

THE POINT

Steel City Showdown

Point Park and pro sports teams kick off premier esports event

Great Entertainment

Playhouse presents new season of world-class productions



Last Print Issue

Going all digital!

See page 33.



Dear alumni and friends,

It's summer vacation season, but work continues to hum along at Point Park. From new academic programs and events to premiere entertainment productions, there is always something innovative happening on campus and we enjoy sharing the news with you.

One of the most vibrant aspects of our community of students, faculty, staff and alumni is our shared commitment to making a positive impact in our own neighborhood and beyond. For example, the new Center for Veterans Excellence at the Rowland School of Business recently partnered with Pittsburgh Hires Veterans to host an all-day workshop for active duty veterans and their spouses. "The Starting Point to a New Career" gave participants an opportunity to build job-finding skills while networking with business professionals. The University's Center for Media Innovation recently announced the All Abilities Media Project, in which people with disabilities can receive free training in media production and podcast hosting, as well as the establishment of the Doris O'Donnell Innovations in Investigative Reporting Fellowship, which is designed to spotlight and address the growing number of "news deserts" (underserved news markets) in the United States. These projects, and many others, underscore Point Park's longstanding commitment to community engagement.

After an extraordinary inaugural season in the heart of Downtown Pittsburgh, as well as hosting Pittsburgh's first major esports event last spring, Point Park's award-winning Pittsburgh Playhouse has announced a 2019-2020 season filled with world

premieres, dazzling dance and compelling speakers. The new Playhouse is a one-of-a-kind interdisciplinary center for all facets of entertainment management, including our nationally ranked Conservatory of Performing Arts. We hope you'll join us for a performance or speaking event this fall or spring.

Finally, you're holding the last print issue of The Point, which is undergoing an exciting transformation into a fully digital magazine. The new online version, which will be produced twice a year in fall and spring, will enable us to continue to share Point Park stories and profiles in a creative and robust format. Be sure to share your contact information with us, especially your email, so we can let you know when each new issue of The Point is online. See page 33.

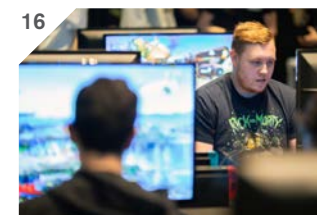
Thank you for being a part of Point Park's story. We are proud to share the journey and our progress with you. The best is yet to come!

Warm regards,

Dr. Paul Hennigan
President



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ON THE COVER:
The Steel City Showdown brought sponsors such as the Pittsburgh Penguins and the Cleveland Cavaliers together with hundreds of esports athletes and spectators for a weekend of esports at the Pittsburgh Playhouse. Photo by John Altdorfer.

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TALK TO US!

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

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STANDING ROOM ONLY

Freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors in the Conservatory of Performing Arts gathered together on the steps in the lobby of the new Pittsburgh Playhouse to celebrate the first day of classes during the 2018-19 academic year. Aaron Bollinger, associate professor and chair of the Theatre Department, and Alex Yargeau, administrative assistant in the Conservatory, coordinated the photo.



Professional Advancement



Helen Fallon, M.A., professor of journalism and Honors Program director, was named Honors Professional of the Year at the Northeast Regional Honors Council Conference, held April 11-14 in Baltimore. Fallon is in her ninth year as director of Point Park's Honors Program, which includes 230 students from a variety of majors. She was nominated by her students and chosen among nine finalists. "For more than

30 years, Helen has been a student advocate at Point Park ... instrumental in creating the Honors Program and ensuring its successful operation every year," said Tina Cafasso, Honors Program graduate assistant. "She encourages students to give back to the community, create lifelong friendships and work hard to conquer their goals."

Paige Beal, M.B.A., assistant professor of sports, arts and entertainment management, was honored by the Media Association of Pittsburgh (MAP) with the organization's Outstanding Achievement in Media Award (OAMA) in the agency/allied category. The award recognized her service to MAP and to the Pittsburgh media industry. Beal is a past president of MAP and was an Art Stein Award OAMA honoree. Her career includes market-

ing and management in radio, TV and Internet. She was senior director of sales for Comcast Spotlight Pittsburgh and her Pittsburgh media career included WRRK-FM (Benns Communications), WWSW-FM (Clear Channel) and WPXI-TV's Pittsburgh.com (Cox Interactive Media). "Paige keeps evolving and learning and exploring. She delights in sharing what she's learned, as she continues to lead, innovate and inspire," said Morry Feldman, senior account executive for WQED Multimedia.

Lynn Ribar has been appointed director of the Office of Graduate Admission. Ribar started with the University in 2003 as an admissions counselor. She advanced to associate director of graduate admission and most recently was serving as interim director. Ribar

will continue to oversee admission into Point Park's doctoral programs, master's programs and all undergraduate and graduate online programs.



Marshall Highet, part-time instructor for the Department of Literary Arts and Social Justice, co-authored the book *Hold Fast*, a novel taking place off the

coast of Italy in 1761 in which 13-year-old Joseph Carlos and his cousin have been kidnapped by the British Navy and pressed into service on the *Deptford*, a British man of war. "Just the day before, the two boys were happily sailing with their uncle on a routine merchant passage, dreaming of owning their own ship one day and returning home to the warmth and safety of their family. What was supposed to be a 'punishment' for a childish misadventure turns into a fight for survival on foreign seas." Highet teaches courses in College Composition, The Short Story and Intro to Literature.

Jose Muniain, part time professor in the Cinema Arts department, produced and directed a VR/360 video in collaboration with the dance group "slowdanger." The production was shown in conjunction with an exhibition on dance and film at the SPACE Gallery in Downtown Pittsburgh.

Jayne Olshanski, M.B.A., C.P.A., assistant professor in the Rowland School of Business, led a group of students from her Advanced Accounting Theory class in meetings with PNC executives **Katy Reeping**, vice president of financial reporting and analysis, and **John (J.J.) Matthews**, director of finance governance and SEC reporting, among other PNC professionals. Olshanski's course focuses on acquisition accounting and SEC reporting. Her students apply course concepts in cases that require financial analysis and accounting policy verification of SEC reports of real companies. "Our PNC visit allowed the students to witness accountants working with these complex concepts. I was impressed to see these PNC executives take the time to review the organization's entire Form 10-K with our students." One the students was accounting senior Ryan Bytzura — who joined PNC's finance and

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accounting development program in June 2019. "This opportunity afforded us the unique ability to connect with PNC's top-level management while gaining valuable insight into the highly regulated work that they are responsible for each day," he said.

Ben Blazer, assistant professor of movement and acting, played the lead role of



Walter Prime in the Pittsburgh premiere of *Marjorie Prime* at Pittsburgh Public Theatre in June 2019. Jordan Harrison's play imagines technology and the future of family. The funny and emotional sci-fi hit, written by Harrison (TV's *Orange is the New Black*) and directed by Marya Sea Kaminski (*The Tempest*), was a finalist for the 2015 Pulitzer Prize.

All-Abilities Media Project

People with disabilities can receive free training in podcast hosting and production through workshops at the Center for Media Innovation (CMI). The All-Abilities Media project is a collaboration with Unabridged Press and funded through a grant from the FISA Foundation. "As a laboratory for innovation in communication, we are very pleased to be working with Unabridged Press to provide opportunities for more people with disabilities to develop their journalistic voices," said **Andrew Conte**, director of the CMI. Two people with disabilities working with Unabridged Press have been recipients of Golden Quill awards through the Press Club of Western Pennsylvania. **Erin Gannon** won awards in 2018 and 2019, and **Mark Steidl** in 2018 for work they did on "Look Who's Here!," a series of video and audio interviews done through Unabridged Press. Gannon also received a promotion at ACHIEVA – she is hosting a new online series about disability and community for the organization, which supports and empowers people with disabilities and their families. This effort to better integrate journalism, communications and other fields also aims to allow media professionals and students without disabilities to learn from and work alongside people with disabilities, often for the first time. "FISA's grant enables us to give more people with disabilities

a shot at wielding the microphone in a professional setting. This group is underrepresented in media and underemployed overall," said **Jennifer Szweda Jordan**, founder of Unabridged Press, which produces audio and video content that amplifies voices and issues that are typically underrepresented in media. "The goal is to initiate a dedicated pathway to greater income opportunities." **Kristy Trautmann**, executive director of the FISA Foundation, said the organization is excited to support the project. "About one in five people have a disability, and yet the stories of these people are not well-represented in mainstream media," Trautmann said. "This project gives people with disabilities more tools to tell their stories in their own way."

Doris O'Donnell Media Fellowship

With the number of underserved markets – known as news deserts – growing throughout the United States, the Center for Media Innovation (CMI) has announced a \$20,000 journalism fellowship designed to spotlight and take on the problem. The annual Doris O'Donnell Innovations in Investigative Reporting Fellowship is made possible through a three-year grant from the Allegheny Foundation. "For many communities throughout the country, newspapers are the best – and sometimes only – source for critical local news. The death of a newspaper in one of these places leaves an informational black hole that can be devastating," said **Andrew Conte**, director of the CMI. "These gaps are expanding across America and right here in Western Pennsylvania as media outlets are closing, shrinking coverage areas and laying off or buying out experienced journalists. This fellowship offers an opportunity to shine a light on



International Media Trip to U.K.

Eighteen Point Park students in the International Media class traveled to London, Windsor, Stratford, Liverpool, Manchester and Edinburgh May 5-17, 2019. Professors **Helen Fallon**, M.A., and **Robin Cecala**, Ph.D., taught the class, and accounting Professor **Cheryl Clark**, M.B.A., C.P.A., and academic coordinator **Jan Getz** accompanied the group. "This class was developed to introduce students to different cultures and to see first-hand how the media in those countries visited each year are both different and similar to the United States," said Getz, who retired from her teaching position at Point Park in 2010 and created the course in 2008. "Students are often surprised at how versatile their majors are across media. They also discover that what they are learning at Point Park is totally applicable in the real world." This was the 12th international media trip offered by the School of Communication. The course is available to students in that school and Honors Program members.

one of those communities." The fellowship winner will have six months to produce and publish or broadcast the final story or series of stories. A panel of distinguished judges with credentials in innovative and investigative journalism will evaluate applicants based on value, innovation, engagement, diversity and ability. That panel includes: **Penny Abernathy**, a former executive at The Wall Street Journal and New York Times who is now the Knight Chair in Journalism and Digital Media Economics at the University of North Carolina; **David Folkenflik**, a media correspondent for NPR News, and host and editor of On Point from NPR and WBUR, Boston's

NPR station; **Amber Hunt**, an investigative reporter for the Cincinnati Enquirer; **Brentin Mock**, a Pittsburgh-based staff writer for CityLab, a standalone website from The Atlantic that explores trends shaping our country's urban future; and **Carl Prine**, editor of the Navy Times, who covered the invasion of Iraq for the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review and was later deployed to Iraq as an Army guardsman. "The Trustees of the Allegheny Foundation are delighted to partner with the Center for Media Innovation on what we consider a uniquely conceived fellowship," said **Matt Groll**, the foundation's chairman. "It combines impactful investigative reporting with innovative methods



Rockin' with Sheila E.

Legendary drummer **Sheila E.** recently performed at Pittsburgh's Stage AE, and thanks to **Melinda Colaizzi**, several Point Park sports, arts and entertainment management (SAEM) majors had the opportunity to work at the event. Colaizzi is founder/producer of the charity organization, Women who Rock, as well as a part-time SAEM instructor at Point Park and founder/CEO of PITCH Consulting. "I reached out to Sheila's team because I believed she would be the perfect artist and icon to represent what Women who Rock stands for. She is passionate about what we are doing to empower women in music and raise funds for life-saving women's health research," Colaizzi explained. "Sheila and her band put on an epic performance!" she added. In addition to Sheila E., the show featured an all-female lineup of Pittsburgh-based musicians including the Sounds of Pittsburgh Women's Chorus, Lyndsey Smith, DJ Jess and 2019 Rising Start Contest Winner Melina Bowser. "The event grew by more than 200 percent from last year, and we're already working on ways to grow the event in Pittsburgh in 2020 and also expand to cities outside of Pittsburgh," Colaizzi said.



Welcome to Wolfies Pub

Point Park students and alumni now have a restaurant they can call their own. When restaurant owner **Bob Wolfinger** decided to open Wolfies Pub — located just steps from campus near Market Square in Downtown Pittsburgh — he first met with **Steve Tanzilli**, J.D., dean of the Rowland School of Business, asking to connect with students for their input. From menu and music entertainment ideas to social media and campus history décor recommendations, students and staff in the Rowland School of Business and School of Communication soon jumped in to help with the launch of Wolfies Pub last spring. Bison Media, Point Park's PRSSA student-run integrated communications agency, implemented a research campaign and developed a communications plan. "The experience the students had through Bison Media working with Wolfies was invaluable as it provided a real-world client experience that supplemented what they are learning in the classroom," said Lecturer **Camille Downing**, M.A. "They had the chance to see what it was like to work closely with a client, just like they would on the job, and to be a part of something really exciting that they can add to their college and life experiences." Since the launch, students have also been helping to schedule live entertainment at the restaurant. Pioneer Records, Point Park's student-run record label, has presented a Thursday open mic night featuring pop-rock band Young Lungs. "With a designated Point Park Alumni Room, Wolfies is a great spot near campus for our students and alumni to connect. Wolfies also helps us tell our story externally and allows the general public to learn more about Point Park," Tanzilli said.

of disseminating the resulting product to a multitude of audiences, especially to those in underserved neighborhoods." Doris O'Donnell, the namesake of the award, was a pioneering journalist who began her career during World War II for the Cleveland News. She joined the

Cleveland Plain Dealer in 1959, covering the Sam Sheppard murder trial that inspired "The Fugitive," and traveling to Dallas for the aftermath of President Kennedy's assassination and the Soviet Union during the height of the Cold War. O'Donnell was hired by Richard Scaife in

1973 to write for the Greensburg Tribune-Review. She worked there for 15 years before returning to Cleveland. "Doris was a trailblazer for the generations of women in this business who came after her," said Sue McFarland, Greensburg editor for the Tribune-Review, who edited O'Donnell's work. "She fought long and hard to cover some of the biggest stories of her time, and erase the notion that some assignments were off-limits to many talented journalists based purely on their gender." Fellowship finalists and the ultimate winner will be announced in September.

Media Innovators Speaker Series

Journalists from CNN and National Public Radio will headline Point Park's 2019-2020 Media Innovators Speaker Series. The series, presented by the Center for Media Innovation and the Pittsburgh Playhouse, in collaboration with 90.5 WESA, takes place in the PNC Theatre at the Pittsburgh Playhouse. Headlining the series will be **Jim Acosta**, Chief White House Correspondent for CNN, who will speak on Feb. 6. Other speakers include **Molly Burke**, motivational speaker, YouTuber and Disability Rights Advocate, on Sept. 12; **Quil Lawrence**, veterans correspondent for NPR, on Oct. 17; and **Neda Ulaby**, reporter for the Arts Desk at NPR, on May 7. Each presentation begins at 7 p.m. **Andrew Conte**, director of the Center for Media Innovation, said, "I am excited about the stories to be told by this year's class of speakers. Molly, in particular, is an inspiration — despite the challenges she faced early in life, she saw no limitations to what she could accomplish. Jim, Quil and Neda are on the front lines delivering news every day at a time when their chosen profession is continually under attack." For information, call 412-392-8000 or visit PittsburghPlayhouse.com.

New Trustees

Rich A. Pegher, M.B.A. and **Peggy A. Schiavone**, Ed.D. have been appointed to the University Board of Trustees. Pegher graduated from Point Park in 1974 with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration (Accounting) and

later earned an M.B.A. from the University of Pittsburgh. He began his career as a staff auditor for Price Waterhouse & Co. and in 1980 began a 17-year run at Rockwell International Corp. When Rockwell's automotive operations spun off into Meritor Inc., Pegher became a vice president and created an internal

audit function for the new company, an international truck and auto parts supplier. Pegher was also vice president of internal audit for such companies as XM Satellite Radio Inc., Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. and TMS International LLC. Schiavone, a retired leader in education, began her career as a special education



Starting Point for Vets

An all-day event at Point Park offered active-duty veterans and their spouses an opportunity to sharpen critical job-finding skills while networking with industry professionals. The Rowland School of Business presented "The Starting Point to a New Career" in partnership with Pittsburgh Hires Veterans on March 9. "I have seen first-hand the need to help veterans and their families gain a better understanding of career transition and personal finance," said **Steve Tanzilli**, dean of the Rowland School of Business. "We are proud to partner with Pittsburgh Hires Veterans on the development of curriculum and industry connections to further the mission." This kind of event "is important because of the difficulty veterans have reintegrating into society," said **Jack Wagner**, director of Pittsburgh Hires Veterans, and a Purple Heart recipient for his service in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Vietnam War. Wagner also has served as president of the Pittsburgh City Council, state senator and state

auditor general. "Veterans in Allegheny County have a higher unemployment rate than civilians, and to us, that is simply not acceptable," he said. "We understand the struggles faced after returning home. It is not always easy to adjust to a new lifestyle as a civilian." The day included such activities as: a career prep/transition to civilian workforce seminar, led by **Erin Howard**, career counselor in Point Park's School of Arts and Sciences, and **Dayna Brown**, director of operations at Pittsburgh Hires Veterans; a networking lunch with speaker **Mark Nave**, senior vice president of Individual and Small Group Markets at Highmark Inc.; a personal finance seminar led by Tanzilli, and a GI Bill and disability benefits seminar led by Wagner. A variety of employers took part in the event, including Highmark Health, the City of Pittsburgh, PNC Bank, First National Bank, 84 Lumber, Target Freight Management, Pitt Ohio, GeNon Energy, ADP, Diamond Technical Services and PA Career Link.

teacher for the School District of Philadelphia. From 1987 to 1996, she was a secondary special education teacher at Strath Haven High School in Wallingford, Pa. In 1999, she joined the Pennsbury School District and spent two decades as an elementary principal, serving at Fallsington Elementary School, Penn Valley Elementary School and Quarry Hill Elementary School. She is experienced in such areas as differentiated instruction, strategic planning, curriculum development, gifted education, school finances, special needs students and 21st century classrooms. "Richard's long and successful career in corporate finance and Peggy's lifelong commitment to education will make them extremely valuable additions to a Board focused on academics, student experience, managed resources and community engagement," said President Paul Hennigan.

Literary Arts and Social Justice Symposium

Students from a variety of majors across the University shared their diverse interests through poetry readings, research projects, original creative nonfiction pieces and an open forum on literary magazines at the 10th Annual Undergraduate Symposium hosted by the Department of Literary Arts and Social Justice. "Every year, we're delighted to see that students invite their families and friends to campus so that their guests can share in what it means to live inside an idea or a book with the kinds of curiosity and delight that our students' work demonstrates so well," said **Sarah Perrier**, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Literary Arts and Social Justice. "The variety of projects also speaks to how adaptable and student-

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driven our courses can be," Perrier added. "I was really impressed with Dr. **Kirstin Hanley's** group, who each presented a five-minute synopsis of their critical papers. The topics ranged from a postcolonial analysis of 1960s funk music to the rhetorical impact of Barack Obama's speeches," said **Chris Girman**, Ph.D., assistant professor of literary arts.



Grand Marshal Bob O' Gara. Below, from left: Former President Katherine Henderson with current President Paul Hennigan; Dr. Jim Withers; O'Gara and Hennigan.



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Point Park's 59th Commencement took place on April 27 at PPG Paints Arena. Dr. **Jim Withers**, the featured Commencement speaker, is a physician within the Pittsburgh Mercy health system and an assistant clinical professor of medicine at the University of Pittsburgh. In 1992, he began to dress as a homeless person and make "house calls" under the bridges and along the river banks of Pittsburgh in the company of a formerly homeless man. This led to the founding of Pittsburgh Mercy's Operation Safety Net (OSN), one of the first full-time, comprehensive medical services of its kind for the unsheltered homeless. In 2009, Withers created the Street Medicine Institute to focus on helping communities establish Street Medicine programs, improve existing practice and promote the "classroom of the streets" model in medical education.

"Point Park is proud of the work that's been done on campus over the years to support Operation Safety Net. Jim's incredible public service is reflective of the community engagement work our students, faculty and staff perform all the time," said President **Paul Hennigan**. "I can't think of anyone better to inspire our graduates as they head out into the real world." **Katherine Henderson**, Ph.D., who served as the sixth president of Point Park from 1997 to 2006, received an honorary degree. Under her leadership, the University experienced significant enrollment growth and she successfully led the capital campaign to build the George Rowland White Performance Center. "Dr. Henderson is a critically important figure in the history of Point Park as it exists today," Hennigan said. The graduate hooding ceremony featured speaker was **Aster Teclay**, the

Pittsburgh Housing Authority's primary liaison with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, who analyzes legislation and crafts policies to improve housing programs. In 2014, she earned an M.B.A. in the Sports, Arts and Entertainment Management Program at Point Park. Teclay is cofounder of Invest in Her, an organization that supports female entrepreneurs in the Pittsburgh region. "Aster is precisely the kind of student Point Park prides itself on developing and supporting," Hennigan said. "She has chosen to build a successful career that involves lifting others along the way. We couldn't be more proud of what she's accomplished." **Bob O'Gara**, retiring professor of public relations and advertising, served as grand marshal for the main Commencement ceremony.



New leaders join Conservatory and Pittsburgh Playhouse

Point Park has announced the appointments of **Steven Breese** as the new artistic director and dean of the Conservatory of Performing Arts (COPA) and **Drew Martorella** as the assistant vice president and managing director of the award-winning Pittsburgh Playhouse.

As Artistic Director and Dean of COPA, Steven Breese assumes the position formerly held by Ronald Allan-Lindblom. Breese will direct programming for the University's award-winning Pittsburgh Playhouse and its state-of-the-art Cinema and Animation labs and the 8-studio George Rowland White Performance Center. As Dean of the University's renowned Conservatory, Breese will establish an overall artistic vision for the Playhouse as well as be responsible for ensuring the highest quality undergraduate and graduate educations in theater, dance and cinema.

Prior to joining Point Park, Breese was dean of the College of Arts, Communication and Design at Long Island University in New York. An accomplished theatre professional, his background



includes a national and international acting, directing and playwriting career that has spanned more than 30 years. He has worked at Tony Award-winning regional theaters, including The Cleveland Playhouse, South Coast Repertory and Dallas Theatre Center.

As Assistant Vice President and Managing Director of the Pittsburgh Playhouse, Drew Martorella will develop programming, audiences and cross-disciplinary education opportunities for Point Park's academic community. Martorella will work closely with newly appointed COPA dean to maximize opportunities to showcase and leverage the award-winning Pittsburgh Playhouse facilities, and collaborate with other arts organizations to engage audiences locally, regionally and nationally.

Martorella was formerly the executive director of UCCS Presents at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS). There he was responsible for building support for arts and fostering community engagement through the operation of the Ent Center for the Arts and its programs including the Artists Series; Theatreworks, the region's premiere professional theater; the Galleries

of Contemporary Art, and the University Center and Event Services.

"We are thrilled to welcome Steven and Drew to Point Park," said President **Paul Hennigan**. "Their fresh energy, commitment and vision to the University's mission for our nationally-recognized Conservatory and award-winning Pittsburgh Playhouse will set the agenda for years to come and provide an exceptional student academic experience as well an entertaining, unique and thought-provoking slate of programming for the public."

Engineering Students Intern for Tech Startup, Connect Wolf

Electrical engineering technology majors **Talal Alrasheed** and **Khalid Alzahrani**; electrical engineering major **Joshua Jackson** and M.S. in engineering management student **Dev Darshan Rajpuriya**, interned this summer for Connect Wolf, a tech start-up connection company founded by CEO **Jennifer Sydeski Hurd**, a part-time professor for Point Park. A scientist, engineer, business professional and entrepreneur, Hurd teaches engineering, science and chemistry classes in the Department of Natural Sciences, Engineering and Technology and connected the students to the internships. Her background spans clinical operations, research and innovation, process design, project management and continuous improvement. "We are incredibly grateful to these students for their attitudes and attention, Dr. **Gregg Johnson** for supporting them both in career and engineering guidance and [the] University for being a place where such wonderful new talent is nurtured and developed," said Hurd. ❖

Heartfelt Work

School of Communication graduates are part of Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's Pulitzer Prize-winning team



Photo by Hannah Johnston, English major.

Point Park School of Communication graduates Ashley Murray, M.A., and Andrew Goldstein are part of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette team honored with a 2019 Pulitzer Prize for breaking news reporting. The Post-Gazette was recognized April 15 for its coverage of the shooting deaths of 11 people and wounding of seven others Oct. 27, 2018, at the Tree of Life synagogue in Squirrel Hill.

"This was the greatest honor of my life," said Goldstein, a 2014 B.A. in journalism alumnus and graduate of Taylor Alderdice High School in Pittsburgh, Pa. He added: "My heart broke Oct. 27, and it remains in pieces. I worked on so many of these stories with tears rolling down my cheeks and falling on my keyboard. I hope that our coverage helped our community cope, honored the beautiful lives lost and shed a little light on darkness."

Light on darkness

Murray, who earned a B.A. in broadcast reporting in 2009 and an M.A. in media communication in 2018, said being a part of a Pulitzer Prize-winning team so early in her career feels unreal. "While, of course, you are never expecting a Pulitzer, it doesn't surprise me that the heartfelt work of Post-Gazette journalists after a community tragedy was recognized at such a high level," Murray said. "The editors, the reporters, people on the desk that morning, the art department – just everybody was all hands on deck." Helen Fallon, M.A., professor of journalism and a part-time copy editor at the Post-Gazette, taught both Goldstein and Murray, beginning with Introduction to Journalistic Writing.

"They had the instincts and the curiosity from the very beginning of that first course," Fallon said. "The work they do, they are so serious about. They immerse themselves in it." Andrew Conte, M.S., director of the Center for Media Innovation, said both stand out as memorable students from his nearly 15 years of teaching at Point Park.

Serious work ethic

"Andrew has always been a hard-charging, serious journalist. He was that way in class, and he brings that same ethic to his work at the Post-Gazette," Conte said. "Ashley works harder at the details than any journalist I have ever met." Fallon said both Murray and Goldstein benefited from supplementing their class work by committing to being part of The Globe, Point Park's student-run newspaper. "I think it shows that learning for both of them was inside and outside of the classroom," she said. Conte noted that, in addition to The Globe, Murray and Goldstein were able to secure work as interns while still students at Point Park. Both did internships at the Post-Gazette, while Goldstein also interned at The Jewish Chronicle. Both were hired full-time by the Post-Gazette after graduating. Since hearing the news of the award, Murray has been reaching out to her professors to thank them.

"I can think of each one and remember specific pep talks and lessons on interviewing, editing and writing that they gave me," she said. "I carry those with me always while on the job." ❖



GOING GREEN

Education majors serve as student teachers in the Emerald Isle

By Barbara Vilanova

While Ireland may be an English-speaking country, for student teachers from Point Park who taught in Irish schools last spring, that was often where the similarities ended.

Daniel Strickland, a secondary English education major with a dual certification in special education, was assigned to a school where he worked with English as a second language students who were residents of Spain, so even more challenging than the Dormont native expected. “The experience gave me more of a world-view and allowed me to take some of the values of Irish teaching techniques and incorporate it into my own. That approach didn’t just change me professionally, it also changed me personally. I think more about being content in the present – to just live, as the Irish would say,” said Strickland.

Cultural appreciation

That’s the kind of take-away Darlene Marnich was hoping for when the first group of seven students journeyed to Ireland to teach at four Irish schools, three primary and one secondary.

Marnich, who heads Point Park’s School of Education, believes that teaching abroad is about more than an opportunity to live in a foreign country and do some traveling. “We wanted our students to come away with an appreciation of another culture and lifestyle and learn the importance of opening your eyes to a world different than your own,” she said.

One of the ways the inaugural class of student teachers experienced a difference in culture was the mandate that they teach religion. While not something most students had experienced themselves, in Ireland, explained Marnich, teachers are required to teach all subjects, including religion. “One of our students who had not experienced any sort of religious teaching in school told me that what she tried to impart to her students was the universal goodness of humanity as something that is an essential part of almost every religion.” For that student, teaching religion became one of her favorite subjects. Having little to no teaching experience before Ireland, students had to be flexible and adaptable to their Irish schools, and learn to problem solve, an important skill for any teacher, in any location.

International partnerships

Point Park partnered with SEK International School Dublin (primary and secondary), Kilcoole Primary School, Greystone’s Educate Together and Glebe National School to offer the student teaching programs. All are located in Wicklow, Ireland. The Student Teaching Experience in Ireland is part of the University’s study abroad options which include education partnerships with schools in Rome, Madrid and London. In addition to Strickland, the School of Education students who traveled to Ireland for the once-in-a-lifetime student teaching experience included Madison Gray, Mary Isaac, Alexis Kitchen, Abby O’Connell, Megan Oleksa and Madeline Walstra.

“My time in Ireland was epic. I can’t thank my professors enough for this opportunity, and I am beyond grateful to Point Park for giving me the chance to study abroad in Ireland,” said Isaac, a Pre-K through fourth grade and Pre-K through eighth grade special education spring 2019 graduate. “I have had the ‘luck of the Irish’ on my side and got blessed with an amazing school, cooperating teacher, staff and host family, she added.

“My biggest tip, for those who are looking to do this, is to have an open mind to everything. Be willing to jump out of your comfort zone and be one with the Irish!”

A new kind of independence

“For some of our students, it’s not only their first time abroad, it’s their first time on an airplane,” said Virginia Chambers Ed.D., who directs the study abroad programs at Point Park. “When these students get to their destination, they have to negotiate the academic part of the program as well as figure out the day-to-day necessities like transportation, a foreign currency, or even a different language. “It’s problem-solving and learning a new kind of independence, all at once,” said Chambers.

Upon their return, the students’ teachers, families and fellow classmates often see a difference. “I have seen students’ confidence grow, especially the way they see themselves as teachers and human beings, and that’s really an invaluable part of the experience,” said Marnich.

Additional reporting by Amanda Dabbs. ❖



PARADE, PUMP UP THE VOLUME, AND MUCH MORE

New Playhouse season features world premieres, captivating dance and thought-provoking speakers

Point Park University's award-winning Pittsburgh Playhouse has announced its 2019 - 2020 season which features a compelling lineup of new and classic works, including the Tony Award®-winning musical *Parade* directed by Tony Award®-winning alumnus Rob Ashford, the world premiere musical *Pump Up the Volume*, and the Off-Broadway hit, *Good Grief*. The season runs from Oct. 10, 2019 – May 7, 2020.

On the heels of an in-demand inaugural season in its Downtown location, the Pittsburgh Playhouse expands the depth and breadth of productions for its 2019 - 2020 season with national theatrical collaborative efforts, the integration of legendary works from master choreographers, and the continuation of its successful speaker's series aimed at sparking informed discussion in the community on a broad range of topics.

Innovative theatrical opportunities

"Our first season laid the groundwork for creating innovative theatrical opportunities that offered students the opportunity to experience what it's like to mount a new work alongside a professional artistic team, while at the same time, bringing exceptional and entertaining productions to Pittsburgh audiences," said President Paul Hennigan.

According to Hennigan, after last season's well-received collaboration with RWS Entertainment Group on *The Old Man*

and *the Sea*, "The Playhouse will once again collaborate with RWS on the world premiere musical *Pump Up the Volume*, which will feature Point Park students performing alongside professional actors."

"This coming season, we're also anticipating an exceptional Conservatory Dance Company season and another stellar lineup for the Media Innovators Speaker Series," Hennigan added.

Thought-provoking entertainment

The productions for the upcoming season were carefully chosen to be thought-provoking, entertaining and innovative, according to Ronald Allan-Lindblom, who recently stepped down after 20 years as artistic director of the Playhouse and will return to the faculty of the Conservatory of Performing Arts this fall. "This diverse and formidable collection of productions explores the complexity of relationships, race, freedom of speech and culture, addressing the very societal issues we're experiencing today.

"Of exceptional note is the opportunity to welcome home several accomplished alumni, both in playwright and directing roles, who we hope will embrace the new facility and our talented Conservatory students as a national laboratory for artistic exploration," he added. Headlining returning alumni are Tony Award®-winning director

Rob Ashford who will direct *Parade*, *Good Grief* playwright Ngozi Anyanwu, and *The Wolves* director Rachel Stevens.

Conservatory Dance shines

Point Park's Conservatory Dance Season, sponsored by UPMC, celebrates the profound contributions women have made to the world of dance by featuring a lineup that includes all female guest choreographers.

"We're centering the dance season around the theme of women's voices," said Garfield Lemony, chair and associate artistic director of Point Park's dance department. "The works will showcase the brilliant versatility of our dancers, and audiences will enjoy works that are new to Pittsburgh and the world, along with cornerstone works by legends such as Martha Graham."

Media Innovators Speaker Series

Point Park's Media Innovators Speaker Series, a collaboration between the Center for Media Innovation and the Pittsburgh Playhouse, will present speakers ranging from national journalists to top media professionals in fall 2019 and spring 2020 at the Playhouse. For more information on this season's speakers, see page 6. For ticket information, contact the Box Office at 412-392-8000 or visit PittsburghPlayhouse.com.

ON STAGE THIS FALL AND SPRING

CONSERVATORY THEATRE COMPANY

Good Grief

By Ngozi Anyanwu
Directed by Reginald L. Douglas
Oct. 18 – 27, 2019
Rauh Theatre

A story of love, loss and friendship, *Good Grief* focuses on a young woman, Nkechi, grieving the loss of her longtime friend and almost lover, MJ. The play invites audiences to join her journey through an adolescent friendship and a painful but eye-opening loss.

Much Ado About Nothing

By William Shakespeare
Directed by Steven Wilson
Nov. 8 – 17, 2019
PNC Theatre

Match-making, deception and betrayal are the makings of William Shakespeare's classic comedy *Much Ado About Nothing*. The show follows several love triangles that struggle to overcome mishaps and deceptive rumors before love wins out in the end.

Adding Machine: A Musical

Composed by Joshua Schmidt/
Libretto by Jason Loewith & Joshua Schmidt
Directed by Tlaloc Rivas
Dec. 6 – 15, 2019
Highmark Theatre

Adding Machine: A Musical, an adaptation of Elmer Rice's 1923 play, follows lead character and anti-hero Mr. Zero, who is replaced at his company by a mechanical adding machine. After an act of rage, he journeys to the afterlife and is given a chance at redemption.

The Wolves

By Sarah DeLappe
Directed by Rachel Stevens
Feb. 21 – March 8, 2020
Highmark Theatre

The Wolves is full of explosive energy as it follows a team of teenage soccer players. Through conversations and friendly gossip, each girl expresses her own individual character. When tragedy occurs, the players have to decide if they'll learn to stand together as a team.

Parade

Music & Lyrics by Jason Robert Brown
Book by Alfred Uhry
Directed by Tony Award-winner and Point Park alumnus Rob Ashford
March 13 – 22, 2020
PNC Theatre

A Tony Award®-winning musical, *Parade* tells the tragic true story of the trial and death of a man wrongfully accused of murder in 1913. With a book by Alfred Uhry and a powerful score by Jason Robert Brown, this moving theatrical experience examines the impact of prejudice.

Pump Up the Volume

Book & Lyrics by Jeremy Desmon
Music by Jeff Thomson
Directed by Dave Solomon
Produced in collaboration with RWS Entertainment Group
April 3 – 12, 2020
Highmark Theatre

Based on the 1990 film, *Pump Up the Volume* is a new musical about a shy teen who shakes up his small suburb by broadcasting nightly as a radio shock jock. When a desperate teen calls into the show, what transpires on-air ignites the community and an underground revolution.

CONSERVATORY DANCE COMPANY

Contemporary Choreographers

Oct. 10 – 13, 2019
George Rowland White Performance Studio

An energizing collection of works from leading female innovators in dance, including Yin Yue, The Pillow Project, Bridget Moore and Amy Hall Garner. An unforgettable evening of dance.

Fall Student Choreography Project

Nov. 15 – 17, 2019
George Rowland White Performance Studio

One of the most anticipated shows of the season, the fall Student Choreography Project features original works

choreographed by the Conservatory's talented students.

Winter Dance Concert

Dec. 6 – 15, 2019
PNC Theatre

Certain to be breathtaking and inspiring, the Winter Dance Concert will feature a world premiere, full-length work by Point Park Professor and renowned choreographer Kiesha Lalama.

Faculty Dance Concert

Feb. 20 – 23, 2020
George Rowland White Performance Studio

Point Park's extraordinary faculty members choreograph works that showcase the versatility of the Conservatory's gifted dancers. Featuring jazz, ballet, modern and other electric works.

Spring Student Choreography Project

April 3 – 5, 2020
George Rowland White Performance Studio

The spring Student Choreography Project, which features original works choreographed by the Conservatory's talented students, presents world premiere works by up and coming artists.

Spring Dance Concert

April 15 – 19, 2020
PNC Theatre

The dance season culminates in an unforgettable performance of works by masters of the new and old dance worlds, including Jessica Lang, Martha Graham, Penny Saunders, and Camille Brown.

SPECIAL OFFER FOR ALUMNI

Point Park alumni can purchase tickets for \$15 for each theatre show. Visit or call the box office: 412-392-8000.

For more information on the 2019-20 Playhouse season, including tickets, subscriptions, student & alumni discounts, visit: PittsburghPlayhouse.com.



Photos by John Altdorfer.

STEEL CITY SHOWDOWN

Point Park partners with pro sports teams to present first major esports event in Pittsburgh history



Point Park University hosted the Steel City Showdown — the first major esports tournament in Pittsburgh history — May 11-12 at its Pittsburgh Playhouse with more than 500 participants and spectators.

Teaming up with Point Park were the Pittsburgh Penguins, CAVS Legion GC, Pittsburgh Knights and AbleGamers Charity, while the Pittsburgh Penguins Foundation, iHeart Media and Walmart served as sponsors.

“The event was a huge success and the first of its kind for both Pittsburgh and Point Park. We brought together three professional sports teams while raising money for AbleGamers,” said Steve

Tanzilli, J.D., dean of the Rowland School of Business and chair of SportsPITTSBURGH's Esports Task Force.

The Steel City Showdown featured competitions in three-games — Super Smash Bros., NBA 2K and NHL'19 — with monetary prizes for the winners.

Rapidly growing

“It's long overdue for Pittsburgh to really get behind one of these tournaments, and our Pittsburgh Playhouse is the perfect venue for it,” said Tanzilli. “The University is heavily invested in esports, through both this event and our Business of esports



course that will help develop professionals in the industry with event management and business skills." Pittsburgh does have an established esports presence through the Knights, the city's first professional team.

"We're excited that Point Park University is venturing into esports, and are happy to be supporting this event," said Rodney Lee, project manager for the Knights. "We think this [is] really fun for the community and a great introduction to the growing esports scene." Len Komoroski, CEO of the Cleveland Cavaliers and Quicken Loans Arena, said esports is rapidly growing in popularity from Cleveland to Pittsburgh and beyond. "This may be the first esports tournament for

many gamers in the Pittsburgh area, so we are excited to help bring this to life and provide a fun and educational experience for all those who attend," Komoroski said.

"It's unique to have three professional teams from two cities representing different sports supporting Point Park University in this exciting esports venture," said James Santilli, senior vice president of marketing for the Penguins. "The Penguins are honored to be part of it."

Professional opportunity

Point Park students, faculty and staff volunteered at the two-day event, with duties ranging from ticketing and check-ins to social

media coverage and distribution of prizes. "The Steel City Showdown furthered my love of events, and opened my eyes to a lot of different career opportunities. I got the chance to speak with a Red Bull representative. She gave me some amazing insights into jobs I could excel in based on my degree and work experience in the hospitality industry. Without this experience, I may have never made that connection and had that conversation," said Charlotte Primrose, a senior business management major.

"It's amazing to see what the esports industry is growing into, especially in Pittsburgh and at Point Park. The participants were so excited to be at the event!" Primrose added.

"Steel City Showdown was a blast for me. The event went smoothly and it was a lot fun to meet new people while playing the games we all love. I would love to come back and participate in this event many more times!" said Matthew Whitaker, a 2019 sports, arts and entertainment management graduate.

For students interested in learning more about the esports field, Point Park offers a course titled The Business of esports, taught by Instructor Charles Berry, J.D., owner and attorney of Charles Berry Consulting. The University also plans to host Pittsburgh's first ever Esports Summer Camp for high school students, which is expected to launch in 2020.

BROADCASTING ESPORTS

Alumnus Ryan Bailey is an esports specialist/commentator for Skillshot Media

In addition to the competitions at the Steel City Showdown, Pittsburgh's first major esports event hosted at Point Park May 11-12, broadcast reporting alumnus Ryan Bailey (COM '14) talked at the event about his experiences working as an esports specialist/commentator for Skillshot Media, "To see major institutions like Point Park, the Penguins and Cavs Legion all be involved with on-campus esports was truly incredible. Seeing my alma mater make this kind of effort into esports makes me incredibly excited for the future of both esports and Point Park! Point Park is the perfect place to cultivate a thriving collegiate esports scene," said Bailey.

First wave talent

According to Bailey, "I am lucky enough to have been part of the first wave of esports talent. I am one of the few who has a degree in broadcasting and real experience in a TV studio. That won't be the case for very long, as lots of students see the opportunity that is esports broadcasting."

Bailey said he laid the groundwork for his current position in the rapidly expanding field of esports as a senior at the University. "I began working at 93.7 FM The Fan towards the end of my senior year at Point Park, eventually working my way up to a producer/on-site engineer position," he said. "During this time, I started playing Smite, a third-person multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) game developed by Hi-Rez Studios, competitively in my free time.

"I had opportunities to travel to New Orleans, Columbus and Atlanta to compete in local area network (LAN) events. I was asked to come to Atlanta and do guest commentary for Skillshot Media (owned by Hi-Rez Studios) during an event for which my team failed to qualify, similar to how ESPN will use a football player during the playoffs if their team isn't playing."

Passion for the game

Bailey said he especially enjoyed the broadcast end of the business, "because it was a perfect marriage of my background and my passion for the game. I immediately accepted a full-time offer as an esports specialist/commentator for Skillshot Media!" Bailey explained that, "We operate a league that is incredibly similar to traditional sports. During the regular season, it's a long grind doing color commentary for months. My usual day is prepping for the games I'm working that week. I also have to do plenty of my own practice, both in-game so that I can understand it better, and re-watching my commentary to identify areas I need to improve."

He said he also has the opportunity to help the Smite design team create new characters or make balance changes to the game. "During bye weeks or the offseason, I work to create content about the pro players or the game. I also get to work for other games, like casting The Halo Classic, or serving as the emcee at local charity events."





TRUE PIONEER

Point Park's most decorated student-athlete graduates and runs toward professional dreams

By Barbara Vilanova

Four years ago, Point Park University 2019 graduate and 2019 NAIA Women's Indoor Track National Athlete of the Year Anna Shields was working at a small community bank in her home town of Torrington, Connecticut.

The former high school track star had signed a letter of intent to attend University of North Carolina, but in her senior year, her running performance began to fall off and the offer was rescinded. "I wasn't paying enough attention to nutrition and health and it took a toll. I figured maybe it just wasn't meant to be," said Shields.

Instead of a Division I school, Shields enrolled at nearby Central Connecticut State. She continued to run but her times were not what she wanted and so she dropped out and took a job as a banker teller instead. As she said in a recent interview with *Citius*, a national magazine for runners, "Sometimes I would have dreams about running, of winning a race again. I would wake up and feel sad because I thought it wasn't possible."

Running to the top

It was an employee step-challenge got her re-thinking her decision to quit running. "The prize was a week of free groceries so I thought, why not try?" Naturally competitive, Shields started incorporating running into her step-challenge training, starting with easy jogging and working her way up to six-mile runs.

"It was so much fun, I had forgotten why I liked running so much," she said. Thinking maybe her running days were not over, Shields reached out to her former high school track coach who encouraged her to apply to an NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics) school where she could continue to compete with no age limitations. That suggestion brought Shields to Point Park, the closest NAIA school to her home state of Connecticut. Since enrolling in Point Park in the fall of 2016, Shields has become the first national champion in any sport at the University. For the fifth time in her career, Shields was named NAIA National Athlete of the Year by the United States Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association and she was voted the 2019 NAIA Women's Indoor Track

National Athlete of the Year by the USTF CCCA. This past spring, Shields placed fifth at the USA Track & Field 1 Mile Road Championship in Des Moines, Iowa, running against the best milers in the country.

Exceptional leader

"Anna's not just an exceptional athlete. She has been the best kind of team leader – quiet and encouraging at the same time – and her presence on the track team has helped elevate the performance of her teammates," said Kevin Taylor, associate athletic director. "There has never been a Pioneer like her. I think she'll be remembered for many years to come for how she's raised the bar for what's possible to be a student-athlete at Point Park." The Don Kelly Outstanding Student-Athlete Award was established in 2014 and has been presented

annually to student-athletes – one male and one female – who display outstanding leadership and embody the values, spirit and tradition of being a model student-athlete at Point Park. Deserving candidates are outstanding representatives of the school, the department and their teams in the classroom, in the community and on the field of play. Starting in 2020, the female recipient of this award will receive the Anna Shields Outstanding Female Student-Athlete Award, to honor Point Park's most decorated student-athlete in school history. The name change was announced when Shields was the female honoree for the 2018-19 school year. The male award will remain named for Don Kelly, the Point Park baseball alumnus who played many years in Major League Baseball.

Now 28, Shields' biggest dream may be qualifying for the 2020 U.S. Olympic trials in Eugene, Oregon. "I never would have imagined that I'd have an opportunity to compete at this level at my age, but with the support of the Point Park athletic department, teammates, family and friends, I feel like there's no limit to what I can do," said Shields, who received her bachelor's degree in English in April 2019.

"I'm grateful for every opportunity that comes my way." ❖

ALUMNI CONNECTION



Dear fellow alumni and friends,

In life, each of us has someone who shaped us into the person we are today. I define such a person as patient, kind, tough when it counts, encouraging of your true self, and a force that drives you when you need it. To me, this “person” is my mom and dad. Both have always been extremely patient, tough and supportive – to say I would not be where I am today without them would be an understatement.

After spending nearly a decade in the event industry, I found myself in search of a new challenge and set my sights on forging a career in higher education. This “left turn” out of an

established field would not have been successful without the guidance, encouragement and patience of my support system and the skills I learned at Point Park University.

This was not an entirely new field, as my time in higher education truly began when I was 10 years old and volunteered at a college fair with my dad. I put on my prettiest dress, fanciest shoes, and escorted representatives to their tables. While meeting representatives from across the region I began creating relationships, asking endless questions, and thinking how cool it was to have a bag on wheels. Fast forward 20 years into my role at Point Park, and not much has changed. I'm still wearing my prettiest dress, fanciest shoes, and eagerly learning as much as I can about the Point Park community.

Encouraging dreams, creating relationships and giving back to a community that gave me my start is the reason I am here today. Though my support system encouraged me to pursue my dreams, Point Park taught me the skills I needed to jump into the workforce and establish myself successfully in two career fields.

Hearing about your journeys is the reason I love my job. The success stories in our alumni community are endless, from owning restaurants and starring on Broadway, to leading educational institutions and winning a Pulitzer Prize. It's wonderful to think about how your time as a student at Point Park played a role in each of these stories.

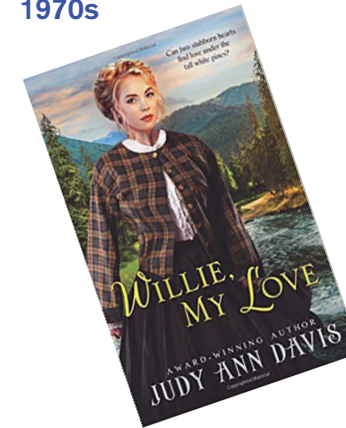
Point Park is a part of our journeys, and is the reason many of us are where we are today. Continue embracing who you are and telling your story, while appreciating the impact Point Park has had on your life. The future is unknown, but equally as beautiful when we are encouraged to follow our dreams. Listen to your heart, wear your fanciest shoes, and always be true to yourself. Looking forward to meeting you soon!

All my best,

Lauren Steiner (COM '11)
Alumni Engagement Officer
lsteiner@pointpark.edu

CLASS NOTES

1970s



Judy A. (Lashinski) Davis (COM 1971) has just released her latest novel, *Willie, My Love*, a historical romantic suspense. Writing as Judy Ann Davis, her book is set in 1856 in the small logging settlement of Clearfield, Pa., when white pine was king of the forest. This is her seventh work of fiction. According to her Amazon.com bio, she began her career in writing as a copy and continuity

writer for radio and television in Scranton, Pa. Davis holds a degree in journalism and communications from Point Park and has written for industry and education throughout her career. Along with her novels, more than a dozen of her short stories have appeared in various literary and small magazines and anthologies and have received numerous awards. When [Davis] is not behind a computer, you can find her looking for anything humorous to make her laugh or swinging a golf club where the chuckles are few. She is a member of Pennwriters, Inc. and Romance Writers of America, and lives in Central Pennsylvania. Her other titles include: *Red Fox Woman*, *Under Starry Skies*, *Key to Love*, *Sweet Kiss*, *Up on the Roof and Other Stories*, and *Four White Roses*. Davis divides her time between Central Pennsylvania and New Smyrna Beach, Fla. She would enjoy hearing from fellow alumni and can be reached via

her blog “A Writer’s Revelations” at: <https://judyannDavis.blogspot.com>.

Philip Klinedinst (COM 1973) writes, “After nearly 50 years in the newspaper business, I retired in April from The Baltimore Sun, where I was copy desk chief. I’ve worked for Gannett, Dow Jones, Media News Group, Scripps Howard, Times Mirror and Tribune Publishing, among others. The last 26 years were spent at The Baltimore Sun.” Klinedinst, a resident of York, Pa., graduated from Point Park with a degree in communications in 1973.

1980s

Guido DeAngelis, J.D., (A&S 1980) and **Michael Spagnoletti** (A&S '18), were honored by Point Park’s Criminal Justice Club at a celebration dinner on April 10. After more than 30 years of service, Spagnoletti, a veteran, recently retired from his role as community

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Asheville Reunion

Matt Bush (COM '02), news director for Blue Ridge Public Radio (BPR) recently reunited with his former Point Park teacher **Helen Fallon**, professor of journalism and Honors Program director, at the offices of BPR in Asheville, N.C. Bush joined Blue Ridge Public Radio as news director in August 2016. Prior to that, he worked at the NPR member station in the nation's capital as a reporter and anchor. He primarily covered the state of Maryland, including six years of covering the statehouse in Annapolis. He also worked at WMAL in Washington and Metro Networks in his hometown of Pittsburgh. Bush earned his degree in broadcasting from Point Park and a master's degree in media entrepreneurship from American University in Washington, D.C. In 2017, he was a graduate of the 35th class of Leadership Asheville at the University of North Carolina. Photo by **Jan Getz**, former broadcaster in residence and assistant professor in the School of Communication from 2002-2010.

relations and crime prevention officer for the Allegheny County Police Department. "Officer Spagnoletti was honored for outstanding leadership in law enforcement throughout his

career. He has done a lot for the community and for Point Park University," explained Noelle Wachter, a sophomore criminal justice major. DeAngelis is currently a judge for the

Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas and was honored by the Criminal Justice Club for many achievements throughout his career in the judicial system. In the past, the Criminal Justice Club has shown appreciation for Pittsburgh Police officers, honored its police chief — Point Park alumnus **Scott Schubert** '07 '10 — and fundraised for the Homestead Borough Police Department, among other activities.

1990s

Michelle Schmude (BUS 1999) has been named to leadership roles at both the Pennsylvania Area Health Education Center (AHEC) and its regional site, the Northeast Pennsylvania Area Health Education Center. At the Northeast Pennsylvania Area Health Education Center, Dr. Schmude has been named vice president of the board of directors. For AHEC, she was appointed to the Applications/Promotions and Curriculum Development Committees of the Pennsylvania AHEC Scholars Program. She earned her M.B.A. at Point Park in 1999.

2000s

Kelly Coccia (COM '01) was nominated by the Western Pennsylvania & West Virginia Chapter of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) as a candidate for LLS's 2019 Woman of the Year. Candidates across the country led fundraising teams and competed, in honor of two local children who are blood cancer survivors, to raise the most funds for blood cancer research. Coccia, who earned her degree in journalism and communication and works in document management in the AMG department of PNC, is part of an elite group of community and business leaders who competed for the titles of LLS's Man & Woman of the Year by raising funds between Feb. 28 and May 11, 2019. Coccia's efforts helped fund therapies and treatments that are saving lives. Over the years, LLS-funded

research has been responsible for the blood cancer advancements that have doubled, tripled, and in some cases quadrupled the survival rate for some blood cancers. Through programs like Man & Woman of the Year, LLS has invested more than \$1 billion in research to advance breakthrough therapies.



Jennie (Ryan) Sanchez (A&S '02) has been named to the 2018 & 2019 Pennsylvania Super Lawyers' Rising Stars list, an honor awarded to the best up-and-coming attorneys. Sanchez is a workers' compensation lawyer at Edgar Snyder and Associates. Prior to that, she served as attorney advisor to the Honorable Administrative Law Judge Drew A. Swank within the United States Department of Labor. She earned her J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, where she was research editor of the University of Pittsburgh Journal of Technology Law and Policy and was awarded the C.A.L.I. Excellence for the Future Award for Legal Analysis and Writing. Sanchez earned her bachelor's degree in psychology, summa cum laude, from Point Park in 2002.

Tyrone Goodwin (BUS '06) was recently hired as a staff accountant/auditor at Cameron Professional Services Group LLC. Goodwin earned his M.B.A. at Point Park in 2006.



Andrea Robinson (BUS '09) is the owner of the new restaurant, Sugar and Smoke, a southern kitchen and bar in the heart of Pittsburgh's Bloomfield neighborhood. According to Robinson, who earned her M.B.A. at Point Park in 2009, "The concept arrived from my years of living in the South and inspiration from my daughter Morgan, my 'sugar pie.' Robinson said she chose Point Park's M.B.A. program specifically for the international business concentration, "I wanted to travel the world and work for a large international corporate company. Also, I wanted to be able to talk business with people all over the world. The M.B.A. program was perfect for me because I ended up landing a job with the \$12 billion international company Solvay, which recently acquired Lanxess. My degree really helped to propel me and prepare me well for the business conversations I had. [It has also] made me more marketable and provided me

with the skills to aid me in opening my own business." Robinson is also among the newest members of the Rowland School of Business Dean's Advisory Board. She said, "I am looking forward to sharing my educational, personal and professional experiences as a member of the Board. I am hoping my experiences will help guide students into a path that is best for them while guiding them away from a path that is less favorable. I am honored to dedicate my time in any way possible to help students and the mission of my alma mater." Added Robinson, "I am particularly excited about being involved with the sports, arts and entertainment management program, as well as the hospitality management classes and the new marketing and sales program, areas in which I have a lot of experience. I am excited to see how the Dean's Advisory Board is received to these future professionals."



Alumna wins Chita Rivera Award for Broadway Debut

Point Park graduate **Gabrielle Hamilton** (COPA '18) won a Chita Rivera Award for Outstanding Female Dancer in a Broadway Show for her performance in Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* The awards were presented on May 19 at the NYU Skirball Center for the Performing Arts in New York. The Chita Rivera Awards were established "to promote and

recognize dance and choreographic excellence on Broadway, Off-Broadway and in film," according to the organization's website. Hamilton is a 2018 graduate of Point Park's Conservatory of the Performing Arts and the revival of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* is her Broadway debut. Hamilton's performance received a rave review in *The New York Times*, with chief theater critic Ben Brantley calling it "stimulating and frightening – and as fresh – as last night's fever dream." *Oklahoma!* was nominated for eight Tony Awards, and won the Tony for Best Revival of a Musical. The show's choreographer, **John Heginbotham**, was a guest choreographer at Point Park where he met Hamilton and later cast her in the current Broadway production. According to **Garfield Lemonius**, chair and associate professor of dance, "Providing our students with opportunities to meet and work with choreographers of John's caliber is a focus of our dance program. That accessibility can be a huge boost to students once they leave here to launch their professional careers, like it was for Gabrielle, and we're incredibly proud of her."

2010s

Olson Kelly (COPA '17) has been promoted to artistic associate at Theatre Under the Stars in Houston, Tex. He writes, "I will be providing support for the overall artistic objectives for the organization, as well as assisting on casting and new works development projects." Kelly earned his degree in Theatre Arts at Point Park in 2017.



Anthony Romano (A&S '19) is an application engineer at Benschaw, Inc. He earned his degree in electrical engineering in April 2019. According to Romano, "The Circuits Analysis, Electrical Power and Power Electronics courses I took as technical electives in the electrical engineering program have been extremely helpful to me in my position as an application engineer at Benschaw, Inc. The course that applies to my current work the most is the Power Electronics course, which taught me the fundamentals of AC to DC and DC to DC converters and DC to AC inverters. These devices are the exact type of devices I size and apply as motor control systems. It was useful to learn how such devices operate and can affect a power system. I have been able to apply this knowledge to the work I perform every day. The year-long Senior Design course sequence was also immensely useful. The Senior Design course was challenging, but in the end, a pleasurable experience that walked through the process of designing a solution for an engineering problem. The course sequence was a thorough simulation of a real-world project, as it began with defining the scope of a project, requiring design reviews and progress reports during the development, and ended with the requirement of a product being delivered and presented." Added Romano: "The professors at Point Park are very knowledgeable within their subject matter. The instructors presented material in an approachable format without compromising the content of the material being taught. They were very

helpful with providing one-on-one instruction when needed. Also, the faculty were helpful for providing career ideas and advice."



Andrew Duncan (BUS '18, '19) is a partner account manager at Cloud Adoption Solutions in Pittsburgh. He earned his undergraduate degree in business management in 2018 and his M.B.A. in 2019. According to **Shannon J. Gregg**, M.B.A. (BUS '14), president of Cloud Adoption Solutions and a current Ph.D. in community engagement student at Point Park, "Andrew's ambition and tenacity made him an absolute perfect candidate for the role

of partner account manager. Point Park has a focus on perspective and inclusion. In my studies there, I have always been encouraged to consider where others were coming from and the challenges they faced, and I knew that Andrew would have been given the same opportunity to think globally. I know that anyone who has been a learner at Point Park knows to dig deep, to get to a root cause and to take action." Duncan, a former Pioneers basketball player, said, "Point Park embodied everything that I was looking for in a college experience. Initially, the draw was playing baseball at the collegiate level, but receiving a top-level business management education while living in one of the most beautiful cities Downtown was the experience I had always dreamed about." It was an incredible experience — and I owe it all to Point Park University. I regularly keep up with Point Park alumni success stories, so that I can learn from others and be inspired by them. I read about Shannon's company and what they do, and I just knew this was the company and leader I wanted to work for. I proactively emailed the company my

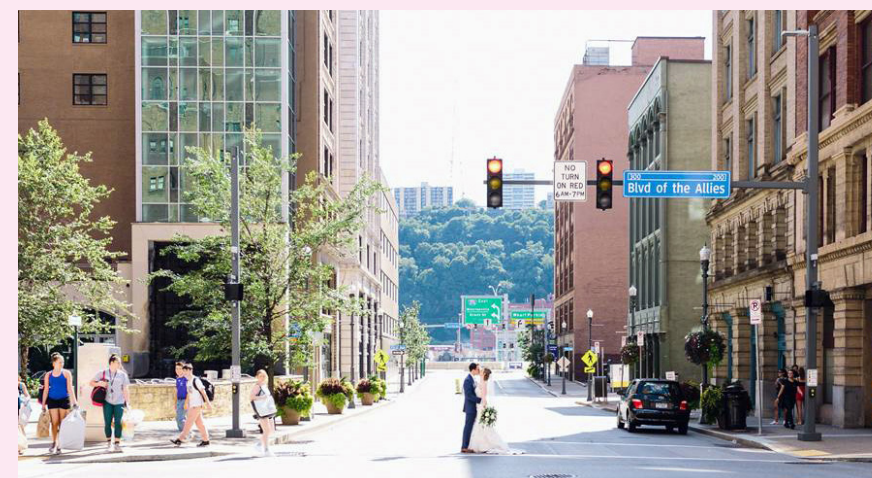
resume and the ideas I had for furthering the organization's success. I interviewed a few days later, and the rest is history! Now I wake up every day and work my dream job, while learning from a mentor who pushes me to be the best I can!"



Gabe Reed (COPA '18) is a singer, songwriter and actor living in New York City. He recently competed in the International Songwriting Competition. Reed said, "Pioneer Records introduced me to marketing myself as an artist by creating a network of people who can help me create. The main thing I learned was that meeting people in the business, who know the business, is an incredible opportunity for marketing and meeting artists and producers." He said, "I decided to submit to the International Songwriting Competition after seeing artists like Kehlani, Vance Joy, Bastille and Passenger participate prior years and get big recognition for it. I also was very curious to see what the response to my new music would be." His fondest Point Park memories include, "Getting to perform in all three spaces at the historic Pittsburgh Playhouse before it relocated to Downtown. Another fond memory was waiting in line for the West Penn Hall elevators. It never gets old."

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Heart of Point Park

Gabriel Dubin (A&S '17) and **Marin Helppie-Schmieder** (COPA '15) tied the knot on Sept. 2, 2018 with a wedding in Downtown Pittsburgh. They took photos on Point Park's campus as part of their special day.

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ON THE BALL

Pioneer softball soaring high on and off the field

By Kevin Taylor



To be a Point Park University softball student-athlete means to achieve highly on and off the field. The Pioneers have been setting a high pace in both areas for many years.

The 2018-19 school year was no different with Point Park softball posting another 20-win season and leading the Pioneers' athletic department with a 3.47 team grade-point average. Softball is one of the many teams that achieves highly, with 15 of 17 varsity sports coming in above 3.00 for the year. It's a big part of the way 13th-year head coach Michelle Coultas runs the softball program. She prides the team on being great students and athletes. She's also in charge of monitoring academic progress of all student-athletes in the department as the Pioneers' Primary Woman's Administrator.

Serious and competitive

"I want players to be well-rounded," said Coultas. "To achieve highly in academics and on the field. When you come to Point Park, you are able to be a serious student, get good grades and also be a part of a competitive, collegiate softball program." Coultas knows what it takes to succeed at Point Park. She played softball and basketball for the Pioneers from 1993-97. The Pioneers have been successful under Coultas with 288 victories since she took over in 2007. That's an average of 22 wins per season, a strong pace with springtime in Pittsburgh hardly allowing for more than 40 games a year. This past season, the Pioneers won 22 games and posted a 12-6 record in the River States Conference. That was good for third place in a highly competitive regular season.

At playoff time, the Pioneers once again made a strong run at the conference championship. They made it to the final three teams of the 10-team conference and came within one game of qualifying for the NAIA national tournament. It was the third time in four years Point Park got to the conference semifinals.

Strong seniors

"We peaked at the right time, playing our best softball the second half of the year and into the playoffs," said Coultas. "We really turned our season around at the midway point. We had a great group of seniors that led us down the stretch."

The Pioneers were stuck in a losing skid toward the end of March. But they responded by winning their next

eight games to turn things around. The Pioneers ended the regular season on a 15-3 stretch. The Pioneers were at the top of the RSC class academically as well. Of the 17-players on the roster, seven achieved NAIA Scholar-Athlete status. That is for juniors and seniors with a 3.50 grade-point average or higher. That included senior pitcher Ashley Iagnemma (3.58 GPA), senior catcher Delaney Baumis (3.68), senior first baseman Tiffany Edwards (3.74), senior outfielder Shannon Davis (3.78), junior second baseman Courtney Blocher (4.00), junior shortstop Chandler Krelow (3.58) and junior outfielder Paula Ambrose (3.65).

Academic accolades

The academic accolades did not end there, with sophomore center fielder

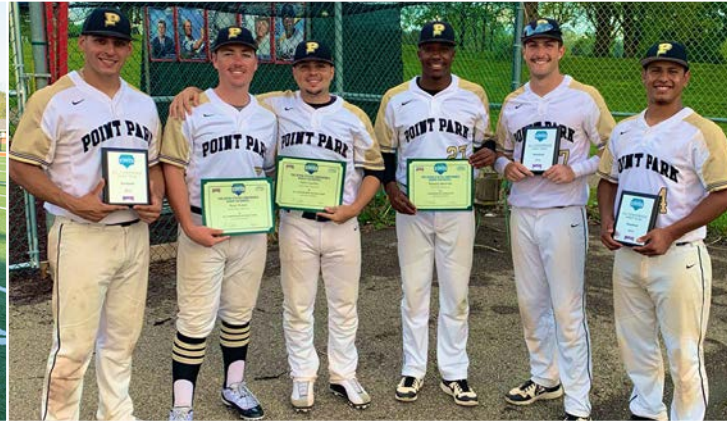
Maddie Horn pulling in Google Cloud® Academic All-District honors. She is not only one of the top offensive and defensive players on the team, but she also carries a 3.99 GPA in biology and pre-med. Iagnemma carried the Pioneers in the postseason with spectacular pitching. She racked up four complete games during the playoff run. Iagnemma reached a major milestone by surpassing 500 career strikeouts. She finished her career with 507 in 501.1 innings. That went along with 39 wins and a 2.37 career ERA. Junior Katie Tarr was a huge part of the team as another dominant pitcher on staff. She was named RSC Pitcher of the Year after putting up 182 strikeouts in 18 games for an average of 10.1 per game. The Pioneers had six players named all-conference with first-team

honors going to Tarr, Horn, Edwards and freshman catcher Hailey Leitner. Second-team accolades went to Iagnemma and Baumis, and Ambrose was Point Park's honoree for the RSC Champions of Character Team.

"I can't say enough about the seniors and what they brought to the team all four years," said Coultas. "They had great careers on the field, they've had a great experience with internships and student-teaching, and they are all going on to jobs after graduation. And we have talented underclassmen who do well on and off the field. We want them to have the same, great experience during their time here at Point Park." ❖

Kevin Taylor is director of athletic communications at Point Park.

SPORTS ROUNDUP



▶ MEN'S TRACK & FIELD

The Pioneers won the RSC Outdoor Championship in the spring for the first outdoor title in team history. Point Park had been runner-up each of its first four years of existence. The Pioneers posted 16 all-conference performances at the RSC meet. Xavier Stephens advanced to the NAIA national championship in two events and earned NAIA All-American in the 1,500 meters. Daniel Jacobs qualified for NAIA's in the javelin.

▶ WOMEN'S TRACK & FIELD

The Pioneers wrapped up a great year with a second-place finish at the RSC Outdoor Championships in the spring. Point Park had 15 all-conference performers at that meet and advanced a program-record four individuals to the NAIA Outdoor National Championships. Anna Shields won two more NAIA titles to finish her career with 10 overall. Senior Kara Rohlf, sophomore Reba Bartram and freshman Alyssa Campbell also qualified for the nationals.

▶ BASEBALL

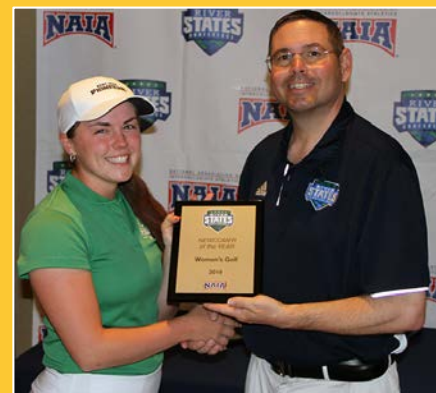
The Pioneers had another strong season at 32-17 overall and made a run in the River States Conference playoffs. It was the eighth 30-win season under 10th-year head coach Loren Torres despite just two starters returning from the year before and a big injury to the pitching rotation. The Pioneers had five players earn all-conference honors including senior third baseman Erik Montero, sophomore catcher Luis Mujica and sophomore left fielder Ed Pfluger all on the first team

▶ MEN'S GOLF

Senior Gage Basiletti and sophomore Matt D'Amico led the Pioneers at the River States Conference championship both finishing in the Top 10 individually. Basiletti was third overall with rounds of 75-73-75. D'Amico placed ninth and was named All-RSC second team on the strength of a 72 in the middle round. Senior Nick Finoli was the team's RSC Champions of Character Team representative and was named an NAIA Scholar-Athlete.

▶ WOMEN'S GOLF

The Pioneers took first place at three tournaments during the spring season with victories at Carnegie Mellon, Westminster and Grove City to highlight the year. Joey Walz was the top player with a third-place finish at the RSC Championship and being named the RSC Newcomer of the Year. Sophomore Sydney Schaffer and freshmen Olivia Stawovy and Megan Locke all return next year as well.



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