

THE POINT

SPRING '23

A PUBLICATION OF POINT PARK UNIVERSITY



DANCE FEST!

From the President

Since taking over as interim president in January, I have been on a whirlwind tour of campus to meet as many people as possible, while settling into some of the critical business at hand for Point Park University.

I want you to know that alumni engagement is a major priority for me. I am operating with a goal of building a real community at Point Park, one that engages students, faculty and staff, as well as our alums. As part of those efforts, I'm excited to tell you that Point Park will host a Homecoming Weekend from Sept. 29 to Oct. 1, and you'll find more details on the events early this summer.

I hope you'll read a message on Page 6 from Mariah Peoples, our new Director of Alumni & Donor Engagement, who is eager to meet all of you and build meaningful relationships.

One of my first and most important missions is to finish the development of our next strategic plan. This plan is critical to ensure Point Park is focused on the right goals and objectives to allow this institution to continue to thrive in the years ahead. I look forward to sharing this with our entire University community upon its completion.



“I am operating with a goal of building a real community at Point Park, one that engages students, faculty and staff, as well as our alums.”

Dr. Chris W. Brussalis

In Other Exciting News at Point Park:



I am thrilled to let you know that **Ted Black**, a former executive with the Pittsburgh Penguins and Buffalo Sabres, is joining Point Park as our Senior Vice President of Institutional Advancement and Strategy. With a proven track record in entertainment, media, marketing, nonprofit management and business, his leadership will be critical in advancing the University. In his Senior VP role, Ted will lead alumni affairs and development, external relations, enrollment marketing, and university marketing.



We also are excited to welcome **Marlin Collingwood** as our new Vice President of Enrollment. Marlin comes to us from Plymouth State University in New Hampshire, where he was Vice President of Communications, Enrollment & Student Life. Marlin is a native of Western Pennsylvania and worked with many of Pittsburgh's most iconic brands during his time as Vice President of Public Relations for Mullen Advertising. ●

NONDISCRIMINATION, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY INITIATIVES:

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: sex, race, ethnicity, religion, color, national origin, age (40 years and over), ancestry, individuals with disabilities, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, height, weight, 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 and policies, or complaints, should be referred to Point Park's vice president of human resources, phone number 412-392-3952. Complaints of discrimination can be filed via the Incident Reporting Form online at PointPark.edu/IncidentReport; and will be processed by the University Office of Equity and Inclusion according to Point Park's policy on discrimination and harassment. Complaints may also be emailed to equity@pointpark.edu

Inquiries regarding Title IX and the Title IX regulations should also be referred to the University's Title IX coordinator. The Title IX coordinator may be reached at oci@pointpark.edu, 412-392-8190, or 201 Wood St., Student Center, Room 104D, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. A Title IX incident report can be filed via the Incident Reporting Form online at PointPark.edu/IncidentReport

TALK TO US

The Point wants to hear from you. Send your comments and suggestions to alumni@pointpark.edu or drop us a note at:

Point Park University
Office of University Advancement
201 Wood St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

ON THE COVER

Students dancers perform in a class during the National High School Dance Festival, held March 1-5 on Point Park's campus.

Contents



8

2 CAMPUS NEWS

Student, Faculty, Alumni
and Event Updates

6 DANCE FEST 2023

PLUS: Point Park Dance
Once Again Ranked One
of Best College Programs
by DanceUS.org

8 MAKERSPACE EDUCATION EXPANDS WITH NSF GRANT AWARD

10 TURNING OUT EXPERT BREWERS AT THE BREWING SCIENCE ACADEMY

Make it a POINT
to support Point
Park students
with a gift to
the Pioneer
Fund or Bison
Scholarship Fund.

Visit www.pointpark.edu/give

Email alumni@pointpark.edu

Call **412-392-8096**

Or scan the QR code:



12 CREATIVE GENIUS

Pittsburgh Playhouse
Hosts Legendary
Choreographer

14 STUDENT SUCCESS

Professional Career-
Readiness Center

16 ALUMNI

A message from the
Director of Alumni &
Donor Engagement

PLUS: Save the Date for
Point Park University
Homecoming Weekend!



STUDENTS | FACULTY | ALUMNI | EVENTS

Campus News

STUDENTS School of Education Students Gain Impactful Field Experience

To further learning outside of the classroom, Dr. Rhonda Threet '19 arranged for students in her Family and Community Diversity course to have a hands-on field experience at Pittsburgh Faison's K-5 after-school program during

which they worked in groups of four to facilitate mini-lessons based on positive, identity-affirming children's books with 40 elementary school students.

The course has been a bit of a full-circle moment for Threet. A Pittsburgh Public Schools educator and senior policy fellow with Teach Plus Pennsylvania, she is a 2019 alumna of Point Park's community engagement doctoral program, for which her dissertation examined how culturally relevant pedagogy impacts positive racial identity for African American students. ●

At top: Point Park University students pose for a photo with Pittsburgh Faison students after facilitating a mini-lesson based on the book "Hair Love," by Matthew A. Cherry. The field experience was part of Point Park's Family and Community Diversity course. Tayler Cleveland '25, pictured third from the right, said she sought to empower the students and teach them to respect their differences, while also acknowledging that they are all beautiful.

Submitted photo

Meet Our Students



Shivansh Waleacha '23

is an Economics and Finance major who has been involved in just about every student leadership opportunity available: Student Government Association, Resident Educator, Pioneer Ambassador, Campus Activities Board member, and Student Accounting Association member. Outside of the classroom, Waleacha has interned with Signature Financial Planning. "My internship requires me to hone my hard skills like using Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint and proprietary software used in the finance industry. All of this experience will be transferable when I graduate and enter the workforce. I will already be comfortable with many of the tools used in the field, which will make me a more competitive job candidate."



Civil Engineering student and track and field athlete **Dontay Moore '23**

interned with GAI Consultants, a planning, engineering and environmental consulting firm. Double alumnus Gary DeJidas '72, '11 is the Chairman and CEO of GAI Consultants. Moore shared his key takeaways from the internship. "I got to see the actual process that goes into a real-life engineering project, connecting my coursework to my internship tasks along the way. I worked on my professional communication skills, time management and task prioritization. I learned how to balance my schoolwork with my internship responsibilities to maximize my time and productivity."



STUDENTS

Honors Student Organization Explores Ecological Issues

Exploring local trails, tending to trees across campus and discovering ways to effect positive change in the environment: Point Park University's Honors Student Organization (HSO), a student-run group for Honors Program members of any major, is spending the school year learning about ecological issues through events and programming with community partners and local experts.

"I chose the theme of ecological issues for this year's HSO's programming because I wanted to help students expand their knowledge on how they can take an active role in making the environment a better place by addressing the ecological issues around Point Park's campus and the city of Pittsburgh," said Natalea Hillen '24, a broadcasting major, marketing and sales minor and HSO president. "My goal is to get them to observe and study how much planning and hard work goes into maintaining and improving our vibrant urban areas."

The HSO fosters personal and professional growth for students through leadership and volunteer activities. From attending cultural events around the city to traveling to the National Collegiate Honors Council and Northeast Regional Honors Council conferences, the organization is deeply invested in enhancing the honors student experience. ●

"I wanted to help students expand their knowledge on how they can take an active role in making the environment a better place by addressing the ecological issues around Point Park's campus."

Natalea Hillen '24, HSO president

STUDENTS

SAEM Sports Sales Course & Teams Prepare Students for Success

For students aspiring to work in the sports industry, Point Park University's Sports, Arts & Entertainment Management program is a winning play. In particular, students exploring careers in sports sales will find a distinctive blend of classroom instruction and experiential learning at Point Park. A new sports sales course was created that covers a range of topics, including identifying the sales process and how to develop an effective sports sponsorship package.

Students gain hands-on experience selling professional sports tickets on the University's sales teams for the Pittsburgh Penguins, Pittsburgh Pirates and Cleveland Cavaliers.

"One of my favorite things about the course was how interactive it is," said Sydney Weaver '22. "We get to work with different organizations by selling tickets and creating sponsorship pitch decks which is an awesome way to get experience. We are working with real organizations and making connections in the industry while learning valuable information along the way." ●





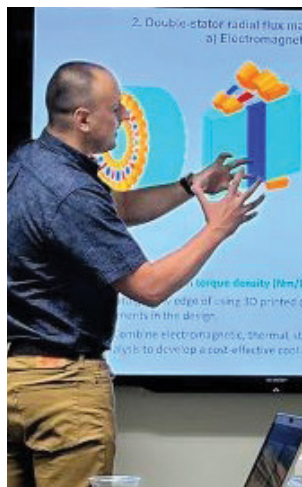
FACULTY
School of Arts & Sciences Colloquium

Dr. Britney Brinkman, Associate Professor of Psychology, spoke about her recent book, “Girls’ Identities and Experiences of Oppression in Schools: Resilience, Resistance, and Transformation,” at the first School of Arts and Sciences Colloquium on November 9, 2022. In her presentation, titled Educational Transformation: Creating Schools where Girls can Thrive, she described lessons learned about girls’ educational experiences from more than a decade of data collection in schools.

Brinkman conveys that her book was written for a wide audience. “It offers valuable pedagogies, policies and practices for educators, counselors, social workers and policy makers, as well as academics and students in social, developmental and educational psychology. It’s also an important read for high school students and anyone who works with teens, whether in schools or as parents. Everyone should be invested in what’s happening in our schools.” ●

FACULTY
National Renewable Energy Laboratory

Dr. Oleksandr Dobzhanskyi, Assistant Professor of Electrical Engineering, spent last summer working on a sustainable energy and transportation project at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) of the Department of Energy through its visiting faculty program. Dobzhanskyi created designs of two electrical motors, and along with a team of other experienced field researchers and scientists, was able to develop an efficient design and prototype of the motor featuring lightweight and large-output power characteristics. In the classroom, students will be able to use the motor prototype, and will also benefit from the new hands-on skills and methodologies acquired by Dobzhanskyi as a result of the project. ●



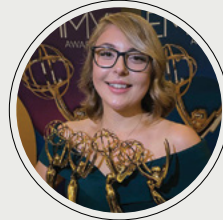
EVENTS
2ND Annual Myron Cope Day

Steelers legend Rocky Bleier joined Pittsburgh media heavyweights as the Point Park School of Communication celebrated its second annual Myron Cope Day on February 20, 2023.

Four panel events were held to discuss Cope’s legacy and career as a communication professional in Pittsburgh.

“Myron Cope forged a legendary career that is worthy of both honor and reflection,” Dr. Bernie Ankey, Dean of the School of Communication said. “His importance to the Pittsburgh communication landscape is reflected by the impressive professionals willing to take part in our panel events so they can discuss his legacy and impact.” ●

Meet Our Alumni



Ashley C. Stokes '18

We are #PointParkProud of Cinema Production graduate Ashley C. Stokes '18 for receiving four Suncoast Regional Emmy Awards for her work as a producer with WEDU PBS, West Central Florida’s PBS station. Stokes shared that one of her favorite Point Park memories was her senior thesis. “I got to spend two semesters creating a documentary about healing with nature. The beautiful thing about the documentary classes I took was the flexibility for creativity. This class ultimately led me to becoming a documentary filmmaker and I use the skills I learned from it every day.”



Trisha Simmons '83

Trisha Simmons '83 appeared on “Let’s Make A Deal” on January 18, 2023, where she mentioned Point Park on air and talked about her passion project of six children’s books she wrote, voiced and illustrated to support The Simmons Scholarship Fund she established at her alma mater. Simmons will be traveling across the country this spring and summer to promote her books and to share them with children in underserved communities, where she will give them an experiential opportunity to write and record their own inspirational stories!

EVENTS

Mark Your Calendars for the next Day of Giving: Nov. 1, 2023!

On Nov. 16, the Office of University Advancement hosted its inaugural Day of Giving. The 24-hour celebration of community and philanthropy saw more than 575 alumni, trustees, students, friends, parents, faculty and staff, along with generous match and challenge donors, come together for “One Big Day” as “One Big Team” to support Point Park University. The day was a huge success, greatly exceeding the goal of 150 donors, and in part made possible through the generosity of our match and challenge donors: Lisa Cibik, Julie Cryser, Dave Duncan '79, Joe Greco '71, Don and Cathy Green, Andrew Hughey, Don Jenkins '70, Paul Meese '65, Nyx Melody '15, Stephanie Schmader '98, Darrell E. Smalley, Michael Soto, and an anonymous donor. ●



Lee Bodnar '12 “I always look for an opportunity to give back to Point Park, whether it be the University or the Athletics Program. I had such a great experience during my time at Point Park and made some of my favorite memories with my teammates, coaches and classmates. My wife also attended Point Park — we’ve been married for three years now and have two beautiful children. Without the University and our mutual friends, we may have never met. I feel it’s important to give back to Point Park for all that it has given me in hopes that it can help provide those great experiences and opportunities for current and future students.”

582
DONORS



**Josie Brown, Ph.D.,
Dean of the School of
Arts and Sciences**

“As a community, we need to recognize how important giving is to our institution, and we need to build a culture around giving. It plays a significant role in how we rank in national polls which correlates to our enrollment. Most importantly, however, giving provides us with another avenue for supporting students. In Arts and Sciences, this is a tremendous need. The dollars that we receive from events like the Day of Giving will help to support student retention by providing resources to clubs and organizations in our school; by providing resources for faculty-led off-campus activities; as well as by providing resources for faculty and student research collaborations. I give to Point Park because I am invested in the institution and to the students we serve.”



**Nyx Melody '15,
Alumni Board President**

“I supported Point Park on the Day of Giving because I would have never been able to complete my undergraduate degree or travel for conferences without the generous support of donors when I was a student. I specifically offered a challenge to support the Alumni Association Scholarship for a few reasons: firstly, as the President of the Alumni Association Board of Directors it felt important to me to lead by example; secondly, as a board we had expressed a desire to increase what we could offer to students each year and I wanted to participate in that effort; and thirdly, I was a previous recipient of one of the Alumni Association Scholarships during my time at Point Park and wanted to return the favor.”



**Michael Soto, Ph.D.,
Provost and Senior
Vice President of
Academic Affairs**

“Issuing a Day of Giving challenge to my colleagues was no challenge at all. Every day, I’m privileged to witness faculty and staff give their all to improve the lives of our students. The good people of Point Park make this University a special place.”



**Alyssa Campbell '22 '24,
Graduate Assistant**

“The entire Women’s Cross Country team was in Tallahassee, Florida, on the Day of Giving. I remember we as a group all donated at once while on our way to dinner that night. Our head coach had been encouraging his athletes all day through our group chats to donate. We were watching the numbers that whole day!”

\$167,846
RAISED

\$94,836
FROM PIONEERS

\$73,010
UNLOCKED CHALLENGES

GIFTS FROM \$1 TO
\$5,000

\$288
AVERAGE DONATION

24
FUNDS/AREAS SUPPORTED

Dance Fest 2023

During Point Park University's spring break in 2020, high school dancers from around the country and the world descended upon Downtown Pittsburgh to perform, take master classes and audition for some of the best university dance programs in the country. A week later, the entire country shut down as the COVID-19 pandemic took hold.

From Wednesday, March 1, to Sunday, March 5, 2023, the first National High School Dance Festival in

three years took place on Point Park's campus. Approximately 1,200 students from more than 70 high schools across the country were in attendance.

"We are so excited that Point Park was willing to once again host," said Dr. Kathryn Kearns, the founder and Executive Director of the festival. "It's been really tough on the teachers, faculty and students."

The event - the largest of its kind - provides high school students from grades 9 to 12 with the opportunity

to take classes and perform in Point Park's state-of-the-art dance facilities with renowned guest artists and choreographers. More than 200 master classes will be held during the festival.

Students also have the chance to audition for scholarships from more than 60 of the most prestigious dance schools in the country, including Point Park, The Hartt School, The Boston Conservatory at Berklee and the Joffrey Ballet School.

"It's absolutely an honor to continue our association with Kathryn and this festival," said Garfield Lemonius, Dean and Artistic Director of Point Park's Conservatory of Performing Arts. "It's an exciting opportunity for the students and allows us to both recruit and show off our state-of-the-art facilities. We want prospective students to fall in love with everything Point Park and showcase what Pittsburgh has to offer."





High school students perform during master classes held for the National High School Dance Festival on Point Park's campus.



ACADEMICS

Point Park Dance Once Again Ranked One of Best College Programs by DanceUS.org

Point Park University's dance program has again been recognized as one of the Best College Dance Programs for 2022-23 in the United States by DanceUS.org.

"This is the third time Point Park's dance program has been recognized by DanceUS.org and we are incredibly proud of the designation," said Garfield Lemonijs, dean and artistic director of the Conservatory of Performing Arts.

"Our students are fully prepared to enter the professional dance world — whether that's with a national or regional dance company, on Broadway or in the commercial dance industry — because of the exceptional talent and dedication of our dance instructors." ●

"Our students are fully prepared to enter the professional dance world ... because of the exceptional talent and dedication of our dance instructors."

Garfield Lemonijs,
dean and artistic director



Makerspace Education Expands with NSF Grant Award

When Drs. Virginia Chambers, Kamryn York and Mark Marnich of Point Park University's School of Education and Department of Natural Sciences, Engineering and Technology sought a National Science Foundation grant to promote Makerspace STEM education, they hoped it would help move the needle in terms of understanding and maximizing maker education in the Pittsburgh region.

Today, two years into the National Science Foundation (NSF) grant, the program is doing just that by making strides in improving the quality and effectiveness of STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education for students. The team leading the NSF grant in maker education at Point Park are Chambers as principal investigator and York and Marnich as co-principal investigators.

Awarded in 2021, the \$281,830 grant to Point Park University's School of Education supports the school's Transforming Integrative Makerspace Education for STEM Pre-Service Teachers program. It was the largest grant of its kind in the history of the University.

Maker education, a term coined in 2013, involves students working with their hands collaboratively to make, learn, explore and share to advance their learning and success in STEM areas. Makerspace teaching methods can be particularly useful for teaching STEM subjects.

"This is because they require students to become more aware of the design of the world around them and see themselves as people who can test their ideas, make changes and improve their results," said York, Assistant Professor of Education.



Matt's Maker Space Lab, located on the seventh floor of Academic Hall, is operated by the School of Education and the Department of Natural Sciences, Engineering and Technology.

Point Park opened a dedicated makerspace lab last year to support and expand makerspace education among its students. The design and construction of Matt's Maker Space Lab, which is located in 716 Academic Hall, was supported by the University administration and a collaborative effort between the School of Education, Physical Plant and Facilities and Technology Services. The lab is named in honor of local nonprofit Matt's Maker Space, established by Noelle and David Conover in remembrance of their son, Matt, who passed away from cancer at age 12. The organization has created 27 makerspaces in the area, including spaces in Mt. Lebanon School District, UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh and UPMC Western Psychiatric Hospital. Point Park is the first university to house a Matt's Maker Space.

According to Chambers, Associate Professor of Education, Point Park students now have an opportunity to explore and engage in makerspace pedagogy through an interdisciplinary approach across various courses in their certification program.

"The faculty will be building on their own STEM teaching practices through structured professional development focused on cross-curricular makerspace teaching and learning," she said.

The lab is named in honor of local nonprofit Matt's Maker Space, established by Noelle and David Conover in remembrance of their son, Matt, who passed away from cancer at age 12. Point Park is the first university to house a Matt's Maker Space.

Despite the growing popularity of makerspace education in schools across the US, teachers are still often underprepared to teach in maker environments as these are quite different from traditional teaching environments.

To address this challenge, York, Chambers and Marnich initiated a project called T.I.M.E for STEM, where T.I.M.E stands for Transforming Integrative Makerspace Education. The project works with pre-service (student) teachers at Point Park who are focusing on elementary education, with the goal to improve the way they teach STEM subjects and better prepare them for maker education methods.

Makerspaces can be particularly beneficial for teaching mathematics as the fun, hands-on approach has been shown to increase children's confidence and lessen anxiety they have surrounding the subject. Mathematical activities in makerspaces might include students designing and measuring things themselves or working out how to fit different shapes together to create new shapes.

"Maker education develops skills in mathematics such as measurement, data analysis, spatial reasoning, counting and geometry," said Marnich, Professor of Mathematics.

This past March, York and Chambers presented their work at the 17th annual International Conference of Technology, Education and Development in Valencia Spain, and the team will participate virtually in the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting in May.

"As makerspace education continues to grow in the U.S. and beyond, it is our aim to not only be a part of this important movement and discussion among educators, but to help pave the way for students and teachers who will be the makerspace leaders of the future," Chambers said. ●



Turning Out Expert Brewers at the Brewing Science Academy

BY BARB VILANOVA

When Gregg Johnson, Ph.D., helped develop and launch Point Park University's first Brewing Science Academy in the summer of 2021, he knew there was interest but wasn't expecting classes to fill up almost immediately.

Now, three years later, "We are seeing former

students landing jobs in the industry, at least two former students are in the process of opening their own breweries, and an increased participation by professional brewers allowing students to make invaluable personal connections with potential future employers," said Johnson, associate professor of electrical engineering.

Housed in the University's Natural Sciences, Engineering and Technology Department, the beer brewing program is the only one of its kind in Western Pennsylvania. It is a multi-week, on-ground, non-credit program designed for current and aspiring brewers to help provide a trained workforce to beer breweries. The most recent

brewing program, held in the summer of 2022, was made possible with collaborations between Point Park faculty, Master Brewers Association of the Americas (MBAA) members and beer industry experts.

For Scott Wyman, a member of the Brewing Science Academy's inaugural class and co-owner and

As part of Point Park's Brewing Science Academy, students take trips to breweries in the region to learn more about the scientific process behind making beer.



“We are seeing ... increased participation by professional brewers allowing students to make invaluable personal connections with potential future employers.”

Dr. Gregg Johnson, associate professor of electrical engineering



head brewer at Tortured Souls Brewing, the program provided a solid overview of the craft and industry. In addition, the scientific aspects of good brewing were particularly important to his business.

“The classes accentuated the need to focus on not just grain and hops but the mineral content and quality

of water,” Wyman said. “This has been one of the biggest things that has changed the way I brew.”

The state of Pennsylvania is taking note of Point Park’s effort to support and expand state-made beer makers. In fact, last year, the Brewing Science Academy received a boost in the form of a \$39,000 grant to help

expand the program and create more opportunities for aspiring brewers.

According to Johnson, all of this is good news for people who like to brew craft beer and those who like to drink it.

“The craft brewing industry is tight-knit and the competition is unusually friendly compared with any

industry I have worked in,” Johnson said. “This is most evident in how eager they are to share their knowledge with those looking to break into the industry.” ●

Creative Genius

Pittsburgh Playhouse Hosts Legendary Choreographer

“Seeing how [a] piece translates to another generation is always of interest, and you know, I’m always on the lookout for God’s gift — amazing talent.”



© Richard Avedon _ Courtesy of The Richard Avedon Foundation

The acclaimed and influential Twyla Tharp is coming to the Pittsburgh Playhouse.

Students will be performing the revered choreographer’s work during April’s Spring Dance Concert, while also offering a special event, An Evening with Twyla Tharp.

Since graduating from Barnard College in 1963 and establishing her dance company, Twyla Tharp Dance, in 1965, Tharp has forged an award-winning career that includes a Tony Award, two Emmy Awards, 19 honorary doctorates and the 2004 National Medal of the Arts.

How did your association begin with Point Park’s Conservatory Dance Department?

Well, it has a very big reputation and it delivers some very, very interesting dancers into auditions. And, so, I thought I would come have a look-see at their training.

Have you been impressed with what you’ve seen?

They’re very impressive. That’s why I’m coming to see how they are developing.

How does it feel to see students performing your work, as some of ours will do in the upcoming Spring Dance Concert?

Well, it depends on how they do. [Laughs] Kaitlyn Gilliland is coming to teach this work and she’s terrific. It’s always a privilege to see young people receiving information from someone who really knows how to teach and loves teaching, and really knows the material. Seeing how the piece translates to another generation is always of interest, and you know, I’m always on the lookout for God’s gift - amazing talent.



APR 19-23

Twyla Tharp's work will be performed as part of the Spring Dance Concert, which runs from April 19 to 23 in the PNC Theatre at the Pittsburgh Playhouse.

APR 23

An Evening with Twyla Tharp takes place on April 23 at the PNC Theatre at the Pittsburgh Playhouse.

Tickets for both events can be purchased at www.pittsburghplayhouse.com.

What are some of the biggest changes you've seen in the industry for women since you first started Twyla Tharp Dance?

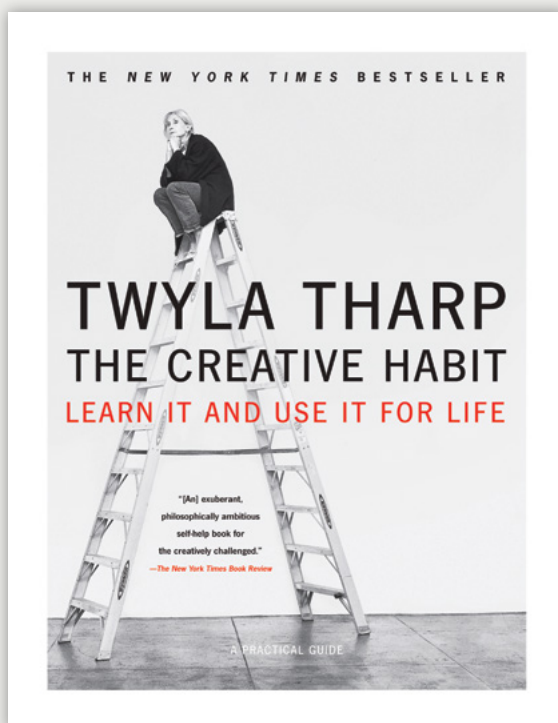
We know about Dionysus and Bacchanalia - the original dancing community was women in Greece in the classic tradition. And so gentleman are actually rather late-comers into the arena. There also is, of course, the tradition in modern dance that is female-driven. So to have some kind of integration problem with women into dance is a little bit backwards.

Point Park has been working with Minding the Gap to improve mental health among dancers. Have you seen an evolution in how dancers are treated throughout your career?

All I can share is what I do and know. One of the reasons I worked for dancers and formed a group is my respect for the people who do it. And my desire is to learn from them. It comes down to respect. It's an opportunity to participate in physical activity with people at the highest level.

What can we expect from An Evening with Twyla Tharp?

I center the lecture on what we call The Creative Habit that deals with many issues that people find in practicing creativity, whether it's writing or cooking or building tables or dancing.



It's all, in many ways, a similar kind of process which requires both skill and techniques and discipline, and the willingness to let that all go. It's training people to step across the line from the very rigorous to the very spontaneous, which is why the title of The Creative Habit is so effective. Because it has always been in my mind and, I think, in everyone else's mind in clichéd terms that creativity is something that rises miraculously from the gods when, in fact, it's something that one trains with much discipline and rigor. But you don't get nothing from nothing. ●

“The Creative Habit” by Twyla Tharp teaches readers how to make creativity a part of their lives by making it a habit. The book provides 32 practical exercises based on the lessons Tharp has learned in her remarkable, decades-long career.

STUDENT SUCCESS
**Professional Career-
Readiness Center**

Dean Jolin is the Director of the Professional Career-Readiness Center at Point Park University. He works closely with a dedicated team consisting of Michael Clarke, Program Manager -

Experiential Learning; Kenneth Anderson, Coordinator of Employer Recruitment and Student Engagement; Monica Ritter, Career Counselor; Ken Lawson, Career Counselor; and Kaela Cardarella, Pathways Grant - Cooperative Education Coordinator, to provide on-site and virtual services. Here, he talks about some of the work the center does in support of both students and alumni.

What are the most important ways in which the PCRC serves students?

Our center engages students prior to their first semester through Open Houses, Accepted Student Days, Orientation - The Pioneer Experience, and other workshops and events. In 2020, the center created a fully online career-readiness module called *Careers on Point* and it's available on Schoology for both undergraduate and

graduate students. This module allows for students to engage in career readiness at their own pace and at a time that works best for them. We want students to understand that career readiness is a journey and that our center is here for our students well before they graduate.

During the year, the center works with students individually and in groups for assistance with career exploration, career document review and development,



social media, job search assistance, job outlook, graduate school, and more. We provide the access for students to utilize Handshake and strive to connect students with employers – including alumni and students currently interning with organizations – through employer tabling, career expos, employer presentations and workshops. The center partners with both internal academic and student service departments, but also with external organizations

such as the Western Pennsylvania Career Services Association (WestPACS) and Pittsburgh Education Recruitment Consortium (PERC), which offer regional job and internship fairs for students and alumni of Western Pennsylvania, and other member colleges and universities. The team also assists students with their internship/co-op search, applying for opportunities and the process to potentially earn credit for the experience. For

students close to graduation, our center participates in the Graduate Fair, Senior Week and Hooding/Graduation Ceremony.

How is this similar or different from how the PCRC supports alumni?

Our center engages alumni with many of the same services. We help all alumni regardless of the time that has elapsed since graduation. Alumni tend to connect with us for job search assistance (especially when considering a career change, change in location, return to the workforce, or additional education/training).

Are there goals you are working toward to expand and/or add services? What is the status of the PCRC's new location, and when it opens, how will that help advance the work the PCRC does?

The bottom of the Student Center will be the new home of the Professional Career-Readiness Center. Work has begun on the space, and it is expected to be completed by October. It will be an amazing space with an open and flexible design that will provide several new opportunities. With the Student Center being a major

hub of activity for clubs/ organizations, and fitness/ athletics, the center will be able to attract students who may not have utilized our services as often in the past.

The newly designed physical space and location for the center will enhance our services and allow us to be more visible and accessible to students and alumni both onsite and virtually. The space will expand the ways that we can collaborate with internal and external partners to provide career-readiness services to students and alumni, including club/organization recruitment, career-readiness workshops, smaller-scale career expos specific to students' schools and majors, employer visits/ tabling, networking events, and employer interviews/ hiring days.

It will be a comfortable space for students to focus on their schoolwork and projects, but to also to network with other students. It will play a significant role in bridging any gaps between students, alumni, employers, and members of the Pittsburgh community. The space will provide resources to increase knowledge and preparation to be career ready, while also providing the social space for students and alumni to build a professional network. ●

Dean Jolin, center, director of the Professional Career-Readiness Center, with his staff, from left: Michael Clarke, Kaela Cardarella, Monica Ritter and Kenneth Anderson. Missing from photo is Ken Lawson. *Photo by Madi Fisher.*



PCRC Key Services

- » Jobs and internships
- » Choosing a major
- » Career fairs and workshops
- » Jobs with the U.S. government
- » Resources and handouts

You can contact the PCRC at **412-392-3950** or **careerdev@pointpark.edu**.



ALUMNI

A message from the Director of Alumni & Donor Engagement

Hello Alumni and Friends of Point Park University! My name is Mariah Peoples and I am the new Director of Alumni & Donor Engagement. I began at Point Park in January and have been infatuated with this campus and its diverse community.

I received my bachelor's degree from California University of Pennsylvania and master's degree from Villanova University. After residing in Washington County for the last eight years, it feels good to be back in the city where I was born and raised. Although I am not an alumna of Point Park University, I have a

variety of friends and family who are, and I am excited to be a part of this great institution.

From my experience in University Advancement and Alumni Relations, I learned that engagement with our alumni and donors stem from the quality of your experience here as a student and the communication with you from our department post-graduation. I am committed to improving our relationship with alumni and donors and looking forward to hearing from you and following your lead. With that being said, I would like to hear from you. Share with us events and activities that you would like to attend, whether it was an event you have attended in the past or something new. Please send your ideas to alumni@pointpark.edu.

Along with improving our relationship with alumni, it is essential for our department to build meaningful relationships with other departments around campus. This priority will provide the opportunity to meet alumni interest from various affinities.

We are excited to share our plans for Homecoming Weekend which is set to take place from Sept. 29 to Oct. 1. We are kicking the weekend off with The Athletics Golf Outing at Cedarbrook. Registration and sponsorship opportunities will be available this summer, so stay tuned. We will end our first day of Homecoming with Point Park Night at PNC Park, beginning at 5:30 PM. Tickets will be on sale soon – keep an eye on your email. If you have not been receiving correspondence from us, please update your contact information with alumni@pointpark.edu. Be sure to follow us on all our social media pages: Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Planning a trip to campus? We can help you with that! We would love to give you a tour of our academic halls and the Pittsburgh Playhouse. We also can help you obtain an alumni ID. The ID will provide you access to certain buildings on campus, such as the Bookstore and the Fitness Center.

Are you interested in being more involved with the University? We have an amazing Alumni Board of Directors that consist of five committees: Scholarship; Community Engagement; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Distinguished Student Awards; and Distinguished Alumni Awards. Those interested can send an email to AlumniBoardPresident@pointpark.edu. We also are seeking alumni interested in mentoring and networking with students. Our students are the future of this University and could benefit from the wisdom and advice of those who have come before them.

I look forward to the journey ahead and hope you will join me in efforts to create a more engaged and dynamic alumni community.

Keep in touch!

 @pointparkalumni

 @pointparku

 Point Park University Alumni



POINT PARK
UNIVERSITY

Point Park University Homecoming Weekend Sept. 29 to Oct. 1

More details on events and registration
to come early this summer! Check your email
and pointpark.edu/alumni.

*Make sure your information is updated with alumni@pointpark.edu

Alumni ... Update your information!

Take a moment to complete the form below, then drop it in the mail to:

Point Park University, Office of University Advancement, 201 Wood Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15222.

Or find this form online at <https://www.pointpark.edu/alumni/updateyourcontactinfo/index>

FIRST NAME		LAST NAME	
GRAD YEAR(S)		PROGRAM(S)/ DEGREE(S)	
NAME WHILE AT PPU (IF DIFFERENT)			
EMPLOYER		JOB TITLE	
HOME ADDRESS 1		HOME ADDRESS 2	
CITY		STATE	
ZIP		COUNTRY	
PHONE #		EMAIL	
HAVE ANY EXCITING UPDATES TO SHARE WITH US? PLEASE SHARE! (Ex: new job, new family member, educational milestone, bought a house, moved, etc.)			

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

201 Wood Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
412-392-6176
PointPark.edu

FALL 2022 FAST FACTS

ENROLLMENT: 3,288

TUITION:
\$44,420 COPA
\$34,880 all other schools

POINT
PARK
PROUD!

Ranked in the
**TOP
10**
on Playbill.com's
list of the "10 Most
Represented Colleges
on Broadway"

Recognized by
Abound as
"One of The
**100
BEST**
Online Colleges
of 2022"

Recognized by
DanceUS.org as
"One of the
BEST
College Dance
Programs" for 2022-23

Ranked as one of the
**TOP
10**
Musical Theater
programs in the nation
by OnStage Blog