JOHN T. WEAVER II, a civil engineering technology student from Williamsport, tests his bridge structure in instructor Drew R. Potts’ Strength of Materials class. Students turned manila folders and craft glue into 19-inch bridge spans that were tested to failure. “The students have to write a report demonstrating the use of statics and strengths of material,” said Potts, a member of Penn College’s civil engineering faculty. “The concepts in this course are challenging; this project gives the students an opportunity to be creative and have some fun.”
Lycoming County's Own Explorer
The man whose footprints have left an unforgettable mark on Penn College history has, over the nearly 40 years since his retirement, unearthed thousands of years of local history.

Vehicle for Learning
Ryan Black, '05, began tinkering with cars when he was 12, hanging out at his dad’s truck-repair shop. Today, he develops the courses that train automotive technicians across the country.

Get Comfortable
A new Writing Center provides a haven dedicated solely to writing. With plants and comfortable furniture – along with knowledgeable, understanding tutors – it helps to ease the stress of writing assignments.

Setting the Course
The excitement of the first college year can yield doubts and confusion about how to navigate new waters. First Year Experience helps new students find their way.

Where Inquiry Meets Industry
Industrial designer Glenwood Cheslock, '57, has made a 50-plus-year career solving problems when others said “You can’t.”

Get Out!
Visiting for Homecoming or Parent and Family Weekend? Make time for one of dozens of scenic walking, biking and hiking trails, all less than an hour away.

ATTENTION ALUMNI:
Share your story and catch up with your classmates online at oca.pct.edu/cn

Web Extra
additional content at oca.pct.edu

In this issue you will find “QR codes” like the one at right. Smartphone users can scan them and get instant access to extra content – like photos and video – on the One College Avenue website.

degrees that work.

On the Cover
Penn College students Shannon L. Abercrombie, left, and Lindsey N. Rosenberry stroll along the Susquehanna River Walk and Timber Trail, a biking and walking path that offers scenic views of the river and Bald Eagle Mountain as it runs along the levee system from Maynard Street to Loyalsock Township.
Letters to the Editor

Living Testament

Editor:
I received my copy of One College Avenue just a few days ago and was pleased to see several articles highlighting the amazing things that Residence Life is doing on the Penn College campus (Fall 2011, Annual Report).

I feel like I can say something to the effect of “I remember when...” It is a true testament to the excellent things happening at Penn College to see the living-learning communities of Dauphin Hall come to life. I feel like, in a sense, these communities are part of (former residence life director and chief student affairs officer) Ward Caldwell’s legacy living on through the efforts of Tim Mallery (assistant director of residence life), Brian Johnson (director of residence life and judicial affairs), and the Residence Life staff.

I am very impressed with the work the Residence Life Office is doing, and proud to call myself both a Penn College alum and a Residence Life alum. It is to the life lessons learned at Penn College that I owe my successes of both today and tomorrow.

Patrick Butler, ’07
Lambertville, N.J.

Memories Ring Clear

Editor:
I wanted to compliment you on the beautiful article regarding the scholarship in honor of Tracy Garis (“Spirit of Giving Resonates,” Fall 2011, by Cindy Davis Meixel, writer/photo editor).

Her mother has become a dear friend of mine; my daughter was one of Tracy’s close friends. I was at Ringing Rock, as you described, on the anniversary of her death, and you captured the sentiment of the day well.

Thank you, keep up the wonderful work. And my appreciation is much extended to Gregory Miller, who launched the scholarship drive. He has touched many aching hearts in a very compassionate and powerful way!

Cathie Ward
Bethlehem
My name is Jodie McVan, formerly Jodie Gausman, and I am married to Michael McVan. In October, we will celebrate 10 years of marriage, so 2012 is a special year for us. We started dating at the age of 19. My husband had been at Penn College for a full year before me, but he was young for his class, and I was older for my class, so we are the same age. We met through our roommates in the fall of 1994. I had a serious boyfriend at the time, and as a matter of fact, I followed that boy three hours east, across the state, to attend the same school. If I hadn’t followed that boy to college, I never would have met my husband!

Although Mike and I met and it was an obvious attraction, I had to pursue him for two entire semesters to get him to go out with me. Mike would insist that he was too young for a relationship, and we should enjoy college, and that he didn’t want a commitment. I had begun to give up in the fall of 1995, but one night, while at a party, I asked him if I could kiss him. He said, “Sure, why not?” and he has been mine ever since. We used to laugh at what a great kisser I must have been! (I like to think I still am.)

That New Year, Mike returned with a gift that I have cherished for the last 17 years. I had always wanted a bottle of rainwater, something silly I saw on a TV show once growing up. I had told this to Mike only once. That January of the 1995-1996 winter break, rain was not available. My wonderful husband melted five pots of snow on his mother’s stove and burned his brows off doing so (which never made sense to me, how on earth do you burn your eyebrows melting snow?) to get me one wine bottle full of “rainwater” (snow water). The bottle is in my possession to this day and sits on a shelf in my living room. Whenever we moved over the last 15 years, it was the one object that I wouldn’t pack; I would always hand carry it myself in my car.

Mike and I enjoyed the rest of our college careers at Penn College as a couple. We were inseparable, much to the annoyance of his roommates! We had a great group of friends and loved Penn College life. The college was small enough to have the small-town feel and community style that we loved, while starting to grow large enough to feel like a university. The teachers knew your name, and the facilities were top notch.

During our years in Williamsport, we were lucky enough to witness the building of the Victorian House from start to finish, attend the first formal dance the college had held in many years, and watch the building of the first college-owned student housing on campus, the opening of the Community Arts Center, and the beginnings of the college’s four-year degree offerings. My husband even played on the first Penn College lacrosse team. The town and campus evolved while we were there into the beautiful area it is today. For my senior project, I wrote and designed a book all about the mansions on Fourth Street – many of which the owners were nice enough to let me into to see their brilliance firsthand. We used to go back to visit every year, but it has been awhile since we’ve seen our alma mater – way too long!

Mike and I graduated the same year, in the spring of 1998 – Mike with a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration and me with a Bachelor of Science degree in graphic design. We said goodbye to our home of four years, and I followed another boy three more hours across state to the Philadelphia area. But this one I married! Mike took his good old time asking me to marry him (must be that original fear to commit I dealt with the first two semesters). We were lucky enough to witness the building of the Victorian House from start to finish, attend the first formal dance the college had held in many years, and watch the building of the first college-owned student housing on campus, the opening of the Community Arts Center, and the beginnings of the college’s four-year degree offerings. My husband even played on the first Penn College lacrosse team. The town and campus evolved while we were there into the beautiful area it is today. For my senior project, I wrote and designed a book all about the mansions on Fourth Street – many of which the owners were nice enough to let me into to see their brilliance firsthand. We used to go back to visit every year, but it has been awhile since we’ve seen our alma mater – way too long!

Winning Entry: Alumni Relations ‘Sweethearts’ Contest

The very first day I was on campus at Penn College was in the fall of 1994. That night, as I unpacked at Campus View Apartments, I was overwhelmed with the excitement of being out on my own. Eagerly watching all of the students moving in below in the courtyard and the commotion of people reuniting, I knew I was going to love it. I remember wondering, “What on earth is this guy doing?” If I had only known then that one day I would marry “Box Man.”

Students gathered at their windows to watch the idiot below. I remember wondering, “What on earth is this guy doing?” If I had only known then that one day I would marry “Box Man!” Students gathered at their windows to watch the idiot below. I remember wondering, “What on earth is this guy doing?” If I had only known then that one day I would marry “Box Man!”

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FedEx Express Donates Boeing 727

A Boeing 727-200F aircraft from FedEx Express, a subsidiary of FedEx Corp., made its final descent March 28 onto the runway at the Williamsport Regional Airport. Celebration of the landing and tremendously generous donation to Penn College took place at the Lumley Aviation Center.

“As we retire this 727 from our fleet, we are proud to give back to the aviation community,” said David Sutton, managing director of Aircraft Acquisition and Sales for FedEx. “The donation of this aircraft by FedEx is just one example of the many ways we support educational endeavors, reflecting the community spirit shared by all FedEx employees in the communities where we live and work.”

Wrestlers Named All-Americans

Based on their top-eight finishes at the National Collegiate Wrestling Association Championships at Daytona Beach, Fla., two Wildcats were named All-Americans – the first since Penn College reinstated wrestling as a varsity sport last year. Freshman Derek Leiby, of Troy, placed third in the 149-pound weight class, and sophomore Tyler Myers, of Centre Hall, was eighth at 157.

“It’s a goal that we wanted to achieve, have guys be All-Americans. I’m really excited that we were able to achieve that in our second year,” coach Schuyler Frey said.

Leiby finished the three-day tournament with a 5-1 record, and Myers was 3-3. Teamwise, Penn College ended No. 17 among 79 teams, bettering last year’s 42nd-place finish.

Earlier, the Wildcats won the Penn State University Athletic Conference championship and finished third in the United States Collegiate Athletic Association.

Pitcher Makes College History

Sophomore baseball player Josh Longsderff, of Columbia, made Penn College sports history by pitching a perfect game against Penn State Greater Allegheny on April 13. Penn College won 6-0 as Longsderff struck out eight, ending Greater Allegheny’s 15-game win streak. Listen to ESPN Williamsport’s interview with Longsderff and Coach Chris Howard at oca.pct.edu/pg.
Tribute to Icons

Camille S. Koroma, foreground, and Kayla E. Bosley light up the stage with a Supremes medley during the college’s first Soul Food Dinner. The “Tribute to African American Entertainers” honored some of the biggest names in show business with a mix of gospel, comedy, song, dance and a short skit dismantling stereotypes. The feast – the closing event of the campus’s “Icons and Legends” observance of Black History Month – filled Penn’s Inn with high-energy entertainment and home-style cuisine.

Spring Breaking at Heifer Ranch

Student Jason T. Maddox plays with young goats at the Heifer Ranch. He was one of 11 Penn College students who traveled to Perryville, Ark., for an Alternative Spring Break with Heifer International, a nonprofit agency dedicated to ending hunger and poverty. The agency provides livestock, trees, seeds and environmentally sound agricultural training to families in more than 50 countries, including the United States.
Recycling Diverts 90 Tons of CO₂

Through their recycling efforts, Penn College students and employees diverted 76,600 pounds of materials from ending up in the landfill during an eight-week contest that ran Feb. 20 to April 13, averaging 10.95 pounds per person. That’s the equivalent of 90 metric tons of carbon dioxide, 48 cars, or the energy consumption of 24 households.

2012 marked the fifth year the college has participated in RecycleMania, an annual competition that encourages faculty, staff and students to increase their on-campus recycling rate beyond those of counterparts at other institutions.

Find Complete Articles on PCToday

To find more comprehensive versions of the articles in Campus News – and to read other news stories about Penn College – visit PCToday, the college’s news-and-information website, at oca.pct.edu/pctoday.
Tutoring Offered in More Locations

In a continuing effort to make sure students have access to the support services that can help them succeed in their college course work, Pennsylvania College of Technology’s Academic Success Center expanded its tutoring services to new locations in 2011-12.

In addition to services at the Tutoring Center and Writing Center (see article on Page 14) in the Klump Academic Center, tutors are available in a variety of labs on campus, as well as in the Madigan Library and Dauphin Hall, bringing support services to students where they spend their time.

“We’re trying to serve more students,” said Jennifer L. Hammond, coordinator of tutoring. “That’s always our goal.”

This year, on-site tutoring was available in more locations and in more majors than in the past, for a total of 18 courses or subject areas in all eight of the college’s academic schools.

Course study leader Tara C. Jordan, left, offers tutoring in Human Anatomy and Physiology I to pre-physician assistant student Nychol M. Shook, center, and pre-nursing student Alexandria V. Martin in the science wing of the Hager Lifelong Education Center, where the course is taught.

Students in computer aided design majors tested out their design work in the College Avenue Labs parking lot, revealing what Dave Probst, assistant professor of drafting and computer aided design, called “six of the most unusual pedal-powered vehicles to hit the campus.” The students were tasked with designing – then fabricating and testing – four-wheeled pedal vehicles using 1-inch PVC pipe frames. The full, concept-to-testing experience offered a real-world perspective that will help the students in future design work. In the front seat of a five-passenger vehicle are driver Frank J. Fata and passenger Luke A. Ferrara. In the back seat, from left, are Daniel Donowski, Azeez O. Salu and David J. Donowski.
As a young boy, James P. Bressler was so enamored with natural history that he wrote a letter to Roy Chapman Andrews, an American explorer and paleontologist. Bressler wanted to join one of Andrews’ renowned expeditions to the Gobi Desert to find dinosaur eggs. Andrews, who is speculated to be an inspiration for “Indiana Jones,” never wrote back, but Bressler unearthed his own life of exploration and adventure just the same.

For more than 60 years, the Schuylkill County native has channeled his inquisitive passions into Lycoming County, leaving large footprints at the foundations of local education, history and archaeology where he stood strong, sleeves rolled up, hard at work, digging and discovering.

Bressler, 97, was recently honored with the Society of Pennsylvania Archaeology’s “Lifetime Achievement Award.” The distinguished recognition follows other accolades in recent years, including the dedication of the James P. Bressler Heritage Trail on Canfield Island at Loyalsock Township’s Riverfront Park along the Susquehanna River’s West Branch and the creation of the James P. Bressler American Indian Gallery at the Lycoming County Historical Society’s Thomas T. Taber Museum.

When asked if the honors give him a sense of personal satisfaction, Bressler, ever the pragmatist, said: “Of course they do, but it’s satisfaction not so much that I did it, but the fact that it got done. Now, if we want to know who was here, when they were here and how they fit in, we have answers.”

It was Bressler who led excavations at numerous local archeological sites, including investigations at Canfield Island that led to its placement on the National Register of Historic Places. There – between Williamsport and Montoursville – he and fellow
members of the Northcentral Chapter 8 of the state archaeology society unearthed evidence of a number of American Indian cultures, with one in particular, now referred to as the Canfield Culture, dating back 3,600 years.

“James P. Bressler’s lifetime of dedication to local archaeology has put northcentral Pennsylvania’s prehistoric past on the map, forging new connections to regional archaeology,” wrote his Lifetime Achievement Award nominator, William A. Turnbaugh, professor emeritus of anthropology at The University of Rhode Island. “He has inspired and guided generations of students, members of the general public, and amateur and professional archaeologists alike toward a better understanding of ancient mysteries.”

Turnbaugh lauded him as “a patient and good-natured mentor to generations of budding archaeologists” – Turnbaugh included.

Archaeology isn’t the only arena into which Bressler’s inspiration was cast. He spent 30 years as an accomplished agricultural and English educator and administrator at Pennsylvania College of Technology’s predecessors, Williamsport Area Community College and Williamsport Technical Institute. When he retired from the college in 1975, Bressler embarked on his “second career” at the age of 60 – dedicating his full-time energies to archaeology. There, he achieved another 30-plus years of passionate purpose.

Today, anticipating his 98th birthday in mid-August, Bressler’s mind still flows with facts and memories, but his body is unable to achieve what it once did. Six years ago, “James P. Bressler’s lifetime of dedication to local archaeology has put northcentral Pennsylvania’s prehistoric past on the map.”
a stroke forced him to hang up his trowel, but he continues to receive visits from newer members of the local archaeology chapter, who still seek his expertise. His Williamsport living room, decorated with his own landscape paintings, brims with archaeological documents and remembrances of more active years.

“There’s never enough time in this world to do things the way you want to do them,” Bressler lamented, “but we got quite a bit accomplished. I’ll leave some things for someone else to do.”

His curiosity still strong, he continues to marvel at archaeological discoveries and ponder historical connections.

“It could be mighty!” Bressler responded when asked to comment on the significance of the area’s archaeological history.

He went on to explain that the Indian culture known as the Clemsons Island/Owasco, who resided in the area from about A.D. 800-1300, moved north into New York where they became the Mohawk Indians, whom he calls the “godfathers of the Iroquois Confederacy.”

“The Iroquois Confederacy was the first representative form of government known in this country. William Penn got his idea for his government from the Iroquois Confederacy. And where did the United States get their idea? From William Penn. It could well be that the originators of the American dream of a representative form of government lived right down here (on the banks of the Susquehanna). That’s merely a possibility. I’m not saying it as a fact, but it’s entirely possible,” Bressler speculated.

Possibilities and connections have stirred Bressler since his boyhood days on his family’s farm.

“Since I can remember, which is a long time ago, I’ve always been interested in archaeology,” he said. “Early on, my dad sent me down to the field to water some plants. There was a bad drought on that year. And there I saw, lying on the ground … something. I dropped everything! I couldn’t

“NOW, IF YOU’RE THE MAN I THINK YOU ARE, you’re going to take this and make a department out of this,” ordered George H. Parkes to James P. Bressler.

In front of them stretched a “huge space just full of junk and dirt and grime and grease,” Bressler recalled in a Williamsport Technical Institute Oral History interview, conducted in 2006. “Now, this was a challenge, and that was the beginning of that.”

It was July 1945, and Bressler had just arrived at WTI, charged with establishing an agricultural program, mainly focused on agricultural mechanics for World War II veterans.

Parkes, director of WTI, had set Bressler up in a basement space in the institute’s shops along Susquehanna Street. A Pennsylvania State University graduate and former editor-in-chief of Penn State Farmer, Bressler rolled up his sleeves and set to work, proving Parkes’ initial edict.
George Parkes was a pretty stern taskmaster, but he was one of a kind, with great vision and great persistency," Bressler said, adding, "He was able to improvise, to make do. And that philosophy pervaded everything he did. We were able to improvise.

After improvising a functional instructional space, less than a year later, Bressler's shop was inundated by the 1946 flood. He recalls traveling in a rowboat to the shops. "The windows were open, and we saw fish swimming in and out of the windows," he said. "My shop, of course, down below ground, was completely under water."

But as usual, WTI's group of visionaries "pulled themselves up by their bootstraps" and moved forward. It was just another day at the office.

Around the same time, an off-site training spot emerged at the Brock Farm, which offered more than 700 acres near the present-day Lycoming Mall in Muncy Township. Bressler led operations at the farm, which included training in production, as well as agricultural equipment repairs. The sprawling instructional space teemed with veterans, seeking training and peace, along with high school-age farmers, bused in from the outer reaches of the area's countryside.

The experimental facility was, according to Bressler, "a new thing in the annals of agricultural education," and the Brock Farm drew various spectators, including student teachers from Penn State, as well as international visitors gathering wisdom to take back to their homelands.

As veterans' training needs receded in the mid-'50s, WTI concluded its educational outreach at the Brock Farm, but what happened there laid the groundwork for majors now offered at Penn College's Schneebeli Earth Science Center.

The multitalented Bressler transferred to teaching and leading the English department. Later, when the college became Williamsport Area Community College, he served as dean of applied arts, responsible for all vocational and technical programs (a position equivalent to today's vice president for academic affairs). He retired from the college in 1975.

"Jim is one of the pioneering giants of both WTI and WACC," said Daniel J. Doyle, professor emeritus of history at Penn College. "His can-do spirit, vision and commitment to teaching and learning set a course for excellence that enabled those who came after to build on."

"The biggest satisfaction that I ever got out of education was the effect I had on the students," Bressler said. "Every time I go somewhere, someone comes up to me; this old man comes up to me – a much older man – and reminds me of the fact that he was my student, and ... they're still my friends. And I find that they have made successes of themselves, (that) they have become good citizens, productive, and that, somehow along the lines, you had a little tiny influence in causing that. "That is the biggest satisfaction of anything, is the fact that you meet students and you have helped them in some way to become productive citizens. There is no greater satisfaction than that."

— Cindy Davis Meixel

Editor's Note: Oral history interviews were conducted by Daniel J. Doyle.
Ryan Black’s eyes slowly shift from an automotive manual to his dual computer monitors. Various images of integral vehicle components appear with the click of his mouse. Adjoining text enhances understanding of the pictures, whether they are illustrating drive shafts or the center differential lock sleeve. For a few moments, Black contemplates the information consuming his screens. Then he types away.

The beach and glorious Pacific Ocean, just 10 minutes down the road, beckon on this warm, sunny Wednesday afternoon. But as he does on most days, Black is finding peace and fulfillment within his open cubicle in a spacious first-floor office suite. His 22-foot sailboat can wait a few more hours. Now it’s time to concentrate on his work, a job that impacts many of the vehicles whizzing past the window to his left.

The 2005 Penn College graduate is a technical training development administrator for the University of Toyota, the continuing educating and training arm of Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. Inc. Black is responsible for formulating curriculum to train thousands of technicians at Toyota dealerships across the United States. Since arriving at Toyota’s headquarters in Torrance, Calif., in 2007, Black has created four courses, enhanced several existing classes and devised numerous e-learning modules. The work produced on his computer screens leads to improved maintenance and performance of countless Toyota vehicles.

“You know that it’s a part of you that is being taught to these technicians,” says Black, 29. “When I go to training events and interact with technicians, they might say, ‘I attended this course and got a lot out of it.’ You can actually say, ‘I created that.’ It gives you a great deal of pride, a sense of accomplishment.”

Developing a single course consumes several months of work for Black and includes a multitude of steps, from conducting a needs analysis to identifying training gaps to creating appropriate content to conceiving hands-on exercises. The possibilities inherent in those numerous stages invigorate him.

“I have the ability to take a project in any direction I personally feel is necessary,” Black says matter-of-factly. “When I’m given an assignment, it’s up to me to develop the overall path of the class. I have a great deal of flexibility in how I create the class. There’s no micromanagement. That flexibility keeps it refreshing to come to work.”

Materials are developed in-house at the University of Toyota in Torrance, approximately 20 miles southwest of Los Angeles, and provided to service training specialists who deliver the training to technicians at regional centers across the country.

“They have to be able to take the package that we develop and be able to deliver the entire curriculum to our technicians,” Black says.

The “package” for each course typically consists of a thick instructional book, worksheets and practical tasks for the instructors to assign during the one- to three-day training process. Those activities are performed on Toyota vehicles or, when appropriate, simulators that Black helps create. On this day, he is proud to reveal a black contraption, about the size of a couple shoeboxes, which replicates engine control operations. Black demonstrates by depressing the throttle with his right hand to activate the simulator’s accelerator.

“This device makes it easy for the instructor to manipulate common bugs,” he says.

Black’s career at Toyota is a perfect marriage between his love for education and his passion for cars. Growing up in Chambersburg, Black was a fixture at his father’s truck-repair business.

“From the time I was 12 years old, I was tinkering on cars. I was always good at fixing them,” he says with a smile. “I was interested in how things work, how they come apart and come back together.”

When searching for a college, Black wished to broaden his technical know-how. That’s why Penn College’s automotive technology management bachelor’s degree proved to be the perfect choice.

“It was the best of both worlds,” Black says of the major, which stresses applied technical work for the first two years before shifting to a management focus during the junior and senior years. “You receive state-of-the-art technical experience, and they also mix in the business
side of things. The degree opens a wide array of jobs you can target.”

According to Ronald A. Garner, professor of automotive technology management, three main professions influence the automotive industry: business, education and engineering. The Penn College degree is unique and effective because it encapsulates all three of those areas.

“It is our students’ strong occupational background, coupled with their hard work to complete the rigorous academic requirements focused on industry-specific content, that makes them successful,” he says.

Garner continues to appreciate Black’s dedication as a student, which included many hours serving as a math, economics and business tutor.

“Ryan read, thought, wrote, analyzed data, went to the library and worked hard to master the content provided,” Garner says. “He understood how the assignments prepared him for a career path that an academic degree can provide.”

After graduating magna cum laude from Penn College and completing a hike of the 2,174-mile Appalachian Trail (read more about the adventure at oca.pct.edu/vf), Black enrolled at The Pennsylvania State University for a master’s degree in workforce development and education. He also secured full-time employment at a State College-area Toyota dealership, where he advanced from line technician to assistant service manager. During this period, a chance meeting at a wedding with an old friend working for Toyota in Torrance changed his life. The friend told Black about the University of Toyota and prodded him for a résumé to take back to the Golden State. Without giving it much thought, Black obliged.

“It wasn’t more than a week or two later that Toyota called, and I was on the phone with a manager for at least an hour and a half,” Black says. “A couple weeks after that, I was on the plane. When I crossed the Mississippi, I thought, ‘I’m going to California and there was no turning back.’ It was going to be an entire career path change for me, but I knew I wanted to be in education, so it was a good fit in the end.

“The major and the way it’s set up at Penn College is exactly what they were looking for. I would not be able to do my job today without my Penn College education. You have to have an extremely solid knowledge base in the automotive field. I draw from that knowledge base every day with developing these materials.”

Most of the material he develops focuses on core powertrain issues. Course binders with titles such as “Engine Control Systems II,” “Manual Transmissions and Transaxles” and “Suspension, Steering and Handling” are propped up on the left side of his workstation. Black admits that creating the content within those binders is challenging.

“In reality, we have at most three days with the technicians when they come for training. It can be difficult to determine how much they really need to know about a topic before they can complete a task,” he says. “We have to drill down, cut the fat from courses and make the information direct.”

The e-learning modules that Black develops are often required prep work for the technicians prior to attending training sessions. The Web-based, interactive modules are centered on general information rather than specific tasks. “We put out 12 to 20 e-learning modules a year, and they range from 30 minutes to an hour for a technician to complete,” Black says.

With his confident approach and easy smile, it’s obvious that Black has found a lasting home at the University of Toyota.

“You never feel like you’re doing the same thing over and over again,” he says. “Even though the tasks are somewhat similar from project to project, it’s the flexibility in what you’re doing with that project that makes it interesting. It keeps you wanting to come back.”

Befitting a course developer, Black has outlined personal career objectives. The resident of nearby Long Beach hopes to secure a management role within his department, earn his master’s degree in education or instructional design and become bilingual by learning either Spanish or Japanese.

But on this afternoon, the objectives for his courses are foremost on Black’s mind. He examines the diagrams of vehicle components prominently displayed on his computer screens. He contemplates and resumes typing. It’s obvious his sailboat can wait for another day.

[Web Extra] Watch a video of Ryan Black at work at oca.pct.edu/vf

The Parkes Automotive Technology Center is the hub for Penn College degrees in automotive technology and automotive technology management.
Get Comfortable.

New center helps to ease the stress of writing

by Jennifer L. Hammond, coordinator of tutoring

WHEN I WAS A STUDENT HERE (when Pennsylvania College of Technology was Williamsport Area Community College), in 1985 and 1986, I tutored English and thought it was the best job I had held so far in my very short working career. I enjoyed meeting interesting students and reading about topics that were often new to me (even if every second process essay was about changing the oil in a Chevy Camaro). And I especially valued the camaraderie we tutors established over several semesters of working together, chatting during the slow times and spending time together outside of work. (Even now, 27 years later, I am still in contact with some of my fellow writing tutors.)

In 1987, I transferred to Indiana University of Pennsylvania and tutored in the Writing Center there. Unlike the Tutoring Center at WACC, where all tutoring happened in one room, the Writing Center at IUP was separate from other tutoring locations. Even then, IUP’s Writing Center had a bank of computers for drafting papers, and it had soft, comfortable couches and chairs for informal meetings between tutors and students. I loved it – that center embodied so much of what I had been reading about in my undergraduate studies in English education, about the importance of conferencing with students about their writing in a comfortable, unintimidating atmosphere. And I held onto the image.

When I returned to Penn College to work as a professional English tutor in 1989, I hoped that Penn College would create a writing center, but space and budgets were limited. I was consoled, though, by the fact that I knew the English tutors were still providing quality writing assistance, even if they were sitting on straight-backed chairs formerly used in the college’s Le Jeune Chef Restaurant and not on overstuffed couches.

Eventually, in 2001, I became the coordinator of tutoring and was still infatuated with the idea of a comfortable, functional writing center. Yet, even as budgets expanded a little, space was still at a premium, and the time was just not right for a writing center.

But two years ago, several converging circumstances created the perfect conditions for establishing a writing center. Penn College had just finished the Foundations of Excellence self-study, and we were trying to rely less on grant funding that restricted student participation in services (usually based on financial or academic criteria).

As a result, the college decided to examine support services. At the request of President Davie Jane Gilmour, a committee began a “comprehensive and systematic re-evaluation of the services that Academic Support Services offers, as well as an exploration of what services a newly envisioned Academic Support Services office might provide to all Penn College students in the future,” as described in the document “Re-Envisioning Academic Support Services at Penn College: A Proposal to Create the Center for Academic Success.”

The committee’s efforts produced several recommendations, including a radical revamping of support services at Penn College that involved changing the department name from Academic Support Services to the Academic Success Center, creating a mentoring program and promoting our new philosophy of “all services to all students.”

In another significant initiative, the committee recommended establishing a writing center. With more bachelor-degree programs requiring senior capstone projects and more programs including writing-enriched courses, the time was absolutely right. Thus, the Penn College Writing Center was born, and it opened for business with the start of the Fall 2010 semester.

The new Writing Center includes many elements of my initial vision: It has a wall of computers, some upholstered furniture, plants on the window sills and usually some candy in a basket to help combat the fatigue brought on by writer’s block.
The writing tutors enjoy the new space and the peaceful quiet it affords them. Don Noviello, a professional writing tutor with 20 years of experience, says the environment welcomes students.

“Our relaxed atmosphere is not intimidating,” he said.

He understands that students who seek help are often under pressure and says: “Relieving stress is a very effective way to keep students on track. The center is a place for students to get both academic and emotional support from those who have been trained to assist students in need.”

Historically, writing tutoring took place in the Tutoring Center, alongside math and science tutoring. And although the quality of tutoring did not necessarily change with a new location, a separate Writing Center devoted solely to writing does offer some important advantages. Access to the computers allows students to work on drafts and make revisions with a tutor present. This practice reinforces the writing process and encourages students to make significant revisions and write multiple drafts.

In addition, several reference librarians are able to spend a couple hours a week in the Writing Center to help students work on research topics. With their expertise, the librarians can help students and tutors search for and document reliable sources more efficiently.

Another welcome addition to our staff is the English faculty volunteers who spend some of their office hours in the Writing Center. This practice creates an opportunity for faculty to see the range of assignments writing tutors face, for tutors and faculty to get to know each other, and for students to work with a greater variety of tutors.

One of the first volunteers, Mark D. Noe, professor of English-composition, explains the value of a separate Writing Center: “The independent Writing Center creates a space devoted to the single, fundamental element of the broader education process, the element that is – theoretically, at least – integrated into every discipline and course: writing.”

Jennifer L. Hammond, coordinator of tutoring, dreamed for years of opening a Writing Center, a dedicated space for writing tutoring, at Penn College.

“The center is a place for students to get both academic and emotional support from those who have been trained to assist students in need.”

Top Five Writing Tips

• Consider your audience: Think about what your reader needs as you make decisions about language, content and organization.

• Understand your purpose: Think about what you want to accomplish (your goal for writing) as you make decisions about language, content and organization.

• Practice writing as a process: Think and talk about your ideas, write and revise multiple drafts, and allow some time in between versions.

• Provide a clear, central idea and offer sufficient, relevant support for it.

• Share your writing with at least one other reader and ask for feedback.

- Jennifer L. Hammond
And indeed, the Writing Center offers help with writing from all types of courses – everything from social-science writing assignments to senior capstone papers in students’ majors. Writing tutors will help students with writing-related courses such as speech and reading, as well.

Many students use the Writing Center on a regular basis and, as a result, have seen dramatic improvements in their writing. Linda K. Burkholder, who returned to school in 2011 as a pre-practical nursing major and nontraditional student, used the Writing Center weekly for her ENL 111 (English Composition I) assignments. She earned an “A” in that course and claims, “If it wasn’t for the Writing Center, I wouldn’t have succeeded.”

She says she knew what she wanted to write, but sometimes could not get started. “The tutors helped me think,” Burkholder said. “As I talked to them, the ideas started to come out.”

She credits the “warm and friendly” atmosphere for bringing her back again and again. Some students benefit so much from writing tutoring that they go on to become tutors themselves. Susan E. Kemnitz, the lead professional tutor in the Writing Center, cites these students as “our greatest success stories.” She recalls one such student who frequented the center in her freshman year.

“We used to literally cut her papers up because their organization was so poor,” Kemnitz said. “Eventually her writing improved so much that she became a tutor!”

Writing tutoring does not always produce such obvious results, and evaluating the effect of this service proves challenging sometimes. But the testimony of Judy L. McMullen, a nontraditional human services student, leaves little doubt about the value of the Writing Center.

“In order for me to be successful here at Penn College, I needed to find the help,” she said. “The Writing Center not only helped with my writing but also became a source of support through my college career. The Writing Center helped me develop a skill that will last a lifetime, as well as achieve academic success. If students want to be successful and gain confidence and motivation, the Writing Center can help them.”

BEGINNING-TO-END SERVICES

The Writing Center offers help with all the stages of writing. Whether students have just received an assignment and would like help brainstorming ideas for a topic, or they have a nearly final draft that could use some polishing, the Writing Center can help.

Writing tutors try to reinforce the idea of a process in which students generate and organize ideas, develop a central idea for a thesis, and write multiple drafts. The tutors first help students with higher-order concerns such as a clear, well-supported focus, sufficiently developed supporting ideas, helpful transitions, an interesting introduction and an effective conclusion.

Tutors encourage students to visit the Writing Center several times so their final draft can evolve from multiple earlier drafts. When a draft is reasonably complete, or in a worst-case scenario, when a paper is due in an hour and students don’t have time for meaningful revisions, the writing tutors help students with lower-order concerns such as grammar, punctuation and spelling. The tutors do not edit papers, though; they try to actively engage students in a learning opportunity to discuss writing choices.

– Jennifer L. Hammond
NOT SO LONG AGO, before the “Me” Decade and the iEverything, immersion into the college environment was a sink-or-swim affair. Parents virtually tossed their teenagers into a whirlpool of campus confusion and, with a kiss and a wave, made tracks for home in the family four-door. A semester’s worth of clothes fit into a small dormitory closet, the only electronic device was a clock radio or calculator, and a 9-inch television at the corner of the desk was as “big-screen” as it got.

Today’s students, at Pennsylvania College of Technology and universally elsewhere, are anything but portable. Move-in day means multiple trips, maybe even emergency runs to a discount store, to fully stock first-year students for the adventures that lie ahead. All across parking lots outside teeming residence halls, it’s obvious that they carry a lot more baggage—and not just physically—than their colleagues of decades past.

There’s still that dizzying swirl of new surroundings, the anxiety over the start of classes, uncertainty about the strangers across the hall, exposure to people unlike any ever met, adjustment to being away from home and meals that are unlike Mom’s.

But there’s so much more: struggles with identity, pressure to succeed, crises of conscience and faith, untold temptations, the paradoxical desire to stand out and fit in. How can anyone stay afloat in such an ocean of stress?

With a lifeline, of course, an SOS known as FYE. >>
Penn College’s First Year Experience program sprouted in 2005 from the fertile common ground between two parallel initiatives: the administration’s appointment of a committee to improve student retention and the Foundations of Excellence program – a comprehensive self-study that identified (among dozens of other observations) the critical needs of new students.

“The impetus was the perception that we could better serve the transitional needs of our specific student population,” said Eugene M. McAvoy, dean of academic services and first year programs. “The students that are attracted to us, to the unique types of degrees that we offer, are not the typical students that you’d find at a liberal-arts institution.”

Additionally, that initial year often corresponds to a period of ongoing brain development and is a time when many young men and women are away from home for the first protracted period in their lives.

“The most important part is that we identified what those students need and designed a course to satisfy those needs,” McAvoy said. “We can easily monitor whether we are meeting them – and if we’re not – make the adjustments that we need to make.”

The ensuing discussions included interviews about the major stumbling blocks to students’ success in their first year after high school, and the findings were as varied as one would expect at a college with more than 100 academic majors in eight distinct schools.

There were the usual suspects, hardly news to anyone who’s packed off a son or daughter to quad-side quarters. Challenges of balancing time and a checkbook abide, as do homesickness, the debatable survival of long-distance relationships, and the tug of war between homework and hobbies.

“Among the other things we found, however, was a lack of familiarity with college processes – not knowing, for instance, that you have to physically withdraw from a class rather than just stop attending,” McAvoy said. “That can have a huge effect on a student’s GPA.”

There also was a hesitance about communicating with faculty, he said, even though Penn College classes are among the smallest anywhere. Breaking through that wall to greater understanding is seen as a basic step toward broader success at college.

“More than 40 years of national data show that attention to the first-year experience improves academic performance and allows more student identification with – and commitment to – the institution,” he said. “Increased satisfaction with the college leads to increased crystallization of a student’s academic major.”

McAvoy cited the groundbreaking research by John N. Gardner, founder of The National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience, whose work has found great value in students’ embrace of their new surroundings.
... and designed a course to satisfy those needs.”

To better acclimatize students to their Penn College home, as well as to fine-tune their academic and critical-thinking skills, an FYE class was forged in the crucible of a proactive administration.

The class is a potpourri of lectures, discussions, field trips and other activities that provide students with a road map for the journey ahead. It has had phenomenal buy-in from faculty in all academic areas of Penn College – by the time it became required in the Fall 2011 semester, 60 faculty and staff members had signed on to teach … among them college President Davie Jane Gilmour, who officially returned to the classroom for the first time in nearly three decades.

Those faculty members, veterans and newcomers alike – some of them parents of college-age children – all bring their own voices (and their candid suggestions) to the mix, McAvoy said.

First-year students have not as willingly recognized the importance of the class, just as they occasionally resist taking general education courses that are perceived as bothersome detours along their career path. Some students, though, have seized the opportunities the course provides.

Among McAvoy’s own former FYE students is April M. Tucker, who enrolled as a pre-nursing student and recently transferred into an applied human services major. She arrived at Penn College from her 200-ish graduating class of Laurel Highlands High School in southwestern Pennsylvania, toting a reading disability and the cautious blessing of teachers who thought she was being overly optimistic to land at Pennsylvania’s premier technical college.

“I liked the challenge,” said an unfazed Tucker, who ended her first year with A’s, B’s and an obvious sense of accomplishment. Much of her success was due to self-discipline, but she admits that FYE gave her some valuable tools.

“My first anatomy test, I didn’t know how much information I needed to know,” she said. “I learned very quickly that I needed more than a day or two to study.”

Brimming with confidence and a genuine desire to make the best of her college years, Tucker continues to turn challenges into opportunities. She misses her family, but finds that distance can bring everyone closer. She misses the sisterhood of her marching band color guard days, but hopes to find similar satisfaction with a Penn College sorority.

“I love school,” Tucker said. From meeting rigorous course work head-on, to enjoying the diversity of a student body that isn’t like high school, “I really enjoy college.”

Kevin E. Brookhart, a former Presidential Student Ambassador, also learned the importance of meeting faculty expectations.

“Although it seems rather simple, I feel like many students, including myself, look past the very simple concept of getting good grades in any class,” he said.

“Give the professors what they want and what they ask for, and you’ll be almost guaranteed success in any class,” was his advice, proffered shortly before his May graduation. “Abide by the syllabus, turn in all assignments, and ask the professor for help after class or during office hours if you’re confused.

“Success in college – academically, socially and professionally – lies on a very simple concept,” added Brookhart, who has earned associate degrees in diesel technology and heavy construction equipment technology: technician emphasis, and a bachelor’s in technology management since he transferred to Penn College in 2008. “Work hard and make smart choices. That’s really all it takes to succeed.”

Another Presidential Student Ambassador – Alissa J. Harris, of Chalfont – can also be counted among those who welcomed the FYE program and parlayed what she learned into lasting benefit.

“I learned where everything on campus was and learned so much about the Tutoring Center and Smarthinking (the college’s online tutoring program),” said Harris, enrolled in applied health studies: occupational therapy assistant concentration. “To this day, I know people in my major that have no idea what Smarthinking is and how useful it can be for helping with math problems, or submitting papers for revisions and returned in about 24 hours!”

“If I had not taken this class, I would not have known about it,” she added, “and would never have utilized it to its full potential.”

FYE also paved the way toward making friends and meeting other students hoping to be accepted into her Health Sciences major, shared Career Services skills such as interviews with employers and resume-writing, and introduced her to Student Government Association and campus organizations.

“I believe I really benefited from this class, and I did urge high school kids – before it was even a mandatory class – to take it,” Harris said. “It really helped me when it came time for learning how I study and how to take efficient notes.”

The long-term value of Penn College’s FYE efforts will become clearer and clearer as the track record grows; even at the pilot level, though, McAvoy said improved retention and academic success was found with a statistically small group of students.

“The big thing to remember about FYE is the holistic view of the student, respecting the entirety of the individual, reminding them that they’re getting a college degree and not a vocational certification,” McAvoy said. “We recognize that learning cannot be divorced from the environment – physical, emotional, cultural – in which our students live.”

A continual work in progress, like the very students that Penn College devotedly serves.
The room in back of the comfortable ranch house is consumed by a series of tannish bookshelves. The thin pieces of wood stretching toward the ceiling support a seemingly endless collection of books, binders, papers and magazines. Three file cabinets camouflage additional documents. A couple computers and their monitors crowd the gray desk. A framed, hand-sketched diagram of a security system circuit board hangs from the wall.

His wife might call the room “messy,” but for the occupant, everything is in order. The dusty resources on the shelves serve as reminders of past challenges and accomplishments. The modern tools at his fingertips provide a resource for today and tomorrow. For Glenwood Cheslock, the room is home. This is where the self-described “problem-solver” goes to work.

“I’ve had a lot of people say over the years, ‘You can’t do this’ or ‘You can’t do that.’ I don’t believe in that,” Cheslock says as he shakes his head. “I’ve had a lot of fun solving problems. That’s really my forte.”

Even at an age when folks tend to relinquish some responsibilities in order to seek more leisurely pursuits, Cheslock puts his inquisitive mind and mechanical aptitude to work. The oil needs to be changed in his Ford Ranger? He’ll do it. The horn on his BMW R 1200 ST motorcycle isn’t loud enough? He buys and installs his own so it will blast. An engineering firm needs a power supply designed? He’ll devise it. After all, his work as an industrial designer has touched countless parts in numerous trades since the 1960s.

“I’m the kind of person who learns by doing,” says Cheslock, who lives with his wife, Jan, in Tarzana, Calif., part of the San Fernando Valley region of Los Angeles. “I’d rather do it myself. I’ve worked with people with master’s degrees but they don’t know how to do anything. They learn by the book. And if it doesn’t go by the book, they are stumped.”

Cheslock credits his self-sufficiency and hands-on skills to his upbringing and his alma mater, Pennsylvania College of Technology’s predecessor institution, Williamsport Technical Institute. “WTI changed my whole life,” says the 1957 graduate. “Otherwise I would have probably stayed in Hazleton and worked as a mechanic.”

As a young boy growing up in West Hazleton, Cheslock enjoyed the tools and workbench his dad, a mechanical foreman for then-Pennsylvania Power & Light, gave him. As a student, he gravitated toward shop classes. As a teenager, he worked part time in a garage, learning to become a mechanic.

“What a blessing that was,” Cheslock says. “After I got into mechanical design and engineering, I would remember working on cars and thinking, ‘Whoever designed this?’ You had to take 10 things off to get at the part that you wanted to fix on the car. It didn’t make sense. When I got into design, I tried to make things bulletproof, and if they had to be repaired, it was easy to do.”

After graduating from high school, an interest in drafting, born from a class he took in junior high, sent Cheslock to WTI.

“It had a very good reputation,” he says. “The instructors were great. They were knowledgeable and helpful. They came from the industry.”

Cheslock remembers living at a boarding house close to campus. No matter the outside temperature, he would leave his bedroom window open a crack so the piercing 7 a.m. whistle from the nearby Lycoming Engines plant could serve as his alarm clock. Once he headed off to class, the mechanical drafting student was pleased.

“The whole idea was if you’re designing and drawing things, you had to know how equipment works, what tools will be needed,” he says. “We spent time in the sheet-metal shop and did some spot welding and riveting. In the machine shop, we got to
It has been 47 years since he has seen the campus, but Glenwood Cheslock's gratitude for his experience at Pennsylvania College of Technology's predecessor, Williamsport Technical Institute, will help today's students.

The 1957 WTI graduate has established an annual scholarship, the Glenwood Cheslock Industrial Design Scholarship. It is awarded to full-time students enrolled in the computer aided product design bachelor-degree major or the computer aided drafting technology associate-degree major. Benjamin M. Schappell, a sophomore computer-aided product design major from Mohrsville, received the initial $1,000 award during the 2011-12 academic year.

“It felt it was important for me to establish a scholarship in appreciation for the education that I received that really made a difference in my life,” says Cheslock, who earned a degree in mechanical drafting from WTI before beginning a successful career in California as an industrial designer. “It’s a good feeling to know that Penn College is providing useful educations for young people so they can really be competent and productive in the field of their choice.”

While he hasn’t visited Williamsport since 1965, Cheslock, a resident of Tarzana, Calif., hopes to spend some time at Penn College in the near future and see firsthand the evolution of an institution that shaped his life.
GET OUT!

A lush and scenic river valley. Miles of diverse trails. Extraordinary vistas.

Enjoy all this and more within an hour’s drive from Penn College.

by Heidi Mack, supervisor of design and publishing

One of the most breathtaking vistas in Pennsylvania is seen from Colton Point State Park on the west rim of the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon.
Author Edward Abbey wrote, “It is not enough to fight for the environment; it is equally as important to enjoy it.”

There’s a reason the adjective “great” is frequently teamed up with the word “outdoors.” Even those who may be more comfortable in front of a computer would not dispute the rewards of getting out and getting active.

Exercising in a gym is good. Exercising outside is better. The outdoors offers the additional benefits of sunlight and mood-boosting, bone-strengthening vitamin D; fresh air; increased mental stimulation from changing scenery; and the enhanced challenge of real-life activities versus virtual programs on equipment.

All without membership fees.

If venturing outside to simply watch the sun set and listen to the birds is your idea of outdoor adventure, the positive effects are still significant. In a study commissioned by Mind, a leading British mental health charity, researchers compared the benefits of hiking a trail through the woods and around a lake in a nature park to walking in an indoor shopping center. Eighty-eight percent of people studied reported improved mood after hiking, while 44.5 percent reported feeling in a worse mood after the shopping-center walk.

The Penn College campus is ideally situated in one of the most impressive natural areas of the state, on the West Branch of the Susquehanna, the longest river in the northeastern United States. Lycoming County lies at the base of Bald Eagle Mountain. The Allegheny and Appalachian mountains surround the valley, and five beautiful streams flow into the river, which meanders down through the state and empties into the Chesapeake Bay.

This unique geographical setting provides an extensive variety of outdoor destinations and opportunities for leisure activities or recreational adventures. Outings can range from a relaxing streamside hike in a hardwood forest to a rugged trail climb through ferns and mountain laurel. Dramatic waterfalls and majestic ridge views that stretch for miles top the list of natural attractions. Wildlife sightings are often a rewarding extra.

Seven state forests are located near enough to allow for perfect day-trip excursions. Numerous state parks operate within each of them, offering activities such as hiking, mountain biking, swimming, picnicking, cross-country skiing, boating, fishing and more.

Penn College students explore the Susquehanna River by kayak.
POPULAR NEARBY TRAILS AND PARKS

Walking/Biking

1. Lycoming Creek Bikeway (5)*
2. Susquehanna River Walk & Timber Trail (5)
3. Susquehanna State Park (5)
4. Williamsport Water Authority (10)
5. Rider Park (25)
6. Pine Creek Rail Trail (40)

Hiking, Biking and Picnicking

Loyalsock State Forest
7. The Loyalsock Trail
8. Old Loggers Path
9. World's End State Park

Sproul State Forest
10. Bald Eagle State Park
11. Chuck Keiper Trail
12. Hyner Run State Park
13. Hyner View State Park
14. Kettle Creek State Park

Tiadaghton State Forest
15. Black Forest Trail
16. Little Pine State Park
17. Golden Eagle Trail
18. Ravensburg State Park

Tioga State Forest
19. West Rim Trail

Bald Eagle State Forest
20. R.B. Winter State Park

Rothrock State Forest

Boating

21. Riverfront Park in Loyalsock Township (10)
22. Rose Valley Lake (20)
23. Shikellamy State Park and Overlook (35)

Nearby Attractions

24. Pennsylvania Grand Canyon (1.25 hrs.)
25. Rickett's Glen (1 hr.)

*(approximate travel time from campus in minutes)

Web Extra
Get an interactive map at oca.pct.edu/trails
For more detailed information on destinations and activities, including downloadable maps:

Lycoming County Visitors Bureau
www.vacationpa.com

Susquehanna River Walk & Timber Trail
www.lumberheritage.org/timbertrail.htm

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
www.dcnr.state.pa.us

Pennsylvania Wilds
www.pawilds.com

Alpine Club of Williamsport
www.lycoming.org/alpine

Rider Park
www.wlfoundation.org/content/use-park

Williamsport Water Authority
www.wmwa-wsa.org/watertours.htm

Pine Creek Rail Trail
www.visittiogapa.com/railtrail.html

Rose Valley Lake
www.fishandboat.com/water/lakes/rose_valley/00rose.htm

PA Hikes and Trails
www.pahikes.com

Penn College student Jonathan F. DeRoner takes a ride on the Susquehanna River Walk & Timber Trail, a paved, four-mile loop along the river, just a stone’s throw from the Penn College campus.

“After a day’s walk, everything has twice its usual value.”

George Macauley Trevelyan

Several smaller parks are located 10 minutes or less from campus. Susquehanna State Park sits on the shore of the river and is the launch site for the Hiawatha, a paddle wheel riverboat available for public cruises. Riverfront Park, also with river frontage, has walking trails on what was once the site of the Native American village of Ostonwakin. Memorial Park, only a few blocks from campus, is a community park and very convenient green space. It is home to Bowman Field, where the college’s baseball team plays.

The Pennsylvania Grand Canyon, a national natural landmark and very popular tourist attraction, is approximately one hour north of Penn College and features breathtaking views of the Pine Creek Gorge.

The Pine Creek Rail Trail, a converted railroad bed that winds along the floor of the canyon next to the creek, was named one of the world’s 10 great places to take a bike tour in a 2001 USA Today article.

The canyon and gorge are part of roughly 2 million acres of state forests and game lands known as the Pennsylvania Wilds. Hundreds of miles of backpacking trails and streams wind through 12 counties of northcentral Pennsylvania. Though much of the Pennsylvania Wilds is more than an hour’s drive from Penn College, it might be worth the trip to see free-roaming elk or do some serious stargazing at Cherry Springs State Park – a remote wild area known for having some of the darkest night skies on the East Coast.

So, get out and enjoy a change of pace. Turn off your phone, share some quality time with your family and friends, inhale some fresh air, get your body in motion, your brain in gear, lift your mood, and connect to the many invigorating sights and adventures within easy reach.
Business and Computer Technologies

Gerald D. “Chip” Baumgardner, associate professor of business administration/management, was among the presenters at the 72nd International Atlantic Economic Conference in Washington, D.C. He presented a paper titled “Successful Cooperative Learning Strategies for the Economics Class.” He additionally served as a judge for the Best Undergraduate Paper competition and chaired a session on “Entrepreneurship, Business competition and chaired a session on “Entrepreneurship, Business Environment and Corporate Strategy.”

Terry A. Girdon, professor of management, recently traveled to the Institute of Management Technology in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, for a site accreditation visit. Girdon served as team leader for assessment of the institute’s MBA program on behalf of the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education. Girdon chairs the board of directors of the IACBE, one of three business-degree accrediting bodies for colleges and universities worldwide.

Integrated Studies

Debra A. Buckman, assistant professor of chemistry and environmental science, participated on a panel discussing the role of educators in teaching about Marcellus Shale. The discussion was part of the annual conference of the Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators. The panel, interacting with about 100 environmental educators, discussed how the various aspects of the Marcellus Shale activities could be handled in the classroom and at nature centers.

Rob Cooley, assistant professor of anthropology/environmental science, presented “From the Field: Using Rich Media and ANGEL to Bring Real-World Examples Into the Classroom” at the Penn State Symposium for Teaching and Learning With Technology. At the annual meeting of The Society for Applied Anthropology in Baltimore, he presented a session titled “The New Frontier: Cultural and Ecological Impacts of the Marcellus Shale Gas Rush in Northcentral Pennsylvania.”


William Ma, professor of mathematics, jointly authored a paper that was published in The Pacific Journal of Mathematics. The paper, titled “Schwarzian norms and two-point distribution,” was co-authored with Martin Chuaqui, of Pontificia Universidad Católica, Chile; Peter Duren, of University of Michigan; Diego Mejía, of Universidad Nacional, Columbia; David Minda, of University of Cincinnati; and Brad Osgood, of Stanford University.

Mark D. Noe, professor of English-composition, was named the nonfiction editor for Aethlon: The Journal of Sport Literature. Noe had been a longtime Aethlon editorial board member. In his role as nonfiction editor, he is responsible for scholarly and critical essays on sport literature and cultural-studies approaches to sports texts, as well as creative nonfiction.

Administration

Davie Jane Gilmour, president, was chosen to serve as a commissioner for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, an association accrediting more than 500 colleges and universities. The commission is a voluntary, nongovernmental membership association dedicated to quality assurance and improvement through accreditation via peer evaluation.

In Memory

Dr. William Homisak, a longtime administrator who participated in the development of the institution from its days as Williamsport Technical Institute and Williamsport Area Community College through the founding of Pennsylvania College of Technology, died Feb. 4.

Homisak served in a variety of positions over the years; his family recalled that the position he most enjoyed was that of dean of continuing education at WACC. Among his many contributions were the development of business education at WTI, participation in the establishment of the community college, leadership of continuing education, involvement in community affairs, and fundraising to support institutional needs.

Among his survivors are his wife, Eleanor Patton Homisak, and daughters Barbara Waldeisen and Susan Girdon, a former Penn College employee whose husband, Terry, is a member of the Penn College faculty.
College Information and Community Relations

“True Blue,” written by Tom Wilson, writer/editor-PC Today, received a 2012 Bronze “CUPPIE” Award in the Feature Article category in the annual competition sponsored by CUPRAP, The Association of Communicators in Education. The article profiles John R. Greenwood, ’10, former captain of the Wildcat cross-country team, and the support he found before and after his recuperation from a heart transplant. The story was published in the Winter 2010-11 issue of One College Avenue.

Workforce Development & Continuing Education

Tracy L. Brundage, assistant vice president for workforce and economic development, earned a doctorate in workforce education with a major in training and human resource management from Penn State University. Her dissertation was titled “A Study Examining the Value of Pre-Employment Training Conducted by the Marcellus Shale Education and Training Center in Response to the Needs of the Gas and Oil Industry.”

FIVE PENN COLLEGE EMPLOYEES – AND TWO ALUMNI – helped to form “Team SchuPa,” running together in the May 5 River Towns Half Marathon in Danville to raise money for the college’s Chester D. Schuman Scholarship Fund. Schuman was the director of admissions at Penn College for nearly 35 years before retiring in 2009. He was also the golf coach at Penn College and recorded 155 consecutive wins. In October, Schuman was diagnosed with stage IV melanoma. He passed away two months later. Because of his dedication to the college and its students, a scholarship fund was established in his name. Once the fund reaches $25,000, it will be endowed, making it a permanent source of scholarship funds. Employee team members gathered with members of the Schuman family on campus for a photo while sporting the team T-shirt, designed by the Schumans’ daughter, Lauren, a 2005 Penn College graduate. Back row, from left, are Matt R. Haile, a network specialist at the college, 2006 alumnus and Schuman’s successor as Wildcat golf coach; Kay Dunkleberger, coordinator of disability services; Denny L. Dunkleberger, registrar; Becky J. Shaner, alumni relations assistant and a 2006 alumna; and John D. Maize, instructor of speech communication/composition. Front row, from left, are Schuman’s widow, Pam; twin grandsons Colin and Liam Moore; and their mother, Sarah, Disability Services’ sign language interpreter/student support assistant.
1970s

Donald R. Warner, ’72, engineering drafting technology, is a design engineer for Cameron Manufacturing and Design in Horseheads, N.Y., and holds or co-holds nine patents from his previous work at Ingersoll Rand in Athens. He graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Elmira College in 1988 and graduated summa cum laude with an associate degree in mechanical design from Penn State Wilkes-Barre in 1993.

Frank J. Sullivan, ’73, architecture, is a brigadier general with the U.S. Air Force, stationed in Afghanistan and serving his fourth deployment. He is working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on large infrastructure projects for the Afghanistan military and police. He has earned two Bronze Stars and commanded the largest Air Force group in Iraq in 2005-06. He continued his education to receive bachelor’s and master’s degrees in architecture from Catholic University of America in 1975 and 1978 and a master’s degree in public administration from Auburn University in 1994. He also holds a design certificate from Ecole des Arts American in France and graduated from the U.S. Air Force’s Air War College. Sullivan may be reached at frank.j.sullivan@afghan.swa.army.mil.

Jay V. Bellanca, ’74, aviation technology, is managing director of Vibrowest, heading North American operations for the Italian company. He received a bachelor’s degree in science, mathematics and technology from the State University of New York Empire State College in 2011. He resides in Salem, N.Y.

Nevin Fiedler, ’74, liberal arts, is retired from the Selinsgrove Center, where he was a residential services supervisor. He received a bachelor’s degree in therapeutic recreation from Elizabethtown College and The Pennsylvania State University in 1978. He resides with his wife, Lynn (Longenberger), ’79, in Selinsgrove.

Joe J. Pearl, ’76, ornamental horticulture, is manager of Benridge Nursery in Phoenix. He received a bachelor’s degree in anthropology from Arizona State University in 1984 and a post-baccalaureate degree in elementary education in 1999. He resides in Phoenix.

Eric Hopewell, ’86, toolmaking technology, is a precision machining technology instructor at Berks Career and Technology Center in Leesport.

Kenneth Hauser, ’87, civil engineering technology, is a program administrator for the Maintenance Division of the Mississippi Department of Transportation. He received a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering technology from the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown in 1989.

Jeanne L. Mitchell, ’87, electronics technology, is an IT technician for the Montville Public Schools in Montville and Oakland, Conn. She resides in New London, Conn. She also furthered her education in graphic design, and worked in that field for seven years.

1980s

Thomas Fisher, ’91, landscape/nursery technology, is a firefighter for the Department of Defense at Fort Stewart, Ga. He graduated from the Alabama Fire College and resides in Hinesville, Ga.

Art Counterman, ’92, electrical technology, is an instructor of electrical technology/occupations at Penn College. He resides in Milton.

Shawn P. Klingler, ’92, automotive service technician, is the maintenance supervisor for the Melt Shop at Standard Steel in Burnham. He resides in McClure.

Marcella “Muff” A. Knaur, ’92, retail management, is a part-time dishroom/kitchen helper in the School of Hospitality at Penn College. She resides in Williamsport and may be reached at mknaur@comcast.net.

Kash Bartlow, ’94, accounting and business management, is an accountant for the Lycoming-Clinton County Jinder Board. He received a bachelor’s degree in accounting from Messiah College in 1998. He resides in Montgomery.

Randall S. Buffington, ’94, construction management, is director of operations for Southern York County School District in Glen Rock, where he oversees the maintenance, custodial and safety/security departments and manages construction projects. He received a Master of Education in school business leadership in 2010 from Wilkes University. He recently began teaching part-time in the building construction technology department at Harrisburg Area Community College.

Timothy L. Young, ’95, information technology: data communications & networking, is a network administrator for the City of Philadelphia, where he resides.

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2000s

Daniel S. Dively, ’00, welding technology, is a boilermaker for Norfolk Southern Railroad Co. in Altoona, where he is a certified welder building new locomotives. He resides in Altoona and may be reached at bullscricker68@yahoo.com.

Robert W. Stepanovich, ’01, automotive technology management, is senior manager of quality assurance for Hyundai Motor America. He resides in Sharpsburg, Ga.

Douglas J. Stewart, ’01, computer information systems: networking and technical support, is a technical support engineer II for Minitab Inc. in State College. He resides in Lewistown.

Michael R. Strause, ’01, computer information systems: networking and technical support, is an enterprise architect for Tory Burch LLC, in New York.

Christine J. (Williams) Lantz, ’96, mass communications, is a broadcast operations assistant for WSKG Telecommunications, a public-television station in Vestal, N.Y., where she worked on an award-winning children’s television program called “Move It.” She resides in Warren Center.

Jeremy D. Waite, ’97, electronics technology: communications/fiber optics, is a technology specialist for Tuscarora Intermediate Unit 11 in McVeytown.

Fletcher Ewing, ’98, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a senior mechanical engineer for Cross Match Technologies in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., where he works in R&D of rugged mobile biometric devices. He resides in Wellington, Fla.

Todd M. Fetzer, ’99, broadcast communications, is an on-air disc jockey for 100.1 WQIC FM in Lebanon, where he resides.
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Graphic Design
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Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning Design Technology
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Marriages & Births


Sarah M. Brennan, '05, hospitality management, married David A. Gilmore on Nov. 26, 2011. They reside in Williamsport.


Jennifer L. Reeder, '10, graphic design, married Jeremiah C. Johnson, '02, business administration, accounting minor, is the general accountant for the County of Lycoming. She resides in Williamsport and may be reached at smartin3@comcast.net.

Jason Weber, '02, computer information systems: data communications and networking, is a business systems administrator for Fulton Financial Corp. in Lancaster. He resides in Mountville.

Eric B. Bagley, '03, business administration: banking and finance, is truck manager for Fairfield Auto Group in Montoursville, where he also works in BMW sales. He resides in Williamsport.

Wade A. Bower, '03, information technology: networking and technical support, is a program manager for Artesian Pools and Spas Inc. in Bloomsburg, where he resides.

Randall W. Hartman, '03, automotive technology management, is a program manager for Boro Construction, which has offices in Mount Laurel, N.J., and King of Prussia. He resides in Gilbertsville.

Keith J. Sauer, '03, computer information systems: networking and technical support, is a system administrator for Diamond Credit Union in Pottstown. He resides in Reading.

John Damico, '04, collision repair technology, resides in Cazenovia, N.Y., and is a teller for Key Bank.

Joseph L. Haag, '04, heating, ventilation & air conditioning technology, is maintenance director for Heathside Rehab and Nursing Center in State College, where his department ensures all aspects of the building and medical equipment are in working order. He is also safety co-chairman, directly in charge of code compliance.

Sarah M. (Brennan) Gilmore, '05, hospitality management, is executive sales manager at the Genetti Hotel in Williamsport. She resides in Williamsport.

Jennifer R. McHenry, '05, culinary arts technology and dietary manager technology, is a clinical dietitian for Geisinger Medical Center in Danville. She received a bachelor's degree in nutritional sciences from Penn State in 2008, completed the Sodexo Dietetic Internship in 2010, and holds credentials for registered dietitian and licensed dietitian-nutritionist. She resides in Lock Haven.

Jared M. Narber, '05, graphic design, is a junior graphic designer for Serino/Coyne in New York City, where he creates original design, web and illustration work for current and upcoming Broadway shows and conceptual designs and mockups. He also maintains and creates advertisements appearing in such media as The New York Times, web and television. He resides in North Bergen, N.J., and may be reached at nixumb@gmail.com.

Erin K. (Fern) Auman, '06, culinary arts technology, is a management assistant for S.L. Nusbaum. She resides in Mechanicsburg.

James L. Stein, '06, forest technology, is a procurement forester for Walker Lumber Co. He resides in Lamar.

Kristy L. Anderson, '07, small business and entrepreneurship, is a WorkKeys coordinator for the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corp. in Lewisburg, where she resides. She coordinates career readiness assessments at Pennsylvania CareerLink offices in a nine-county region of central Pennsylvania. She may be reached at krystylin223@yahoo.com.

Nicki S. (Breitford) Collins, '07, business administration: human resource management, is an internal auditor for the County of Lycoming. She resides in Williamsport.

Becky (Hellmers) Ellis, '07, business management, is a leasing consultant for S.L. Nusbaum. She resides in Suffolk, N.J.

Jarred A. Park, '07, information technology: Web and applications technology, is an embedded software engineer for Northrop Grumman, where he is the technical lead for a team of seven software engineers working on an application for the U.S. Air Force Combat Plans and Operations Airspace Management Unit. He is pursuing a bachelor's degree in information technology from Western Governors University. He resides in Hollywood, Md., and can be reached at jarredpark@gmail.com.
Garrett A. White, '07, automotive technology: Toyota emphasis; '09, technology management, is an assistant team leader in PC board assembly for Magna Power Electronics in Flemington, N.J. He resides in Bridgewater, N.J.

Joseph Iacona, '08, information technology: Cisco technology and information technology: network specialist, is a system administrator for New York City fashion company rag & bone, creating and managing a new network infrastructure for the company.

Derrick Lay, '08, landscape/nursery technology, is a sales manager for TruGreen Lawn Care. He resides in Newville.

David L. Peachey, '08, technology management, is a flight instructor for Aero-Tech Services Inc. in Lititz. He resides in Myerstown.

Mark R. Capellazzi, '09, culinary arts and systems, is pursuing a master's degree in college student personnel administration from Canisius College, where he is also a graduate assistant, serving as program coordinator in the college’s Office of Campus Programming and Leadership Development. He resides in Rochester, N.Y.

Daniel Gongloff, '09, plastics and polymer technology: '08, computer aided product design: '07, computer aided drafting technology; is a design engineer for Lumax Industries in Altoona. He resides in Loretto.

Justin J. Kovaleksi, '09, construction management, is director of business development for Eastern PCM LLC in Lemoyne. He received a Master of Business Administration in sustainable business and green development from Marylhurst University in 2011. He resides in Camp Hill.

Christopher Kurz, '09, business administration: management concentration, is a sales representative for Barrett Paving Materials Inc. He can be reached at christopher.kurz@barrett paving.com.

Harry Lehman, '09, welding technology, is a service technician for Baker Hughes International in Muncy, where he serves as field supervisor for the company's tubular division in the natural gas industry. He resides in Williamsport.

Mary Jo (Nonnemacher) Widdersheim, '09, nursing, is a registered nurse at Grand View Hospital in Sellersville. She is pursuing a Master of Nursing in nurse anesthesia from Drexel University.

2010s

Shawn M. Ernst, '10, automated manufacturing technology, is a manufacturing router/process planner for Dresser-Rand in Wellsville, N.Y. He resides in Port Allegany and is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in technology management through distance learning at Penn College. He can be reached at serrnst@zitomedia.net.

Stephanie J. Irvine, '10, welding and fabrication engineering technology, is an estimator for Vanengo Steel in Franklin. She resides in Titusville.

Brandon Miller, '10, construction management, is a project manager for Henkels and McCoy, a national engineering, project management and construction firm headquartered in Blue Bell.

Travis Williams, '10, business administration: management, is a production team adviser for Schreiber Foods in Green Bay, Wis.

Daniel J. Zbegner, '10, information technology: network specialist, is a solutions technician for Just Solutions Inc. in Fairport, N.Y. He resides in Lock Haven.

Jeffrey A. Kunkel, '11, graphic design, is a graphic designer for AdTrak 360 in Williamsport. He resides in Selinsgrove and is pursuing a degree in Web design and multimedia at Penn College.

Chelsea Rae M. (Osborne) Naylor, '11, health information technology, is a health information coordinator for Select Medical. She resides in Mechanicsburg.

Jonathan Spicher, '11, construction management, is an assistant project manager for W.M. Schultz Construction Inc. in Ballston Spa, N.Y. He can be reached at jspicher1@gmail.com.

Shannon R. Stackhouse, '11, business administration: human resource management, is a recruiter for Guthrie Healthcare System. She resides in Athens.

Devin J. Wynn, '11, electronics and computer engineering technology, is an electronics technician for Universal Well Services. He resides in Lock Haven.
Friday
Plastics and Polymer Technology
25th Anniversary Celebration
Architectural Technology
45th Anniversary Celebration
Master Teacher Reunion
The Gallery at Penn College:
Natural Elements with Bill Wolff
and Marcia Wolfson Ray

Saturday
Alumni Golf Outing at White Deer Golf Course
Alumni Soccer Match
Alumni Ultimate Frisbee Match
Williamsport Technical Institute Reunion
Intercollegiate Soccer Games
Athletic Hall of Fame Banquet
Student Leaders Reunion

Sunday
Alumni Award Recipients Brunch
The Gallery at Penn College:
Natural Elements with Bill Wolff
and Marcia Wolfson-Ray

Contact Alumni Relations for details.
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Pennsylvania College of Technology became an affiliate of The Pennsylvania State University in 1989 after establishing a national reputation for education supporting workforce development, first as a technical institute and later as a community college. Today, Penn College is a special mission affiliate of Penn State, committed to applied technology education. Conveniently located in Williamsport (northcentral Pennsylvania), Penn College attracts the second-highest enrollment in the Penn State system. In addition, Penn College manages the state’s largest worker-training program through Workforce Development & Continuing Education. The modern Penn College campus offers students hands-on instruction and access to the latest equipment, leading to excellent graduate placement and degrees that work.

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Penn College operates on a nondiscriminatory basis.
A “Star-struck” fan wonders if he can believe his eyes during the first Wildcat ComicCon, a two-day event that gave hundreds of people unprecedented access to comics-industry heavyweights and featured presentations on comics and video games, children’s activities, a cosplay (costumed play) contest, book signings and more.