

What did you love about living in Pittsburgh?

A lot of things. Primanti Brothers. They have amazing sandwiches. I think the training was amazing as well. I love just absorbing what the teachers had to teach us and sitting in a practice room

trying to figure it out. Being a transfer as a junior, I only had two years there. Luckily I was cast in the musicals. I think *Rocky Horror [Picture Show]* was the most memorable musical I did there.

What do you miss about the city?

There is a sense of Steeler pride, which I thought was cool. I think it's clean. I had a place to sit and chill every day. The park was nice.

What advice would you give to others who want to pursue a career on Broadway?

Just do it. Don't be afraid. I know for auditions some people don't consider themselves dancers, so they won't go to the dance call, but it's not always about that. It's about seeing you move and then from there, they'll see you sing. So, you can do your strength. It's about hitting all your auditions and being confident in yourself. Just do it because you love it, and don't worry if you don't get the job right away. ❖

Point Extra



Read an extended interview and see a video at www.pointpark.edu/the-point.

Protect and Serve

By Nancy Commella

From humble beginnings to third in command on the Pittsburgh police force, alumna Maurita Bryant embodies the credo

Photos by Martha Rial.



Cleaning offices in the U.S. Steel building in downtown Pittsburgh in 1975 to support her two small children, Maurita Bryant (A&S 2006, 2007) did not foresee a 34-year career cleaning up the streets of Pittsburgh that has led her to assistant chief of the City of Pittsburgh Bureau of Police. Her desire to provide a better life for her daughters prompted her to apply to the police academy after reading an announcement that women would be hired for the first time.

After passing the test to enter the academy, Bryant had second thoughts. "I almost didn't take the job because I had never touched a gun." A woman who cleaned floors with Bryant convinced her. "She said, 'If you don't take that opportunity, you'll be here the rest of your life cleaning offices like me.'"

The soft-spoken Bryant admits she struggled with the physical portion of academy training and course work. "Taking tests and studying never came easy for me, so I had to work very hard at it."

Her hard work paid off. She now has her bachelor and master's degrees in criminal justice from Point Park and oversees the police operations branch, with six commanders and 579 officers under her charge, including the SWAT unit.

"Sometimes I feel like a fireman because that's what you do all day. You put out little fires, big fires." Bryant's 12-hour workdays involve determining what operations will benefit the city, and the best means for the six command zones to work together. "It reminds me of raising a family," Bryant says of the

challenge of leading six commanders, all with different ideas and personalities. "I tend to treat people the way I like to be treated. I try to be respectful at all times, and I try to accept people the way they are," Bryant explains. This applies not only to officers she works with but to drug dealers and prostitutes she arrested as a beat cop. "I've arrested people I've went to school with, relatives, neighbors. Just because you arrest somebody doesn't mean you have to demean them."

That philosophy of life Bryant learned the hard way, not knowing her father and living with a relative when she was young. "I didn't have the best childhood. ... In so many ways, I was a victim. I know how it feels ... So, I wouldn't want anybody else to feel like that."

Despite the respect she showed others, Bryant faced discrimination on the job being one of the first women. "The men, some were just mean. They played little, nasty jokes on you." While some men were supportive, given the hierarchical hiring order – white men, black men, white women, black women – Bryant says black females were given the worst assignments in the highest crime areas. "It's almost like you had to earn your respect. ... You were always being tested."

Unlike many female officers who did not last, Bryant was determined not to quit and found a role model in the first black female supervisor, Gwen Elliott. "She cared about everyone. She would give you the shirt off her back. She was smart as a whip." It was Elliott's fortitude that encouraged Bryant. "No matter how much people talked about her or tried to demean her, she kept her head up. She kept

going. 'If she can do it, I can do it,'" Bryant thought.

And she did. In addition to advancing on the police force, Bryant also emulated Elliott by serving on nonprofit boards, 14 to be exact, including the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives. Bryant founded Pittsburgh's chapter and will serve as national president in 2012.

Bryant loved her job from the beginning, walking the beat her first year, and still does. "I look on it as a passion. You have to like people. You have to want to make a difference. You have to want to change things for the better."

With all her accomplishments, Bryant knows her life could have turned out very different. She credits her late mother (who she described as her biggest fan), her desire to never disappoint her children and God's grace with keeping her on the straight and narrow. "When I look back on my life and think of things that happened or situations where I could have really gone down the wrong path, I feel something led me on the right path. ... I think I was meant to be a police officer." ♦



Focal Point

From photojournalism to fine arts, photography programs span the spectrum

by Colleen Derda

“What’s most important to me is creating a story with each photograph I take,” Point Park alumna Rachel Tokarski says in a blog about her life’s work. “I am passionate about photography and the point of view you can create with every subject.”

Tokarski, 24, graduated from Point Park in 2010 with a B.A. in photojournalism. She now manages her own photography business and serves as a curatorial assistant at Wood Street Galleries in Downtown Pittsburgh.

Tokarski says every day she lives the words of famed American photographer Richard Avedon: “If a day goes by without my doing something related to photography, it’s as though I’ve neglected something essential to my existence, as though I had forgotten to wake up.”

Each year, a new group of students begins to develop a passion for photography at Point Park. In 2011–12, about 60 undergrads are pursuing bachelor of fine arts degrees in photography, and more than 40 are studying photojournalism. All are making the

most of the programs’ hands-on learning and opportunities to develop their craft and careers on campus and off.

Over the past two years the School of Communication has expanded its B.F.A. in photography course offerings, initiated a photography lecture series, opened new studios and labs, acquired and installed new equipment, added exhibition space for student photographs, and created new practicum and internship opportunities.

Assistant Professor Patrick Millard joined the faculty in 2010 to develop the B.F.A. program and to work with Assistant Professor Christopher Rolinson, who oversees the photojournalism program. Both are collaborating to create new opportunities for students and deepen connections for alumni.

Focus on Fine Arts

Millard made it a priority to bring B.F.A. classes back to campus and expand course offerings. He also launched Point Park’s photography blog for students and alumni (pointparkphoto.blogspot.com) and the “Speaking Light” series of lectures. He is also exploring opportunities for student works to be professionally exhibited in Pittsburgh’s Cultural District.

Millard says he intends for Point Park’s photographic arts program to be known nationally and he believes it is well on its way.

“Prospective students interested in fine arts photography are attracted to our small class sizes,” says Millard. “They realize they can receive one-on-one instruction here and get to know their professors individually, unlike studying and working at a large university. And Point Park’s downtown location is a big attraction.”

Telling Stories through Photojournalism

Alumna Rachel Withers, 29, says getting to know her professors was key to launching her own career. The 2005 photojournalism grad says as a student she accompanied

Rolinson on photo shoots for his business and worked with instructors on multiple projects. She began to build her portfolio and gained paid assignments. She says she also learned about the business of photography. Today the Westchester County resident shoots weddings and portraits in New York City and surrounding areas and teaches photography to young children. She makes it a point to keep in touch with her instructors.

Rolinson says Point Park’s ability to provide students with networking opportunities and one-on-one attention indeed sets the University’s photography programs apart.

In spring 2011 Rolinson took a digital photography class to the former Carrie Furnace steel site. The resulting work was then featured in the *Rivers of Steel at Point Park University* student and faculty photography exhibit in the Lawrence Hall lobby, a show that drew praise from the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. ❖



Opposite: Patrick Millard (second from left) leads a classroom discussion with photography students. Photo by Ian Bradshaw. Below right: A student photographer works in the studio. Photo by Frank Walsh. Above: a photojournalism student captures images of the Carrie Furnace site. Photo by Chris Rolinson. Top right: inside a Point Park darkroom. Photo by Andy Weier.



POINT PARK PHOTOGRAPHY STUDENTS ENJOY:

- Darkrooms for processing B&W and color negative photography
- State-of-the-art digital editing and print labs
- A working studio for commercial and artificial lighting needs
- Photofinishing room for gallery and portfolio project production
- Alternative processes room
- Comprehensive equipment rental service
- Exhibit space throughout the University



SPEAKING LIGHT LECTURE SERIES

The School of Communication lecture series on the photographic arts continues with artists John Holmgren on Jan. 27, and Tom Persinger on Feb. 24. Each lecture starts at 6 p.m. in the JVH Auditorium, Thayer Hall. A peer portfolio sharing session precedes the event. The public is welcome.



For more information, visit pointparkphoto.blogspot.com.

ALUMNI CONNECTION ▶



What are you doing? We want to know more about our alumni and their Point Park experience. There are 24,181 alumni of record. Sixty-seven percent live in Western Pennsylvania. The chart (at left) provides some additional statistics about our alumni.

Understanding how alumni experienced Point Park, and knowing what you have been doing since graduation, helps us to plan programs of interest and benefit to you.

Since it was founded, Point Park has offered diverse opportunities for learning. Unfortunately, the Alumni Relations Office can't distinguish between traditional-age residential students and adult learners. We don't know if you commuted, transferred, or if you were a part-time learner who took more than four years to graduate. We have employer information for only 38 percent of alumni and job titles for 43 percent.

The University has taken steps to capture more student information, so we will better understand how (future) alumni experienced Point Park.

But we want to know more about you. How well has your degree served your needs for career advancement, for pursuing graduate degrees, and for preparing you for life?

The more we know, the better the University can provide educational programs that address student needs. And knowing more helps us to provide alumni with opportunities for career development as well as social and continuing education programs.

Last October, we launched an alumni survey. More than 1,000 alumni have responded with updated information. Please tell us what you are doing and how you experienced Point Park. You'll find the survey at www.pointpark.edu/ alumni and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/pointparkalumni.

Sincerely,

Rick Haskins (COM 1971)
Vice President, Development and Alumni Relations

ALUMNI OF RECORD

% TOTAL

Women	48%
Men	51

SCHOOLS

Arts and Sciences	37
Business	32
Communication	12
Conservatory	11

DECADE OF GRADUATION

1960s	9
1970s	16
1980s	17
1990s	20
2000s	36

CLASS NOTES ▶

▶ 1970s

Dennis Beran (BUS 1971) has been elected chairman of the board of the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA). The election took place at the IIA's annual meeting in July 2011 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia during an international conference in which 2,000 internal auditors gathered for networking and professional development. Beran is senior vice president and director of audit at J.C. Penney, Inc., headquartered in Dallas. Beran has spent his 40-year career at J.C. Penney. He joined the company in 1971 directly after graduating (cum laude) with a bachelor's degree in accounting from Point Park. Beran spent the next four decades building a successful internal audit career by working his way up through the ranks of J.C. Penney's internal audit division. As IIA chairman, he will serve as a key spokesperson for the IIA and will work to foster positive, mutually beneficial relationships with other professional organizations.

who you think wrote them." She also wrote and performs her own long-running play *Mrs. Shakespeare*, a one-woman show sharing Anne Shakespeare's trials and triumphs with and without her playwright husband. Hudson is a principal with Imaginative Marketing, PR, Events & Social Media Solutions in Pittsburgh.

Pamela Mauro (A&S 1972) has been appointed dean of students at Kohala High School where she has taught Advance Placement (AP) United States History for the last decade. She also serves as adviser for the school's National Honor Society. Kohala High School is a Title One School on the northern tip of the Big Island of Hawaii with an enrollment of 260 students. Mauro, who earned her undergraduate degree in history at Point Park, has lived in Hawaii for 20 years. Prior to moving to Hawaii, she worked for Capitol Records and Henry Mancini in Hollywood, Calif.



Gershwin Sprauve (BUS 1987) attended the Skål International World Congress in Turku, Finland, in September 2011. He is the secretary of the St. Thomas Skål Club and was the designated delegate to attend the 2011 Congress and exercise voting rights on behalf of the club. Skål is a professional organization of tourism leaders around the world, promoting global tourism and friendship. It is the only international group uniting all branches of the travel and tourism industry. The industry's managers and executives meet at local, national, regional and international levels to explore topics of common interest. Skål International has about 20,000 members in 450 Clubs throughout 85 nations. Sprauve (above left) writes, "I am very excited to say the least to have been amongst fellow Skålleagues and industry professionals from around the world, participating in this outstanding event."

James Henry Riggs III (COM 1973) is in his 31st year as sports editor at the Post-Journal in Jamestown, N.Y. Riggs' wife, Sharon, is a retired special education teacher. The couple enjoys spending time at their condo in Nashville, Tenn. Their son, Jim IV, lives nearby in Nolensville, Tenn. with his wife Melissa, son Brennan (age 5) and daughter Cora (age 2). A third grandchild is due in April.

Yvonne (Potts) Hudson (COM 1979) directed *Ireland's Shakespeare*, presented by Poet's Corner, on Nov. 6 and 7 in the Victorian Chapel at Calvary United Methodist Church in Pittsburgh. The production, featuring a cast of seven, was a staged reading of playwright Michael McGovern's farce about historical forgeries of the Bard's works. A conversation with the playwright, cast and director followed. According to Hudson, the recent obsession over Shakespeare's forgeries is a testament to his significance in literature and the English language as a whole. "Shakespeare's works are significant regardless of

▶ 1980s



Janice Repka (COM 1983) is the author of *The Clueless Girl's Guide to Being a Genius* (Dutton Children's Books 2011). Main character Aphrodite Wigglesmith is a 13-year-old math prodigy who's already earned a college degree and returns to her old middle school to teach remedial math to a group of underachievers who can't tell a square root from a hair root. According to Kirkus Reviews, it's "a lighthearted, funny

and often bizarre saga of middle-school mayhem. Underneath the drama, though, is a gentle, uplifting message. Even though we can't explain how or why some friendships form, the best of them help us to understand ourselves and change us in fundamental ways." Repka, who is an assistant professor of English and creative writing at Lake Superior State University, confirms "it's a book about friendship. But it's also about valuing ourselves. I'm clueless about the secret to my mother's meatball recipe and how to pronounce the word hyperbole, but I'm a genius at circus trivia and loving my kids. Discovering what parts of ourselves are clueless and what parts are genius can be a lot of fun." *The Clueless Girl's Guide to Being a Genius* is available online and in bookstores (ISBN-9780525423331). The reading audience is elementary to middle school and higher. For more information, go to www.janicerepka.com.

FOUNDERS SOCIETY

Established in conjunction with Point Park University's 50th anniversary, the Founders Society is an exclusive membership group comprised of the first 100 alumni, trustees, faculty members and friends who make a lasting commitment to Point Park in their wills, trusts or estate plans.

We proudly welcome these new members:

Karen Hill (1970)
Linda Conn Kistler (1972)
Charles J. and Karen S. McIntyre
Steve (1970; Honorary, '11) and Joann Stein

For more information about becoming a member of the Founders Society, contact Barb Cinpinski at 412-392-4215 or bcinpinski@pointpark.edu

www.pointpark.edu

Beth Marcello (COM 1982) is among nine winners of the 2011 PNC Performance Award, the highest honor given to employees by the PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. The award program recognizes PNC employees who deliver a consistent level of extraordinary



performance. This year's honorees were chosen from among 52,000 employees across the country. Marcello, women's business development marketing manager for PNC, raises the company's visibility among women business owners and female senior-level executives. A five-year veteran of PNC, Marcello serves on numerous boards in the Pittsburgh region, including the Birmingham Foundation, Women Presidents' Organization, City Theatre and Strong Women, Strong Girls. She is also a member of the Executive Women's Council and the South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association.

Monica Conway Koontz (COM 1989) is working with Max Media of Pennsylvania as an on-air personality with country music station B 98.3. Koontz writes, "Max Media recently opened a 'mall studio.' The concept is that now the advertiser as well as the listener can see their favorite personalities and know that what they are hearing isn't voice-tracked, or from earlier in the day, or from another market. It has been well received and it's just groundbreaking, especially for a small market. And WOW, what a way to get in touch with the listener!" Koontz celebrated 19 years of marriage to fellow Point Park graduate Richard Koontz (COM 1988) in October 2011.

Richard Koontz (COM 1988) is employed by the Pennsylvania Army National Guard as a full-time logistician. Koontz graduated from

the Sergeant Major's Academy at Fort Bliss in Texas and was promoted to that rank in summer 2011. He is married to Monica Conway Koontz (COM 1989) and the couple has three children, Richie (age 16), Maria (age 14) and Victoria (age 12). The whole family attended his promotion ceremony.

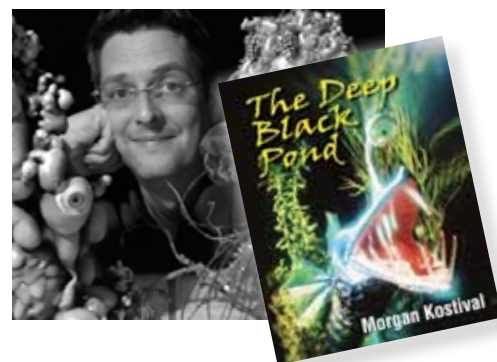
Christine (Tinia) Moulder (COPA 1983) completed a three-month run of Gilbert and Sullivan's *HMS Pinafore* at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis. The production was filmed and was broadcast nationwide in October 2011 as part of PBS's Fall Arts Festival. *HMS Pinafore* kicked off the public broadcasting series.

Stephen Hammel (COM 1983) has been appointed vice president of business development of Michael Baker Jr., Inc., an engineering unit of Michael Baker Corporation. In this key role, Hammel provides leadership in developing architectural business relationships and project opportunities nationwide for several key markets and clients, including health care, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Energy, Veterans Administration, and other private and public sector clients. Additionally, Hammel continues to support business development for JMA Architecture Studios. In previous positions with Baker, Hammel provided business development leadership for such projects as the Stryker Brigade Program for the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, architectural services at Fort Drum (New York), and the Iraq Reconstruction Program where he worked inside the Pentagon. Hammel earned his degree in journalism and mass communication at Point Park.

Bill Doughty, APR (COM 1984) is communications director at CH2M HILL in Denver, Colo. He has been elected to the board of directors of the Public Relations Society of America - Colorado Chapter. He will serve a three-year term as PRSA Leadership

Assembly delegate on the board. Doughty and his wife, Candace, celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary in December 2011.

Shawn Amblod (A&S 1989) is a financial consultant with CNB Bank, serving the Philipsburg, Moshannon Valley, DuBois and Punxsutawney areas of Pennsylvania. Amblod provides CNB Bank customers with professional advice and guidance to help them meet their individual financial goals. He earned his bachelor's degree in psychology from Point Park in 1989 and a graduate degree from Duquesne University. He has been an investment banker in the region and holds numerous certifications in securities series 7 and 63, life, health, disability income insurances and annuities. Prior to that, Amblod was a federal law enforcement officer.



Morgan Kostival (COPA 1989) has published the children's adventure *The Deep Black Pond*, which tells the story of a group of fanciful creatures that inhabit a small pond on a tropical island. Kostival, an author and photographer based in Lake Worth, Fla., says "I write to preserve my child-like imagination that, sadly, too many adults forget how to use. I wrote this book while simultaneously creating and photographing the creatures that are featured in it. I was interested in creating a world that was hitherto unknown." Kostival's books are available through Amazon or visit www.strategicpublishing-group.com.

► 1990s

Scott Kleinberg (COM 1995) is the social media consultant for the Chicago Tribune Media Group, which encompasses such iconic brands as the Chicago Tribune and WGN TV and radio. In this newly created position, Kleinberg is tasked with overseeing and directing social media strategy, daily execution of social media campaigns using such platforms as Twitter and Facebook, and companywide training. Previously, Kleinberg built the social media strategy from the ground up for the Chicago Tribune's RedEye, a daily commuter newspaper serving young urban professionals in their 20s and 30s. Kleinberg lives in Chicago's West Loop with his wife Kelly, and dog, Mac the Puggle.

Taryn Hughes (COPA 1997) recently relocated to Berlin, Germany, where she is completing her M.A./L.L.M. degree in International Human Rights Law at Europa-Universität Viadrina. Hughes serves as founding executive director of Youth-Abilitation, an organization which brings yoga to at-risk youth, including those who are incarcerated. She also teaches yoga to young people and adults from all walks of life. A dance graduate of Point Park, visit her at www.TarynHughes.com

Mark Smith (A&S 1996) recently opened up his own practice, The Law Office of Mark A. Smith, which focuses on medical malpractice, personal injury and criminal defense law. His office is located at Four North Shore Center in Pittsburgh. Smith, who earned a degree in legal studies at Point Park and his J.D. at Duquesne University School of Law, was also named a 2010 Pennsylvania Rising Star in the area of Medical Malpractice. Smith and his wife, Michelle, live with their four dogs in White Oak, Pa.

Nick Williams, Ph.D. (A&S 1998) was promoted to program director at Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, consistently ranked as one of the best psychiatric hospitals

in America by U.S. News & World Report. Williams earned a bachelor's degree in psychology at Point Park in 1998 and went on to earn an M.A. and Ph.D. in psychology from Duquesne University. "Nick is doing very good things at Western Psych and in the community. He is a solid, down-to-earth guy who just happens to have a very fine mind and a compassionate soul. Pittsburgh is lucky to have him and Point Park should be proud to have had at least a little to do with helping to shape his direction in life," said Robert Fessler, Ph.D., psychology professor and acting dean for the School of Arts and Sciences. A resident of Pittsburgh, Williams lives with his wife, Shannon, and daughters Rosalea and Ella.

► 2000s

Ryan Ellis (A&S 2000) is in his first year as manager of the NY Mets Class A affiliate the Savannah Sand Gnats. He was named the South Atlantic League Manager of the Year and Baseball America's Best Manager Prospect for the South



Atlantic League. Under his guidance, the Gnats won the first half Southern Division Championship for the second straight year and beat the Augusta GreenJackets to capture the Southern Division Championship. A native of Munhall, Pa., Ellis still holds the Point Park record for highest single-season batting average when he hit .477 in 1999. He ranks second in school history in home runs (27) and triples (21). Ellis helped lead Point Park to the 1998 NAIA World Series, the 10th in school history. He was a two-time NAIA Honorable Mention All-American in baseball in 1998 and 1999 and an NAIA All-Northeast Region defender in men's soccer in 1997. Ellis was inducted into the Pioneer Hall of Fame on Oct. 9, 2011.

Rosemary Coombs (BUS 2010) is an internal auditor with Schneider Downs in Pittsburgh. She earned her bachelor's degree in accounting, with minors in business management and information technology, at Point Park in 2010. Coombs, who recently passed the CPA exam and is working to complete her CPA designation, has completed several internal audit engagements, as well as Sarbanes Oxley (SOX) management testing. Her job is to evaluate a company's internal control structure, which prevents or detects material misstatements in their financial statements. During her time at Point Park, Coombs was involved in the Student Accounting Association and served one year as president.

Denice D. Withrow (BUS 2006, 2007) has been promoted to vice president of business technology integration at Bank of America in Pittsburgh. She also received her doctorate of science in information systems and communication from Robert Morris University in May 2011. Withrow earned her bachelor's degree in information technology and management, as well as her M.B.A. at Point Park.

Kady Chambers (SAEM 2009) has accepted a position as event coordinator with Hershey Entertainment and Resorts Company in Hershey, Pa.

David A. Mollish (BUS 2011) received the 2011 Human Resource Leadership Award from Surge Point H.R. Talent LLC of Murrysville, PA. He won in the large for-profit business category. Mollish is chief human resources/safety officer GAI Consultants, an 800-employee, environmental and engineering consulting firm headquartered in Homestead, Pa., with 22 locations in 10 states. At GAI, Mollish links human resources and safety functions to company goals to improve business performance. He earned an M.B.A. degree from Point Park.

CLASS NOTES

Dale Grant (COM 2007) and **Kelly Sullivan** (COPA 2007) were married on July 3, 2001, in Exton, Pa.

Emily (Patterson) Carlson (COM 2006) presented a solo show of macro photography, "Natural Fibers," during the month of October 2011 in the gallery space at the Monroeville Public Library. Featuring subject matter such as butterflies and flowers, her work reflects the color, texture and beauty of the natural world. A resident of McKeesport, Pa., Carlson is a freelance photographer who has focused on nature, as well as portraiture, landscapes and weddings. She also manages a bakery. In October 2010, Carlson had a daughter, Sally, who lived just 19 days and will always be close to the hearts of her parents and family.



Photo by Chris Rolinson.

Jennifer Burke (BUS 2007) is the vice president of development at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Pittsburgh. Burke, who earned a master's degree in organizational leadership from Point Park, says, "I love our mission. We provide children facing adversity with strong and enduring, professionally supported one-to-one relationships that change their lives for the better – forever." "Our vision is to make a difference and help someone fulfill their potential and achieve success in life. Wow! That gives me chill bumps every time I think of it. The commitment of our board, volunteers, supporters and staff is exceptional. They truly embody our "Start Something" branding."

Ashley Kasunich (COPA 2011) landed her dream job last August: a four-month gig with

the legendary New York City dance troupe, the Radio City Rockettes. She performed with the organization's *Radio City Christmas Spectacular* through January 2012, performing two to six shows a day, seven days a week. Before coming to Point Park, where she earned her degree in dance, Kasunich performed the role of Victoria the White Cat in the Pine-Richland High School production of *Cats* in 2007. The production won Best Musical in the Gene Kelly Awards for Excellence that year and Kasunich received a prestigious Gene Kelly scholarship.

Chelsea Pompeani (COM 2011) has been hired as a reporter and on-air personality at WJET-TV in Erie, Pa.

Dave Droxler (COPA 2001) and **Meghan Malloy** (COPA 2002) starred together in John Cariani's play, *Last Gas*, at the Penobscot Theatre Company in Bangor, Maine, in September 2011. The production was directed by Marcie Bramucci (Thurstlic) (COPA 2002), the managing director of the

"Patch is like traditional journalism in the sense that we are professionals delivering quality, accurate and local news," says Dezayas, editor of Plum-Oakmont Patch. "However, we're different because we accept all forms of news. If it's happening in the community, it's worthwhile to us." Patch doesn't have traditional offices but provides each editor with a Mac laptop, iPhone, camera, printer and freelance budget so they can work remotely in their community.

Gillooly, who is editor of Canon-McMillan Patch, says, "I love that every day is different. One day I will be following a court case, and the next day I will be covering a community event." Covering such a diverse range of stories means the editors need to know how to do a little bit of everything, and Dezayas, Gillooly and Rex are putting their journalism training and experience to good use.

"Patch is a part of the change in journalism," says Rex, who heads up the Forest Hills-Regent Square site. "I can't even describe how exciting it is to be a part of that. Journalism is so not dying. This is just the beginning."

In contrast to daily newspapers, which cover a wider area, each Patch site focuses solely on news and events going on in an individual neighborhood or community.

Penobscot Theatre Company. Cariani is a Tony Award-winning actor and the author of *Almost Maine*.

Watch for The Point Reader Survey

The Point wants to hear from you! In the near future, The Point will be conducting a short survey of readers. The survey will be emailed to a random sampling of alumni and friends. If you receive a survey, please take a few minutes to reply so we can be sure that your University magazine includes the content that most interests you.

We appreciate your input. And remember, you can email the editor anytime at thepoint@pointpark.edu. Many thanks in advance for your participation!

DROP US A NOTE!

Visit www.pointpark.edu/classnote to share your news.

SOUTHERN PIONEERS

Fellow alums meet by chance at a South Carolina nuclear site

By Timothy Cox



McLaughlin (left) and Cox.

It was by happenstance that **Timothy Cox** (COM 1980) and **David McLaughlin** (BUS 2001) would meet on a construction site at a federal nuclear weapons complex in Aiken, S.C.

It was the first week of August 2011 and temperatures were soaring just over 100 degrees.

Cox was at McLaughlin's work site doing research while preparing to write a news release and take photos of a construction project. Cox works for Savannah River Remediation's Public Affairs Department at Savannah River Site. McLaughlin, who is an avid weekend photographer, started asking Cox about his Nikon D40 digital camera.

During the course of conversation, Cox thought he detected something familiar about McLaughlin, who was monitoring safety activities at the construction site.

"It was his dialect," said Cox. "I've lived down South for more than 20 years but I always recognize a Western Pennsylvania dialect. When I asked him if he was a Pennsylvania boy, David just smiled, and the conversation took off from there."

"During the discussion, he asked me where I graduated college," said Cox. "When I said Point Park University, he belted out with elation – 'No way! So did I.'"

"Down here, you meet folks from Pitt or maybe Penn State, but rarely do you meet a fellow Point Park Pioneer. Never!" said Cox.

McLaughlin earned his M.B.A. at Point Park in 2001 after graduating from the University

of Pittsburgh with a bachelor's degree in environmental sciences. Cox earned a bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communication at Point Park in 1980. A Beaver Falls native, he lived in Wilkinsburg for 10 years before moving to Atlanta in the early 1990s.

According to Cox, who lives in Augusta, Ga., his Point Park education has served him well. "I've worked for several newspapers, including the Gannett and Scripps-Howard chains, in addition to working as a communications specialist and technical writer in the nuclear industry."

McLaughlin is also pleased with his Point Park graduate degree. "The education I received from Point Park has helped me advance in my health and safety professional career," he said. "Through the years I've progressed from mid-management to leadership roles to starting my own company. At Point Park, the instructors not only teach – they're also working professionals."

McLaughlin grew up in Swissvale near Wilkinsburg and graduated from Central Catholic High School in Oakland. He owns Delta Four Group, an environmental, health and safety consulting firm in Columbia, S.C. At Savannah River Site, McLaughlin works as a consultant for Chicago Bridge and Iron Company.

He said he still can't get over the fact that he bumped into a fellow alumnus. "You just never know who you're going to meet," McLaughlin said.

"It really is a small world."

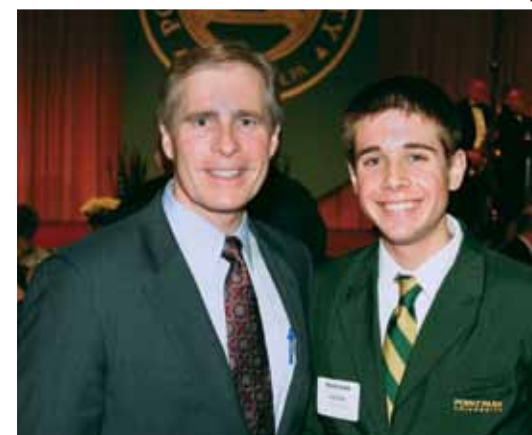
Meet Patch Editors: Stephanie Rex, Heidi Dezayas and Amanda Gillooly

Photo by Chris Rolinson

The latest trend in journalism is "hyperlocal," and three School of Communication alumni are on the forefront of this movement.

Stephanie Rex (COM 2007), **Heidi Dezayas** (COM 2007) and **Amanda Gillooly** (COM 2002), pictured left to right, are local editors in the Pittsburgh region for Patch, a network of hyperlocal news websites owned by AOL. There are more than 800 sites nationwide.





Back to the 'Burgh

Alumni join the campus community for an October weekend of fun and memories

Hundreds of alumni, staff, faculty and students gathered together on campus Oct. 7-9 for the *Back to the 'Burgh* celebration, a weekend filled with activities ranging from a street festival and reunion ballgames to an alumni dinner that honored faculty.

The weekend opened on Friday morning with the University's inaugural Alumni Golf Outing at Hickory Heights Golf Club in Bridgeville. Alumni took part in campus tours and gathered in late afternoon for a reception in the University's newly opened Urban Park

at the corner of Wood Street and the Boulevard of the Allies (see page 10).

On Saturday, former ballplayers and families enjoyed reunion baseball and softball games at Point Park's home field in nearby Green Tree. And, as at last year's 50th Anniversary celebration, a block of Third Avenue at Wood Street was turned into a street festival, bringing together Point Park alumni, students and families for food, fun and games.

The premier event of *Back to the 'Burgh* weekend reunited alumni with

former and current Point Park faculty at a recognition dinner at the Wyndham Grand Hotel in Pittsburgh. A video presentation that evening honored the legacy of the University's dedicated faculty, past and present. View faculty reflections here: <http://tinyurl.com/facultyreflections>.

On Sunday morning, the University honored the newest inductees for the Pioneer Athletic Hall of Fame (See page 2).

A Celebration in the 'Burgh

Opposite page, clockwise from top left: students and alumni enjoy food and fun at the Third Avenue street festival. Alumni gather with friends at the Saturday evening dinner. COPA faculty Garfield Lemonius (center) with Kiesha Lalama (right). Alumni ballplayers at Green Tree Park for reunion games on Saturday morning. Students join friends at the "block party" on Third Avenue. This page, clockwise from top left: Nancy Davis Kahrs, Linda Kistler, Skip Kasky and Mike Lacy with friends at an open house in the new park. (With Back to the 'Burgh banner, from left) Charla Jones Chiappelli, Nancy Davis Kahrs, Linda Kistler and Robin Brandt at the Third Ave. street festival. Alums hit the dance floor after dinner on Saturday. Point Park President Paul Hennigan with Green and Gold Student Ambassador Colton Gerhart. Emeritus faculty member Dr. Emmett Panzella with retired basketball coach Jerry Conboy. All photos by Tom Bell.

Photo Opportunity

To see photo galleries from the various events at Back to the 'Burgh weekend, visit www.facebook.com/pointparkalumni.

Making Strides

Pioneer cross country teams on the path toward success

by Kevin Taylor



On the road with men's cross country runners.

Year by year, the Point Park men's and women's cross country teams are making more of a name for themselves in the Western Pennsylvania running community and beyond.

With a growing reputation of faster times, the overall growth of the school and a growing network of alumni who have had a great experience, the Pioneers are reaping the benefits.

"Point Park never really had too much of a reputation as a running school," said seventh-year head coach Jim Irvin. "But now, people are becoming more aware of us in the local running community."

"The No. 1 factor for us is the school itself, which is key. Recruits can tell that there are great things happening on this campus. Second, there is awareness that

our running times are better across the board. And the third thing is that on an individual basis, they know their times will be significantly faster by the end of their four years."

In the Forefront

The Pioneers have experienced some of their best seasons in recent years. During that time, Point Park has had some of the fastest individual runners to ever compete for the school. As a team, they have enjoyed perhaps the best depth of quality runners that the program has ever seen.

As recently as the 2010 season, Andrew Rowland and Justine Michael set individual school records for the men's and women's teams, respectively.



Runner Martine Saul.

From a team perspective, the men's squad has three runners capable of completing an 8K under 28 minutes in Rowland, Reuben Rono and Dylan Grunn. Four others have turned in times under 30 minutes in the past two years – Chris Kennedy, Jon Rohlf, Ian McIntosh and Conor Mulvaney – which represents the best depth in team history.

The women's team has had some strong, veteran leaders the past few years and has also experienced an influx of freshmen and sophomores who have infused the program with talent. The likes of Lindsay Dill, Carina Jollie and Sarah Austin have provided the veteran leadership in recent years, while Keri Rouse, Katie Johnston and Christina Wisniewski have been top underclassmen in 2011.

A rash of injuries to both teams in 2011 limited top runners like Rowland, Rono, Dill and talented women's newcomer Ashley Goodsell. But despite setbacks, the teams are still strong with others stepping up to fill the void.

"Cross country is a sport in which you compete as a team but also individually," said Irvin. "Goals are set individually, and runners train for that all year, especially during the season. If everyone makes their goals, we should do well at the conference meet at the end of the year."

Along the way, during the hours and hours of training, the physical conditioning is not the only thing achieved. Life-long lessons about working toward a goal that is far off in the future are instilled.

Striving Forward

"The most important lesson is that you set a goal in the future, and it is an annual goal," said Irvin. "You put in hundreds of hours, plan for the goal, set bench marks and check points along the way, and you get one shot to achieve that goal at the

end of the season. It is a great learning experience to train so long for a race that ends up being 20 minutes or so.

"It is not about instant gratification, you have to be patient and be dedicated. The main question is, what are you doing today to improve yourself toward that goal? That type of mindset is one that will help them their whole life."

"The most important lesson is that you set a goal in the future, and it is an annual goal. That type of mindset is one that will help them their whole life."

The cross country teams have also achieved highly in the classroom as both squads were named NAIA Scholar Teams during the 2010-11 academic year. The women had a team GPA of

ATHLETICS ▶

3.38 and the men's team came in at 3.27. The men's GPA was the highest in the conference, the women narrowly missed that distinction.

"The first priority is the academics," said Irvin. "We want to be the highest in the conference, and we've had good success with that. We try to find student-athletes who love to run and also fit in with the academic profile of Point Park."

"It has worked out nicely that we are graduating alumni who have a good experience with running and also in school. We've had a lot of alumni who send thank-you notes saying that the experience really helped them mature and learn what it is like to be an adult. And another great aspect is that running is a lifelong sport."



For more Pioneer news, visit www.pointpark.edu/Athletics



All photos by Chelsey Engel.

Keri Rouse (904) and Lindsay Dill (898) compete.

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The Way We Were

Do you recognize this Downtown corner? It looks quite different these days. Take a look at our cover, and page 10 inside, to see the amazing transformation!

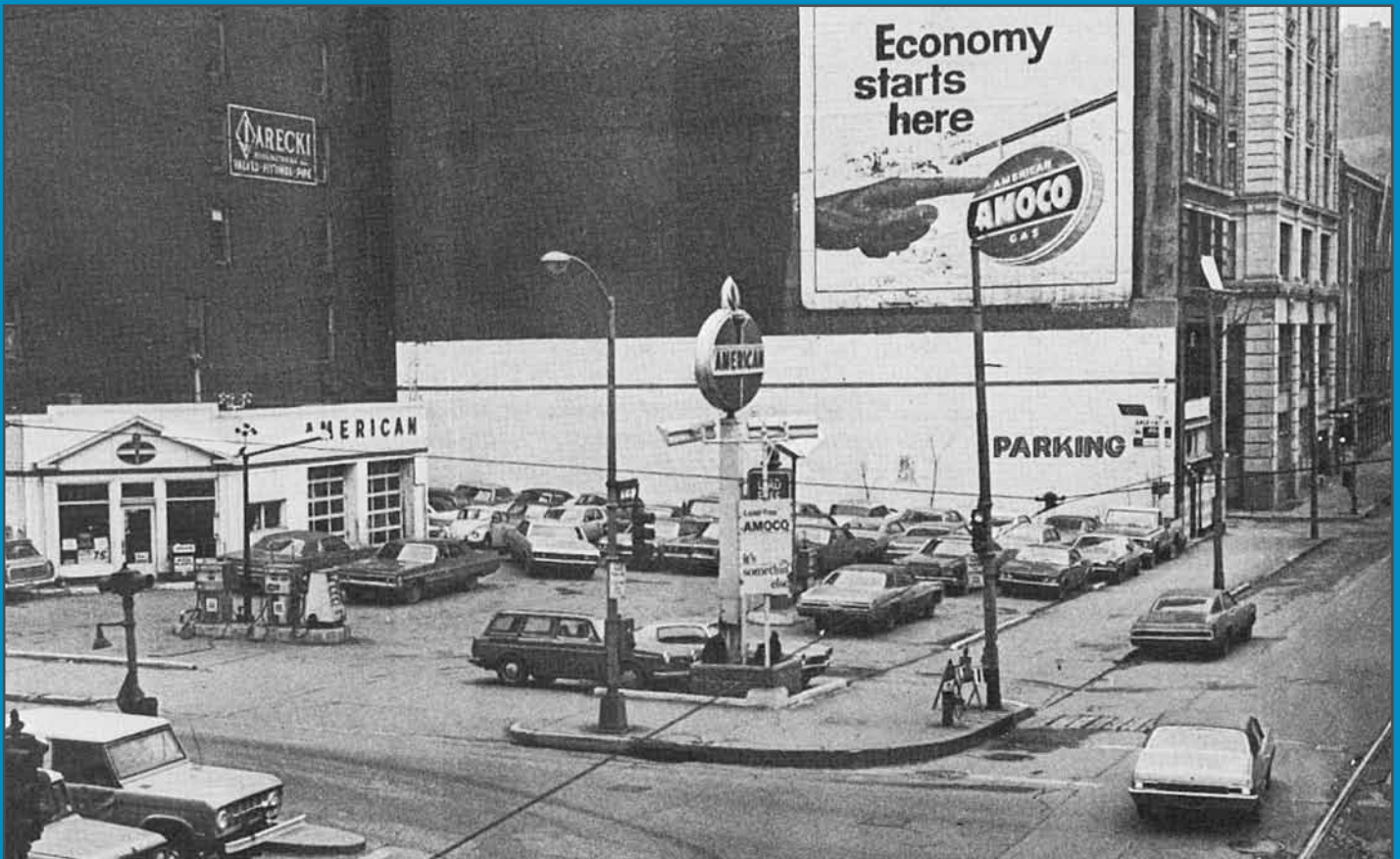


Photo appeared in the 1971 Point Park yearbook, Journey. Courtesy of the University Archives.

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