Revealing a ‘Hidden’ Problem
Following a semester-long service-learning project that included an awareness event on the streets of Williamsport, applied human services students share facts about homelessness.

Building Walls, Demolishing Obstacles
The sole female in her major, masonry student Nicole Reyes-Molina is a role model in the classroom and on the basketball court. The guard, who is deaf, wants others to see they can do anything they set their minds to.

Got Game?
Student-athletes apply the lessons from field, court, course and mat to their post-Penn College lives.

Frontier Firefight
Forest technology alumni Angela M. Poleto, ’11, and Samuel J. Raisch, ’10, take on their first out-of-state wildfire in Alaska.

Saving History
Alumnus Jeff Erdly, ’72, knows how a building breathes, how it ages, and how to keep it viable for future generations. He’s used that knowledge on some of the East Coast’s most stately structures.

Stroll Through Time
A new History Trail invites visitors to reacquaint themselves with college and community lore.

Web Extra
additional content at oca.pct.edu
Editor:

I read the story about the Eager Beaver B-17 in the Fall 2013 issue of One College Avenue.

It never told what happened to the plane. Well it was scrapped in 1947 and sold to a junk man named Joe Brickman, and I helped to take it apart. I also took the pictures enclosed (at left).

Carl F. McDaniel, ’43
Williamsport

We love to hear from you

Send a letter to: One College Avenue, DIF 30 Pennsylvania College of Technology One College Avenue, Williamsport, PA 17701-5799
Email it to: onecollegeavenue@pct.edu
Or comment online: oca.pct.edu

Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We reserve the right to refuse items for publication.
Penn College’s three fraternities (Phi Mu Delta, Sigma Nu and Sigma Pi) squared off in the fourth annual Color Wars, one of the celebratory events during Greek Week. Participants showered one another with blasts of colored powder, marking their turf — and one another — during a good-natured skirmish in the Dauphin Hall courtyard.

Penn College Joins THON Phenomenon

Echoing the rallying cry of “For the kids,” nearly 30 members of the new Penn College Benefiting THON student organization volunteered for the season’s first three weekends of “canning” — standing alongside well-traveled streets and carrying canisters to collect donations from passing travelers — raising more than $11,200. During the year, student groups throughout the Penn State system organize events and go canning to raise money for the Four Diamonds Fund, which funds research and supports families of pediatric cancer patients at Penn State Hershey Medical Center. In February, all of the groups come together in the Bryce Jordan Center in University Park for a 46-hour dance marathon.

Checks can be made payable to Penn State Dance Marathon — with “Penn College 1361” written on the memo line — and sent to Penn State Dance Marathon Finance, 210 HUB, University Park, PA 16802. Donors can also visit the THON Web page, click “Donate Now” and select Penn College as their organization of choice.

Penn College students carring for THON in late September are, from left, Karissa Kulp, Claudia N. Naylor and Rebecca F. Thompson.

100 Percent of Dental Hygiene Grads Pass National Boards

All 24 graduates from the dental hygiene program class of 2013 passed the National Board Dental Hygiene Examination. The written exam assists state boards in determining the qualifications of those who seek licensure to practice dental hygiene.

The pass rate for Penn College graduates taking the test for the first time is 100 percent for the past six years. The nationwide failure rate during the same period ranged from 3.8 to 5.2 percent.

Sara J. (Lefever) Jackson, ’11, is among recent dental hygiene graduates.
College Inducts Six Into Hall of Fame

Penn College inducted six former athletes, coaches and administrators into its Athletic Hall of Fame during a Homecoming ceremony.

The inductees are Shawn C. Naylor, ‘99, who was a member of the world archery team that won gold in Madrid, Spain; Dennis L. Dunkleberger, who coached seven championship cross-country teams and five individual champions in seven years; Adam N. Waigand, ‘05, who helped the men’s soccer team to a 55-14-1 (.793) record and two championships; Matthew R. Haile, ‘06, who helped the golf team stay undefeated and was conference individual champion; Michelle L. Wright, ‘07, of Kendall, N.Y., who was a member of the 2007 world archery team that traveled to Venezuela; and Maria Bova Strohl, ‘07, who helped the women’s volleyball team to four championship appearances and a title.

Students Commended for ‘Selfless Act’ in City Fire Rescue

Three Penn College students were commended for alerting the occupants of a burning building and leading them to safety early on Sept. 22.

Anthony V. Rode, of Lords Valley; Leonardo Tejeda, of New Rochelle, N.Y.; and Thomas P. Veres, of Scarsdale, N.Y., were honored at a Red Cross Heroes Breakfast and through certificates of appreciation from college President Davie Jane Gilmour and Elliott Strickland, chief student affairs officer.

The three young men, who live together in the college’s Campus View Apartments, had turned onto Grier Street while headed home from visiting friends on Memorial Avenue when they heard an alarm and then saw a home on fire.

“We could hear the windows shattering from the heat coming from the fire,” Tejeda said. “We started to yell to get the residents’ attention, but nobody came out of the house.” The commotion managed to alert the neighbors, but the three found it necessary to go inside the burning 512 Grier St. building to notify the tenants.

From left, Thomas P. Veres, Leonardo Tejeda and Anthony V. Rode hold their certificates outside Penn College’s administrative offices.

Alumnus Donates 1940 Ford

Galen Mellott, of Port Matilda, who attended Williamsport Technical Institute for toolmaking technology from 1962-64, donated a 1940 Ford for use by students in the college’s automotive restoration technology major.

Mellott owned the car – his first vehicle – for 55 years, occasionally driving it back and forth from State College to attend classes in Williamsport.

“The program is very grateful for such a generous gift that has a history to be shared with students,” said Colin W. Williamson, dean of the School of Transportation & Natural Resources Technologies. “The car is in great shape and will be an excellent learning project to restore to its original condition. We hope to give the project the same respect and care as its previous owner has shown it through the decades.”
Nursing Students Help at Food Bank

Thirty students enrolled in the Community Health Nursing course took the topic literally when they put in time at the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank. For one of the course’s clinical rotations, the students became familiar with and volunteered at the food bank’s Williamsport Warehouse, where they packed items for a variety of groups.

Meeting basic needs – such as having enough food to eat – is important to helping manage chronic health conditions and current health issues.

“Through this experience, students were able to think critically about the need for health planning and collaborating with community organizations such as the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank to help ensure individuals and families have basic needs met,” course instructor Sandra L. Richmond said.

Latest College Book Traces 100 Years of ‘Marketing With a Mission’

The third volume in Pennsylvania College of Technology’s Countdown to the Centennial series, “Marketing With a Mission,” is available at The College Store or online at oca.pct.edu/bookstore.

National magazine articles, college publications and marketing campaigns, merchandising, newspaper clippings and a wealth of other materials are reproduced throughout the book’s 140 colorful pages, all depicting the institution’s steadfast focus on preparing students for meaningful employment and community service.

Like other titles in the series, “Marketing With a Mission” was written by Elaine J. Lambert, director of college information and community relations, who drew upon her decades of experience and pulled from a rich archival reservoir to take readers on a memory-laden trip from WTI to Williamsport Area Community College to Penn College.

Net proceeds from the sale of the Countdown to the Centennial books – which sell for $9.95 each – go toward annual student awards from the Penn College Endowed Alumni Scholarship fund.

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.
Building Walls
The 18,500 square feet of space produces the cacophonous sound of work. Wet chop saws are cutting blocks into desired shapes. Students and faculty are conferring over the latest projects. And mortar is being mixed to serve as a vital binding agent for the seemingly endless supply of bricks waiting to be positioned.

Nicole Reyes-Molina adds to the echoes in Pennsylvania College of Technology’s Construction Masonry Building. She cuts block, huddles with her instructor and classmates, flips mortar with her trusty trowel and intently aligns brick after brick. In many ways, the lone female in the lab sets the tone for the entire class.

Which is ironic considering that Reyes-Molina is deaf.

“You can do whatever you set your mind to. It doesn’t matter if you have a disability or not,” says Reyes-Molina through a sign language interpreter. “You do things in a different way. You learn to cope. You learn to take on challenges in different ways and to have a positive attitude while doing that.”

Her positive attitude and infectious smile have rubbed off on the other 33 masonry majors seeking an associate degree. Glenn R. Luse, instructor of masonry, chuckles when describing the inevitable sight at the beginning of a project requiring students to pick partners: a long line of hopeful classmates approaching Reyes-Molina.

“They all want to be her partner,” Luse says. “She’s a role model for a lot of the guys because of her abilities. Nicole is very secure with who she is and what she’s doing, and that makes all the difference in the world. She’s determined to learn. She is determined to get all she can out of school.”

Sarah S. Moore, sign language interpreter/student support assistant, considers Reyes-Molina a born leader.

At left, building construction technology student Nicole Reyes-Molina scoops mortar for a 16-foot by 16-foot wall. A guard for the Lady Wildcats, she wanted to play college-level basketball “to have teammates and work toward a goal.”
“Nicole is driven, determined and goal-focused,” says Moore, who has interpreted for Reyes-Molina in several classes. “She does not seem to be intimidated by being the only woman. Instead, she jumps in with creating ideas, offering suggestions and helping others. She does not let her deafness inhibit her dreams.”

Those dreams include becoming a mason and eventually owning her own masonry company. Today Reyes-Molina is building, literally, on the skills that will help her realize such aspirations. With a grateful partner, she is in the midst of constructing a large wall, the main project for her brick masonry class.

The lefthander confidently plunges her purple-handled trowel into a nearby wheelbarrow filled with mortar. A bold swiping motion deposits the perfect amount of mortar on her red brick. Reyes-Molina examines the intended location of the brick before tapping it into place on top of a gray block. Only a couple hundred more bricks to go.

“It’s definitely my favorite part of the day,” Reyes-Molina says. “My mind is free. I love getting my hands dirty. I like working with nature. I enjoy products of the earth.”

Growing up in Puerto Rico, Reyes-Molina preferred toy trucks to dolls. When she was 8, her family moved to Long Island, N.Y., in search of a better quality of life. There, her love grew for nature and “getting dirty.” A few years later, she settled with her parents, two older brothers and twin sister in Lancaster. Her address might have changed, but her attraction to nontraditional vocations did not.

Lancaster County Career & Technology Center exposed Reyes-Molina to masonry during her high school years. She became fascinated with the nature of the work and its unlimited creative possibilities.

“It’s hands-on. It’s physical work. It really requires motivation. It requires creativity,” she says. “You can express yourself. It’s a way for me to express myself through what I can build, permanent structures.”

Determined to be the first in her family to attend college, Reyes-Molina visited Penn College upon the suggestion of one of her technical education teachers. During an Open House tour of the masonry lab, college faculty encouraged her to grab a trowel and lay some brick. She was hooked.

“It was a lot of fun, and I knew then that Penn College was a good connection for me,” she recalls.

The existence of an intercollegiate women’s basketball program solidified the bond. Reyes-Molina played four years of high school basketball and desired to compete at the next level.

“I wanted to accomplish something with a team and have teammates and work toward a goal,” she says. “I wanted to balance my education with fun and academics, and Penn College had both.”
There are various communication preferences among people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Some communicate through sign language, some rely on amplification devices and seeing the speaker’s lips, and others may prefer to write back and forth.

Whatever the communication mode the person uses, here are some tips to use when working with a person who is deaf or has a hearing loss:

- Make sure you have their attention. You can get their attention by waving your hand, tapping them on the shoulder or flickering the lights.
- Always face the person and speak directly to the person. Never position yourself in front of a window; the glare may block out your face and make it difficult for the person to read your lips. Avoid chewing gum or covering your mouth while speaking.
- If the person uses a sign language interpreter to facilitate communication, make sure you speak in a normal tone and pace. If the interpreter has a problem keeping up, the interpreter or the person may ask you to slow down or repeat the information.
- Never stand or walk between the person and interpreter.
- If you do not understand the speech of a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, let the person know.
- Don’t shout at a person who is deaf or hard of hearing. If the person uses an amplification device, your shout will sound distorted.

Kay E. Dunkleberger, coordinator of disability services

On the court for the Penn College Lady Wildcats, the 5-foot, 6-inch guard can’t hear the official’s whistle or her coach’s instructions. Instead, Reyes-Molina focuses on the team's point guard to determine when play is stopped, and she reads that teammate's lips to identify the play to be run. Once she heads to the bench, an interpreter waits to share any tips or strategies discussed by the coaching staff.

"You would think she’s at a disadvantage with being deaf, but you wouldn’t know it by talking with her," says Luse, who shaved his mustache so Reyes-Molina could better read his lips in the masonry lab. "She handles herself quite well."

Perhaps that’s because Reyes-Molina doesn’t know any different. She lost her hearing when she was just eight months old.

An infection caused internal bleeding in both ears. Reyes-Molina’s parents faced a difficult choice to combat the infection: surgery, which could prove fatal, or medication, which could produce severe side effects. They chose the latter. The medication stopped the bleeding but damaged the vestibulocochlear nerve in each ear, which stunted information flow to the brain. The result was bilateral sensorineural hearing loss.

"I can hear a little bit with hearing aids," says Reyes-Molina, who considers Spanish to be her primary language. "If I don’t have the hearing aids, then I am completely deaf."

"There are a lot more people with a worse life than I have, and they live life being miserable and saying they can’t do things. But I want people to know they can do things. You have to try things that are out of the ordinary and get out of the box."

Or in her case, build a wall. With the concentration of an artist contemplating the next stroke on a masterpiece, Reyes-Molina continues to work on her semester-ending project. As she manipulates each brick, she must consider its appearance, structural bond and alignment.

"What she knows already, she’s very capable and competent," Luse says. "Good women masons have the edge in industry. Women are still a minority in the construction workforce. Nicole could pick any job she wanted if she was a union mason."

After six weeks and approximately 60 hours on this job, Reyes-Molina and her partner have crafted a 16-by-16 foot wall, consisting of 784 bricks, 120 blocks and three arches.

"It’s really been an enjoyment to have this class and to accomplish building this wall," says Reyes-Molina, who is scheduled to graduate in August. "It feels very good to know that I’m here doing what I’ve dreamed about doing. I know what my future is going to be like. I already know that this is something I really enjoy."

"She is definitely a role model," Moore says. "She is a nontraditional student by major, a first-generation college student. She is trilingual. She is deaf. She is a wonderful person to know and work with."
ON AN UNSEASONABLY WARM NOVEMBER EVENING,

11 students pursuing bachelor’s degrees in applied human services spent the night in front of the Lycoming County Court House in downtown Williamsport, where they provided information about homelessness while collecting supplies and cash for Family Promise of Lycoming County.

The group experienced an unexpected touch of reality when, during the downtown event, they interacted with two individuals who had no place to stay for the night. The students in turn connected them with Family Promise and, ultimately, shelter for the evening.

The students were enrolled in the Service Learning in Sociology course, taught by Rob Cooley, assistant professor of anthropology and environmental science. In addition to their downtown campout, which included signs, a food vendor and live music, the students fed a Facebook page with facts, videos and giving challenges; created an online giving campaign at “GoFundMe.com”; and conducted on-campus collections of supplies for Family Promise clients.

From interviewing those who work with area homeless, to researching permitting requirements, working with law enforcement, and arranging musicians and food vendors for the event, the experience helped to build the students’ confidence in event planning and awareness building as they prepare for careers with human services agencies.
Facts About Homelessness (compiled by students in Service Learning in Sociology):

1. Homelessness describes the condition of people without a regular dwelling. People who are homeless are most often unable to acquire and maintain regular, safe, secure and adequate housing, or lack "fixed, regular and adequate night-time residence."

2. Families make up nearly 40 percent of the homeless population — its fastest-growing segment.

3. One out of every 45 American children will experience homelessness this year.

4. The average age of a homeless individual is 9.

5. In Lycoming County and similar communities, homelessness is hidden. We don't see people sleeping in cardboard boxes or on park benches, so many don't know a problem exists, explained student Eve A. Allen, of Williamsport. Instead, many sleep in cars or other less-conspicuous places.

6. On any given night, as many as 150 beds are filled in the Williamsport area's homeless shelters. "And those are just the ones able to get into a shelter," student Lacy D. Schoonover said.

7. In 2012, Family Promise of Lycoming County served 27 families consisting of 80 individuals. Of the 80 people, 41 were under the age of 18. Twenty of those were under the age of 5.

8. Nationally, about 50 percent of all homeless women and children are fleeing domestic violence.

9. Local organizations who work with the homeless indicate that Lycoming is one of the counties with the highest number of counted homeless people in central Pennsylvania.
The intensive care nurse uses the patience and focus she gained as an archer when juggling diverse, demanding duties on the hospital floor. The information technology specialist calls upon the confidence he accumulated over the course of his golfing career when complex computer networking problems arise. The construction supervisor incorporates the same team-building skills he learned on the soccer field into the creation of dream houses.

Student-athletes who have graduated from Pennsylvania College of Technology have left campus with more than the proficiencies learned in their respective majors. They’ve packed extra aptitudes obtained on the field, court, course and mat into their skill set and parlayed those talents into their careers, as well.

“Archery has taught me many lessons in life and great skills; most important is patience,” said Lindsey K. Fackler, nursing, ’10, a medical intensive care unit nurse at Penn State Hershey Medical Center. “I also learned how to put all my focus into one thing at a time. While shooting, you must block everything out around you and focus on your form, the target and your mind. While at work, when I have a patient that is becoming dangerously sick, I must juggle many pumps, machines, ventilators and families all while focusing on the patient. Archery has taught me how to tune out anything unimportant at that time.”

Her participation in athletics also taught Fackler leadership skills, which were the main reason her former coach, Chad L. Karstetter, identified Fackler as an ideal archery representative to address the merging of athletics and career skills.

“We’ve had quite a few archers with great success stories during their time at the college and after graduation, as well, but the one who keeps coming to my mind is Lindsey Fackler,” said Karsetter, a 1999 forest technology graduate and a horticulturist at Penn College. “Not only was she a good archer, but she was a team captain, a team leader, a student adviser … who went above and beyond what she needed to do as a player. She was basically my assistant coach. She was the one everyone knew they could count on. Everybody respected her.”

Fackler believes the leadership qualities she developed by working with her coach and teammates have transferred to her job.

“I’m more assertive with physicians and families, and I’m also a charge nurse on the floor,” she said.
Developing self-assurance

Taking control of a challenge – at work or in one’s game – is a matter of confidence for Matthew R. Haile, information technology/data communications and networking concentration, ’06.

“One thing I’ve learned is you need that confidence. I didn’t always have it. I wasn’t always a confident person. Some have it naturally, and for others, it comes with time as you get older,” Haile said, adding that life, like golf, is always “a work in progress.”

A former team member turned Penn College coach, Haile sees many young players lacking confidence, but with regular practice and consistent, solid shots, self-assurance grows.

“I try to teach them things I was taught, like you can do anything you put your mind to. You just need confidence in yourself, and once you develop that, you can do anything,” he said, adding that that belief was honed throughout his childhood by his father and enhanced by playing golf, starting at age 11, with his grandfather, and competing at the high school level prior to collegiate competition.

Working together

The complexities of constructing new homes, complete with managing myriad layers of subcontractors, is the work of Adam N. Waigand, building construction technology, ’05. Waigand faces the formidable task with team-building skills first assembled on the soccer field.

“With the soccer team working together as a unit, it’s similar to what you do working together as a team building a house,” said Waigand, a construction supervisor based in Virginia with national company Drees Homes.

“You need to get everyone...”

“The lessons learned on the fields and courts are lessons in competition, sacrifice, teamwork and goal setting.”
One College Avenue

WRESTLING with Good Memories

WACC's 1974 wrestling squad, one of the most memorable to former coach Max Wasson, standing at left.

Wasson

“He was concerned with creating good men off the mat as much as he was in coaching good athletes on the mat,” said Michael E. Maneval, construction carpentry, ’81, in introducing his former wrestling coach, Max Wasson, at the inaugural induction ceremonies of the college’s Athletic Hall of Fame in Fall 2012.

Wasson was the head coach of wrestling at Williamsport Area Community College from 1970-82. In those 13 years, his teams amassed an impressive 95-39-1 record, the best of any wrestling coach in WACC or Pennsylvania College of Technology history. The impressive record led to eight Eastern Pennsylvania Community College Athletic Conference Championships and multiple individual champions.

Wasson says his job was made easier by being “in the center of the hotbed of wrestling.” “Muncy, Hughesville, Jersey Shore always had good teams, plus we got some guys from DuBois and Clearfield and teams up

on the same game plan just like you need to get everyone on the same construction plan. Everything works more smoothly and a whole lot easier if everyone is on the same page.”

Soccer has its individual skill aspects, he says, but the team-building component is essential because “if you’re not clicking as a team, you’re not going to succeed passing the ball back and forth. You can only succeed as one unit.”

Waigand was introduced to construction as a boy, helping his father with various remodeling projects on the family home.

“When the time came to decide what to do (after high school), people always say ‘Pick something you’ll enjoy doing for the rest of your life,’ so this was it,” he said.

Nowadays, instead of wielding hammers and saws, Waigand is managing plans and people and says he gains great satisfaction from his work.

“The ultimate goal is we’re building someone’s dream,” he said. “Whether it’s someone’s retirement home or a first home or a family who is needing to expand, it’s a large investment … so it’s exciting to be a part of that process.”

Like Haile, Waigand began playing his sport around the age of 11, in sixth grade. Soccer was something he simply “had a knack for” and Waigand progressed from playing in a community league to travel teams competing nationally and, once, even internationally in England. At Penn College, he found the same competitive spirit and sense of belonging under the tutelage of former Penn College men’s soccer coach Andrew M. Richardson, the college’s clerk-of-the-works/construction manager.

Of Richardson, Waigand said, “He always promoted teamwork, camaraderie and working together as a unit.”

Haile’s collegiate mentor was the late Chester “Chet” D. Schuman, former director of admissions at Penn College.

“He was just so easy to talk to and get along with,” said Haile of his beloved coach. “I don’t remember a day that Chet was in a bad mood. An admirable quality of his was that he was a people person. He always knew how to make you laugh or smile. If you were having a bad round, Chet would come riding around in his cart; he’d always have a snack or drink for you, or he’d do or say something funny to lift your spirits.”

Fackler also found her coach to be a great source of inspiration for her sport and life.

“Chad has been one of the most influential people in my life,” she said. “He has helped me achieve goals I never dreamed of.”

When asked what advice she would give college freshmen considering joining an athletics team, Fackler offered, “Trying something new is always a great idea. I was a softball player my entire life, but I wanted a change, so I picked the archery team. Archery was only a game I played as a child; I knew how to shoot a bow, but nothing like when I came to the team. I struggled when I
that way who were always high performers,” he said. “They came to WACC because of the courses offered, like diesel mechanics and construction, but they wanted to continue their wrestling. We had kids who could’ve gone to other schools based on their athletic abilities, but those schools didn’t offer what they wanted to study.”

The “many accomplished wrestlers” who arrived on Wasson’s mat had already attained most of their basic skills in high school and came with many different styles and coaching ideas that the college coach did not attempt to alter.

“I never tried to change their styles. I just taught them some new skills and if they liked them, OK, and if they didn’t, that was fine, too,” Wasson said.

The WACC wrestlers “pretty much dominated for a good many years” in their community college conference, the coach says. “It was good to have other teams look up to us and respect us. Most knew they had a tough match ahead of them when we went into a gym. We made the school proud. That felt good.”

While coaching at the college, Wasson worked as an audiovisual director and teacher in the Williamsport Area School District. He wrestled at Williamsport High School in his youth. Now retired, Wasson resides in Manheim.

The former coach says he thinks often of his WACC wrestling days. He points to the year his son Brent A., aviation maintenance technician, ’83, wrestled on the team, as well as end-of-year team gatherings at his house and a prayer spoken before each match.

“It was the Lord’s Prayer. It was voluntary, but most all participated. I think, for some, they wanted that,” he said. “I think it brought us closer together. I never had any repercussions from it.”

And he remembers the 1973-74 season, when the team included two Vietnam veterans.

“Those guys really rallied everyone around. We all went together like glue,” Wasson recalled. “That same year, one guy’s wife, who was going to school at WACC, too, and a friend of hers hung up signs in the gym. Everything just jelled. That was a great year.”
Frontier Firefight

by Tom Wilson, writer/editor-PCToday

The air was thick with wartime.

One day brought an unsettling rim-shot rhythm of artillery fire, punctuating the otherwise serene surroundings. On another, the percussive rotors of Black Hawk and Chinook helicopters supplied the soundtrack to an attack from above. And later, nagged by mosquitoes, blistered and bundled against the dankness of their leaky tents, the troops waited for marching orders.

No deployment to a far-off jungle or desert, this, but a literal firefight in the adverse heart of America’s “Last Frontier.”

For three weeks in July, two graduates of Pennsylvania College of Technology’s forest technology major – Samuel J. Raisch, ’10, and Angela M. Poleto, ’11 – were among six Tiadaghton State Forest specialists (and 40 Pennsylvanians overall) sent to Alaska to battle the stubborn Stuart Creek 2 wildfire. It was their first assignment with an out-of-state crew; indeed, it was the first time in its 40-year history that the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources fire-suppression program sent a crew that far from home.

The blaze was sparked in mid-June during weapons training at the Eielson Air Force Base and, fueled by winds sweeping across the crunch of a too-dry countryside, was only 5-percent contained by the time Pennsylvania reinforcements landed after a 4,100-mile flight from Harrisburg.

“When we arrived on the military base, before we even dropped our bags, we were briefed by the Army on unexploded ordnance,” Raisch said. “The third day before our last day there (July 19), we were fighting fire on a spur ridge off the military-base road, and we heard this ‘Pop! Pop! Pop!’ sound. It was live ammo that was going off due to the intense heat. Sometimes, whole clips would go off, which was pretty disturbing.”

The explosions continued, he said, so the crew was pulled off the fire for about an hour until no more “gunshots” were heard.

Raisch and Poleto were on separate
details during their Alaskan adventure, but their goal was the same: keep the fire from spreading westward to the base and protect dangerously close towns like Moose Creek and Two Rivers.

As excited as the forest technicians were to be assigned – the seasonally employed Poleto responded, “Are you kidding me!?” when she got the nod during the skeleton staffing of a Fourth of July weekend in the district – their call-up came shortly after the somber news that 19 “Hot Shot” firefighters died battling a blaze in Arizona.

“My mom was pretty upset about that, and it didn’t help that my phone went dead out in the field,” said Poleto, the only woman on the Pennsylvania team. “Then I had to tell her, ‘They’re gonna drop me in the middle of a swamp where no one will be able to reach us.’ She wasn’t too happy about that, either.”

As firefighting strategy goes, there wasn’t much difference between Alaska and their home turf to the extreme southeast; it involved a lot of laying hose and mopping up. The difference was where that hose was laid: on remote, unforgiving terrain that went up and up and up for miles and miles and miles.

“On our first day, we hiked a ‘dozer line about a mile to a line cut into the forest by the military,” Raisch recalled. “It rained in the morning, so the line was all mud. There was a sphagnum bog we had to cross. It was like walking on a water mattress. I’ve never experienced anything like it.”

He and Poleto have vivid memories of the unique conditions of fighting fire in the subarctic: raging flames 4 feet away from the solid ice just beneath the mossy surface. The temperature posed similar extremes and compromised their progress, 40 degrees one day and a sticky 90 the next. Fierce winds and parched conditions helped spread the blaze across 46 square miles, ultimately causing $8 million in damage and taxing the endurance of eight firefighting crews from as many states.

That Raisch and Poleto would be part of such a specialized undertaking does not surprise forestry professor Dennis F. Ringling, who said they epitomize the exemplary students who have come through Penn College’s associate-degree major in his four decades of teaching.

“If I could clone them I would,” he said. “They make my job easier and more rewarding.”

Given their wilderness workload, both would have welcomed such duplication.

“Sixty-hour weeks were the norm,” Poleto said. “One day, we actually hiked 20 miles. I helped build a dam, built two helicopter pads, carried large hose uphill forever. It’s not for the faint of heart.”  

“I helped build a dam, built two helicopter pads, carried large hose uphill forever. It’s not for the faint of heart.”

Angela M. Poleto, ’11, was among six Tiadaghton State Forest specialists – and two Penn College forest technology alumni – who helped contain the Stuart Creek 2 wildfire.

The call to battle fire in Alaska was the first out-of-state assignment for Samuel J. Raisch, ’10, a Tiadaghton State Forest specialist.
The specialists make a home away from home.

Firefighters work to tame the blaze on steep Alaskan terrain.

Battle-weary firefighters catch a rare moment of respite.

Snow-capped Denali towers in the horizon as firefighters stay focused on the task at hand.

By the time the Pennsylvania crew leaves Alaska, the fire is 57-percent contained.

On another morning, Raisch’s team was traveling by bus to a drop-off point when the steep forestry road got the better of the vehicle. “We carried 25-pound, 100-foot hose lengths up to a quarter-mile down this bulldozer line,” he said. “We had to build a ‘hose lay’ that was 3 miles long, plus safety zones. Eventually, we had an all-terrain vehicle bring in the hose and then we installed it because it became too far away to carry by hand.”

The abundant exercise was matched with a severe shortage of restfulness, thanks to the 24 hours of daily daylight in the Land of the Midnight Sun. “Sunset at 12 and sunrise three hours later, but it never actually got dark,” Poleto said. “And on top of that, a four-hour time difference.” Despite a strenuous schedule, sleep deprivation, climatic onslaught and meals-ready-to-eat, they would do it all again.

Raisch noted the variety of wildlife that crossed their path far from Penn’s Woods, including a large cow moose and indigenous birds such as the ptarmigan. “It was a nice experience,” added Poleto, particularly noting the snow-capped expanse of Denali National Park that dwarfed her beloved Allegheny foothills back home. “I didn’t get a chance to really enjoy the beautiful scenery because we were fighting fire the whole time, but it was easy enough to look up.”

By the time the Pennsylvania crews headed home, the fire was 57-percent contained. “We put a real dent in it,” Poleto said. Rain and higher humidity helped to control the fire, Raisch explained, and there was more air support than usual – the aforementioned helicopters dropping retardant and supplies.

Still, much of the success was at the weary hands of those on the ground. Success that wasn’t lost on the locals, gathered at a lunch counter in the evocatively named town of North Pole. “On our last day, we stopped at a diner,” Poleto said. “There were 20 of us on the bus, but there was no room inside so we left. Well, the whole place cleared out behind us, and I just thought it was ‘cause we hadn’t showered in a week. But this guy yelled, ‘Hey, come back. Everyone in there wants to give up their seats for you.’ It was really touching to hear, really nice to know that they were so grateful.”

“We saved that town from burning up – all those businesses and homes – and I helped.”
Saving History
Alumnus’s work preserves yesterday’s workmanship

When some look at a historic building, it is with appreciation for its craftsmanship or with visions of the events its walls have witnessed.

When Jeff Erdly views such a building, it is with keen knowledge of how it was constructed, how it breathes and how it ages. He sees the intimate details of its architecture, the traits of its materials and the effects of time.

His work mixes history, craftsmanship and a great deal of science.
“Everything that man constructs – everything that is organic – degrades with time,” explains Erdly, CEO and co-founder of Masonry Preservation Services Inc.

The concept is simple. Not as simple is Erdly’s work to stall nature’s relentless advances.

With technical expertise, he has helped to preserve the faces of some of the East Coast’s most stately buildings.

His portfolio includes Frank Lloyd Wright’s masterpiece Fallingwater, where his company performed repairs and restoration; the Jefferson Standard Building in Greensboro, N.C., one of the nation’s early skyscrapers; the Pennsylvania Capitol building, where the company determined where water – observed since 1950 – was entering the building and restored the deck below its dome; and, among his favorites, restoration of the iconic smokestack tower at the U.S. Penitentiary at Lewisburg – work that he calls “a world-class project” and that was named 2010 Historic Restoration Project of the Year by Masonry Construction magazine.

At Wyoming Seminary Preparatory School, Masonry Preservation Services restored buildings that have been used as dormitories since before the Civil War and are recorded in the National Register of Historic Places.

“The structures are nearly 170 years old,” Erdly said. “The work we did will take them well into the third century.”

Following the extensive restoration –

“It is amazing how much we focus on how much things cost versus how well they perform over the long term.”

Jeff Erdly, ’72, inspects exterior walls on Pennsylvania College of Technology’s Bush Campus Center. His company, Masonry Preservation Services Inc., also provided restoration work on the iconic French Renaissance-style tower at the U.S. Penitentiary in Lewisburg, at right.
One College Avenue

which garnered numerous awards – the buildings not only are testaments to the campus’s long history, but are also warm and comfortable spaces for the school’s stories to continue unfolding.

“That architecture becomes the essence of the institution,” Erdly said. “It makes me happy to think we had a part in that.”

Erdly’s company also provides inspection and maintenance for younger facades, and his work grows more challenging as the “state of the art” advances.

Some of the world’s most glorious constructions – Egyptian pyramids or Greek temples, for example – stood their ground for centuries. But those, Erdly points out, were built of massive blocks.

“Today, you take limited resources and try to make buildings lighter and thinner,” he said. “You add heating and cooling, and you put people inside.

“Not only do you have the rain outside, but you have human beings inside, and they give off a lot of moisture. Humidity travels in both directions. Brick absorbs a lot of moisture, and if it comes in, you have to take it back out.”

When you don’t, materials deteriorate, even crack. When brick and mortar crack, further damage threatens.

Few have Erdly’s intimate knowledge of how these processes work and how, like a physician, to diagnose and repair the damage. Those who do are, with Erdly, at the top of the field – renowned architects and engineers with advanced degrees and with whom Erdly has edited three compilation books on the field’s latest advances.

Yet, he says, “My total education is a two-year certificate – not even an associate degree from WACC. Which is the deal of the century when you consider what I paid.”

Erdly knows well that humble beginnings are just that: beginnings. Growing up, he watched his father, Carl, make the best of his sixth-grade education while supporting a wife and five children.

A lineman for Pennsylvania Power & Light (now PPL Electric Utilities), Carl while a student at Williamsport Area Community College, Jeff Erdly, ’72, had little time for an extracurricular life on campus. Like many of his classmates, he worked a full-time job in addition to his full-time class schedule.

Without much time to bond outside of class, classroom connections were paramount. The honors graduate recalls the genuine interest instructors like Chalmer Van Horn and Paul Jacobs showed in their students.

“They were instructors who really made a difference,” he said. “I’ve always thought that I’ve learned things here that have helped change my life.”

Erdly has gone on to earn many historic preservation awards with his company Masonry Preservation Services, a nationally recognized building-facade-repair contractor headquartered in the Bloomsburg area.

Active in ASTM International, he was instrumental in the 1997 formation of a committee to develop standards for inspecting building facades and has co-edited three “special technical publications” that compile papers detailing the latest advances in the field.

And he continues his connection with his alma mater, lending his expertise and establishing a scholarship in memory of his parents, Carl and Bonnie, who were unable to pursue higher education but nurtured their five children’s academic achievements.

In 2004, the college named Erdly its Distinguished Alumnus, an honor that recognizes personal and professional accomplishments, contributions toward furthering the efforts of the college, and the high regard in which the recipient is held in the community.

“When all the accolades, being named Distinguished Alumnus at Penn College meant a great deal to me,” he said.
Erdly eventually earned a managerial position.

“He was a well-read, self-educated man,” said Erdly, who endowed a Penn College scholarship in his parents’ memory in 2008, helping students for generations to come to receive the higher education his parents could not.

In 1970, ingrained with his father’s initiative, 18-year-old Erdly enrolled in WACC’s engineering drafting major and took a full-time, evening job with Turbotville Block Co. to pay his tuition.

“I did that because I wanted a chance to be more successful in my life,” Erdly explained.

“I had one instructor who knew how many hours I was working and graded me on projects I was doing for work instead of class projects,” he said. At work, he designed structural concrete members for large buildings.

At graduation, many of his classmates moved to Rochester, N.Y., to work for Eastman Kodak, or to Virginia to work for Newport News Shipbuilding (which still recruits Penn College students). But Erdly chose to remain with Turbotville Block Co., where he eventually became plant manager for the pre-stress division.

Craving room to grow, Erdly left the block company in 1978, sold cars for nine months to support his “two babies at home,” and in November 1979, he was hired by a Buffalo, N.Y.-based firm that had an office in Berwick. The company worked in preserving building envelopes.

There, he absorbed the workings of building preservation, observing technical advances and picturing how he could help the company improve its practices.

Striking out on his own

“I went to my manager and said, ‘We could do so much better,‘” Erdly recalled.

He was told, in short, that the company was already better than its competitors, that the management was happy with the level of his work, and that he should stop making waves.

On his way home from that Buffalo meeting, in a shop at the old Pittsburgh Airport terminal, Erdly spotted a book: “How to Start, Build and Finance Your Own Business.”

The price tag was $19.

“That was about two weeks’ worth of walking-around money for me,” said Erdly, who was raising his children as a single father.

“And I bought it. I still have it – it has hundreds of sticky notes, and it’s dog-eared.”

He wrote a business plan, shared it with two of his colleagues who said, “Me, too,” and incorporated Masonry Preservation Services in 1985. He later bought the partners out.

Cost versus value

Erdly’s business philosophy doesn’t typically mesh well with the competitive, “low-bid” environment he works in.

“It is amazing how much we focus on how much things cost versus how well they perform over the long term,” Erdly said.

He explains his business approach: “First, do excellent work. Second, bring the best technical knowledge of the day to the table. ... Our focus has always been to be the very best technically and ethically. I am always conscious about whether our employees have health care and whether they make enough to send their kids to college. If you live in a low-bid world, that’s not going to give you the lowest price.”

He acknowledges that many would say it’s reasonable to sacrifice quality or employee benefits to ensure a competitive price.

“I just can’t be part of that,” he said. A man whose business is preserving a prior generation’s workmanship, its tangible mark on the world, for future generations, he has a different perspective on “value.”

“It doesn’t matter how good it looks the day after it’s done,” Erdly said. “How does it look 10 years later?”

In conjunction with the college’s Centennial, Pennsylvania College of Technology is in the midst of a campaign to raise money for student scholarships. To support the Penn College Scholarship Campaign, donors are invited to establish a new, named scholarship or contribute to an existing scholarship fund or the Penn College General Scholarship fund. Call toll-free 1-866-GIVE-2-PC or visit oca.pct.edu/giving.

Your gift to an existing scholarship fund will be a tribute to the individual, family or business that originally established the scholarship. In addition, your gift will help that scholarship fund grow and ensure that it will continue to help students pursue “degrees that work.”
State Library

Until this permanent home was established in 2006, the college library moved frequently. From 1966 through 1968, it was housed at 1223 W. Fourth St., several blocks west of campus. From 1968 through 1981, the library was housed at 1201 W. Third St. In 1981, the college moved the library to a space that is now part of the Hager Lifelong Education Center.

SEVENTEEN KIOSKS, filled with archival photos and historical details, delineate Pennsylvania College of Technology’s new History Trail, an easy walking path around main campus. The trail invites visitors and alumni to acquaint – or reacquaint – themselves with the college.

MAIN ENTRANCE

Among the companies once located here were Spencer Heater, a division of Avco Lycoming; Lycoming Foundry; Claster Steel Co.; Lycoming Construction; and the last plant to operate on the site, PBI Industries, a structural steel fabricating firm that closed in 1985. The college purchased the property, removed the rusty skeleton of a massive, once-great industrial structure, and opened the campus to Maynard Street and the adjacent interstate highway.

ROGER & PEGGY MADIGAN LIBRARY

History Trail invites visitors to reminisce

Stroll Through Time

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ALVIN C. BUSH CAMPUS CENTER
This site once was home to W.D. Crooks and Sons, which crafted wood veneer doors for the White House, U.S. Capitol, Library of Congress, Pentagon, National Art Gallery and other public buildings from 1886 to 1971. Elizabeth (Crooks) Bush, daughter of one of the operators of the renowned door company, also was the wife of state Rep. Alvin C. Bush, who sponsored legislation to create Pennsylvania College of Technology and for whom the center is named.

HENRY G. HAGER
LIFELONG EDUCATION CENTER
For many years, this area behind Bardo Gymnasium was the Williamsport High School football field. The center, built in 1984, is home to the early childhood education program and the Dunham Children’s Learning Center, as well as laboratories for culinary, baking and pastry arts; architectural technology; and natural sciences, among others.

JOHN F. THOMPSON
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER
The center, designed and built by students, faculty and staff in 1986, hosts meetings, conferences, seminars and social events. "Boom wood" featured in the center’s interior is salvaged crib lumber from the 1880s, when Williamsport was known as the lumbering capital of the world. Many lumber-related businesses were located on the site, taking advantage of the area’s access to the Susquehanna River. Railroad tracks that served factories along the former Susquehanna Street once ran through the center of campus in the vicinity of this facility. >>
COLLEGE AVENUE LABS
Hon Industries Inc., one of the nation’s largest manufacturers of office furniture, purchased the Williamsport factory that now houses College Avenue Labs in 1983. Previously, the plant operated as J. K. Rishel Furniture Co., known for producing high-grade office furniture since the turn of the 20th century. In 2001, Hon Industries Inc. offered Penn College a generous gift-purchase agreement after announcing plans to close its Williamsport factory.

GEORGE S. KLUMP ACADEMIC CENTER
Opened in 1914 as Williamsport High School, the Klump Academic Center is the most historic landmark on campus. Adult vocational classes, held in the high school basement, led to the development of Williamsport Technical Institute (officially named in 1941), Williamsport Area Community College (1965), and Pennsylvania College of Technology (1989).
REMEMBRANCE GARDEN
Constructed in 2006, the garden is an area of respite and reflection near the site of a former campus and community landmark: a one-time trolley car building, known as “Unit 6,” which served many years as administrative headquarters of Williamsport Technical Institute and Williamsport Area Community College.

KENNETH E. CARL BUILDING TECHNOLOGIES CENTER
Carl, for whom the building is named, was the first president of Williamsport Area Community College. He spent much of his life connected to the institution. He was a Williamsport Technical Institute graduate who became a member of its drafting faculty and eventually its director. He was one of the architects of Pennsylvania’s community college system and served as WACC’s first president.

Web Extra
Preview the rest of the History Trail at oca.pct.edu/trail. Share your old photos at oca.pct.edu/photos.
Business & Hospitality

Chip D. Baumgardner, associate professor of business administration/management, presented a paper to the International Atlantic Economic Conference. His paper was titled “Elements of Effective Cooperative Learning for the Economics and Business Classes.” Additionally, Baumgardner’s paper titled “Using Simulations for Learning and Assessment” was accepted for publication in “Selected Papers From the 24th International Conference on College Teaching and Learning.” The paper was chosen as one of the 10 best of the conference.

Health Sciences

Edward A. Henninger, dean, served on a site-visit team evaluating a Florida university’s business school that is seeking accreditation status. Following a comprehensive review and discussion of the business school’s self-study report, he joined a three-member Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs’ team in a multiple-day, on-site evaluation.

John W. “J.J.” Magyar II, part-time instructor of paramedic technology, completed the requirements to maintain his designation as a Chief Fire Officer by the Center for Public Safety Excellence. The Chief Fire Officer designation is voluntary and is designed to recognize individuals who demonstrate their excellence in seven measured components: experience, education, professional development, professional contributions, association membership, community involvement and technical competencies.
“If life’s not a challenge, it’s not much of a life.”

From northwestern Pennsylvania to New York state, the 63-year-old assistant professor in Pennsylvania College of Technology’s physical fitness specialist major averaged a little more than 57 miles a day on his weekend fundraising trek. (He had two days of 61 miles each and one “short” day of 47.)

Ever health-conscious, Kodish calculated his average speed at 16.6 mph, with a caloric expenditure of about 3,500 per day – the equivalent of one pound of body fat.

All proceeds from the 11-county “Bike for Bear” benefited the LUNGevity Foundation, “Bear,” a nickname for his brother Raymond, died of lung cancer.

The west was also less hilly – not without exertion, but with no climbs for which Kodish’s training hadn’t prepared him. The unexpected waited until his penultimate day, when he was delayed by a serious car/truck accident that closed roads for almost two hours and required a medical helicopter.

“Teresa had stayed behind when I left, as she always did, to update her Facebook, letting folks know where we were and where we were heading that day. She saw all the emergency vehicles going by, with flashing lights and sirens, and of course thought it was me,” he said. “I had started riding back toward her when she drove up and, believe me, she breathed a big sigh of relief!”

That was also Kodish’s most difficult day on the bike. Due to the late start, temperatures were near 80 when he finally got under way – and the 61-mile stretch from Laceyville to Waymart included the most climbs of his trip.

“I was completely exhausted when I finished,” he said. “The bright spot was a surprise roadside visit from a longtime friend and former Kenn-Ton colleague, John Nolan, and his son, Aiden, who flagged me down just outside Towanda to give me a few words of encouragement and motivation. Teresa knew about John’s surprise and had kept it from me for three weeks!”

As tired as he was, no amount of fatigue could have prevented Kodish from finishing his ride the next day: a hot and humid 57-mile finale that took him across the Delaware River to his Port Jervis, N.Y., finish line.

He was as inspiring as he was inspired by the experience, drawing upon friends and family, his brother’s undying spirit, his students and campus colleagues, and his simple desire to achieve something that matters.

“I’m trying to make the most of my ‘dash,’” he said prior to the ride, referring to those years represented by the line between one’s birthdate and death. “My mother said, ‘You’re always challenging yourself.’ And I told her, ‘If life’s not a challenge, it’s not much of a life.’”

- Tom Wilson, writer/editor-PC Today

AS AN ATHLETE, COACH AND TEACHER, RONALD E. KODISH HAS MADE A LIFETIME commitment to keeping fit and staying healthy. That purposeful pursuit wound its easterly way along Route 6 over the summer, as enduring love fueled a memorial bicycle ride through the picturesque Northern Tier.

On July 25 – four years to the day since his brother, Raymond S., succumbed to lung cancer at age 60 – Kodish embarked on a 404-mile journey in “Bear’s” honor. His wife, Teresa, an elementary teacher in the Keystone Central School District, followed him with the family dogs and a pop-up tent, setting up a home away from home at a strategically chosen chain of campgrounds.

“My life is not a challenge, it’s not much of a life.”

Faculty member Ronald E. Kodish, left, took on a 404-mile “Bike for Bear” to benefit the LUNGevity Foundation. “Bear,” a nickname for his brother Raymond, died of lung cancer.

Industrial, Computing & Engineering Technologies

Asesh K. Das, who retired in August 2012 as a professor of computer science, presented the paper, “Capstone Courses as Software Engineering Disciplines With IEEE 1471,” during the IEEE Southeastern Conference in Jacksonville, Fla. The paper, co-written by Das and Michael K. Layton – who graduated in August 2011 with a Bachelor’s degree in information technology: web and applications development concentration – includes portions of Layton’s senior project that was completed in 2010 for a class with Das.

Sciences, Humanities & Visual Communications

Five faculty members presented at the Pennsylvania Sociological Society’s 63rd annual meeting, held at Penn College.

Abdul B. Pathan, professor of economics, presented a paper titled “Grameen Bank and Its Social and Economic Role in Developing Countries.” Four faculty members engaged in a panel discussion titled “Post-Modernist Thinking and Social Activism: Are They Incompatible?” – Vinay Bahl, associate professor of sociology; Roy P. Fontaine, professor of psychology; Craig A. Miller, assistant professor of history/political science; and Richard Sahn, instructor of psychology/sociology.

Kelly B. Butzler, associate professor of chemistry, co-presented a session at the Middle Atlantic Discovery Chemistry Project’s 2013 meeting. The session, presented with Lolita A. Paff, assistant professor of business economics at Penn State Berks, was titled “Flip Your Class! Strategies and Student Reactions to a Flipped Classroom.” Butzler also presented a symposium titled “Flipping the Classroom in the STEM Disciplines” at the National Science Foundation’s GK-12 Building Bridges: Capstone Conference in Lubbock, Texas. >>
Rob Cooley, assistant professor of anthropology and environmental science, presented a program on Loyalsock Creek's watershed and the human impacts that offset stream dynamics at a meeting of the Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association.

Matthew R. Eisley, part-time instructor of chemistry, presented “Early Stages of the Implementation of a Flipped Classroom” at the 2013 Meeting of the Middle Atlantic Discovery Chemistry Project, held at Penn State Berks. The presentation was part of a panel discussion titled “The Flipped Classroom: Applications and Examples – College and High School.”

David L. Evans, professor of biology (anatomy and physiology), received the 2013 President’s Medal from the Human Anatomy and Physiology Society. Evans was lauded for his contributions as the content developer and editor of “What’s New in A&P,” a weekly feature on the society’s website.

Nancy A. Grausam, assistant professor of education and early childhood education, was reaffirmed as an approved professional development instructor in the Pennsylvania Quality Assurance System for an additional five years. Professional development instructors are certified by the Pennsylvania Keys to Professional Development.

Thomas C. Heffner, assistant dean, joined the Education Department Alumni Panel at Juniata College. Each fall, Juniata’s Alumni Office and academic departments identify distinguished graduates and invite them to return to campus to share their experiences with other alumni, current students and families.

Abdul B. Pathan, professor of economics, was selected for inclusion in “Who’s Who in America 2014.” Additionally, he chaired two panels at the Pennsylvania Economic Association Annual Conference. In one of the sessions, he presented his paper “Making the Principles of Economics Class Interesting to Your Students.” He also chaired and was a discussant on a “Student Session” panel that featured papers written by five university students.

Carrie L. Shaner, director, was voted chair-elect of the Nurse-Directed Health Services Section of the American College Health Association. Shaner will assist the current chair of the section at the annual ACHA meeting in San Antonio, Texas, in June and will assume full chairmanship at the association’s 2015 meeting in Orlando, Fla.

Kristi L. Hammaker, health and fitness specialist, was designated as a Certified Health Education Specialist by the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing Inc. The certification is the culmination of two years of classes at Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania and a written examination.

Carl J. Bower Jr., instructor; Dennis P. Skinner, assistant professor; and Justin Shelinski, laboratory assistant, served as judges for state FFA Activities Week held at Penn State. Bower and Skinner judged the Public Speaking-Conservation category of Career Development Events, while Shelinski judged Floriculture entries. Bower also judged the Nursery & Landscape event, for which he serves as co-chair.

The department received third-place honors in a competition sponsored by In-Plant Graphics and the In-Plant Printing and Mailing Association for a poster that promoted a Student Activities bus trip to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. The printing was supervised by Raymond J. Fischer Jr., manager of document services, and printed by Jody L. Fausey, pressroom production specialist. It was designed by Jennifer A. George, student affairs information specialist.
1970s

Thomas M. Holsinger, ’70, engineering drafting technology, retired from PennDOT as a GIS coordinator in March 2013. He resides in Roaring Spring.

LaRue S. VanZile, ’70, civil engineering technology, is a senior project manager in energy services within RETTEW’s environmental engineering group. A registered professional engineer and professional land surveyor, VanZile holds a bachelor’s degree in water resources engineering and a master’s degree in environmental pollution control, both from Penn State. He resides in Mainsburg.

William E. Davis, ’71, electrical construction, is retired and residing in Folsom, Calif.

Tom M. Levett, ’73, toolmaking technology, is a machinist-millwright at Westinghouse/Curtiss Wright, where he has been employed for 37 years. He has completed two four-year apprenticeships, first operating metal-turning equipment and later becoming a millwright. An Eagle Scout, he also owns two businesses: Easy Excavating and Landscaping, and The Golf Car Pit Stop. He resides in New Kensington.

Thomas E. Baird, ’77, business management, is territory manager for Yeager Supply Inc., of Reading. He markets pipe valves and fittings in northcentral Pennsylvania and resides in Montoursville.

1980s

Chris R. Rounsville, ’84, computer information systems, is president of Dataquest Inc. in Harrisburg, where he resides.

Laura (Press) Kinney, ’85, accounting, has worked as a human resources consultant and most recently was director of human resources in a government contracting environment supporting Department of Defense teams. She resides in Sterling, Va.

Vickie (Householder) Huska, ’86, nursery management, owns her own business maintaining private landscapes and gardens. She resides in Seven Valleys.

1990s

Chris Weber, ’92, welding technology, is chief of the Oakland Township Volunteer Fire Department in Dempseytown, where he resides. He is also a volunteer forest fire warden with the state Bureau of Forestry for Oakland Township.


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

Donna M. (Cooper) Wagner, ’96, office assistant, is an administrative assistant for the Selinsgrove Area School District. She resides in Freeburg.

Deanna J. Trick, ’97, applied human services; ’95, human services, is a psychological services specialist for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections in Muncy. She resides in Hughesville.

Kendra L. Sheard, ’98, occupational therapy assistant, is a registered occupational therapist for University of Virginia Translational Care Hospital. She resides in Fishersville, Va.

Ryan Schramm, ’99, culinary arts technology, is the alpine director at Ragged Mountain Resort. He resides in Warner, N.H.

2000s

Ryan M. Buffington, ’00, accounting, is a controller for Hinkle Contracting Co. in Lexington, Ky., where he resides.

Matthew Light, ’01, printing and publishing production, is an account executive for Offset Impressions Inc. in Reading. He resides in West Lawn.

Richard V. Baus III, ’02, construction management, is senior project manager/estimator for Brightline Construction in Bensalem. He resides in Allentown.

Joshua A. Bonner, ’02, advertising art, is associate director of marketing communications at Wilkes University. He plans to graduate from Penn College in 2014 with a Bachelor of Science in web design and multimedia.

Amanda Scott, ’02, technology management; ’00, baking & pastry arts, is a chef instructor at YTI Career Institute. She resides in York.

David J. DiAscro, ’03, culinary arts technology, is a food service manager for the Commonwealth of Virginia-Virginia State Police. He resides in Richmond, Va.

When Gavin Snyder was a senior at Troy Area Junior/Senior High School, he was tasked with researching three careers. He chose IndyCar mechanic, NASA mechanic and heavy construction equipment technician. Enticing as the options seemed, at the end of his assignment, he gave thumbs down to NASA and the racing circuit because he didn’t want to travel. He soon chose to pursue a degree in heavy construction equipment technology: technician emphasis at Penn College.

Today he chuckles at the irony. He’s climbed the Great Wall of China, fished for hours in Mexico, walked Red Square in Moscow, hunted in Africa, and toured Peru and Chile.

A service technician for Schramm Inc., the 2005 graduate travels the world to fix machines and teach people in both classrooms and the drilling field about the equipment he maintains.

“I was the first tech my company ever hired,” Snyder said. “My company had a plan set: For one year, I would work in the factory, then move to service. After six months, I impressed them so much, I started going on the road for service.”

Eight years later, Snyder has seen a good portion of the globe. Asked where he pictures himself in five to 10 years, he quipped: “Well, I did ask my CEO if the moon was an option, and he said, ‘Maybe.’”

During a work trip, Gavin Snyder, ’05, visits the Great Wall of China.
Randall W. Hartman, ’03, automotive technology management, is an auto claim section manager for State Farm Insurance Companies. He resides in Gig Harbor, Wash.

Matthew R. Fry, ’04, broadcast communications, is a machinist at Metalynx. He resides in Ossian, Ind.

Maureen P. (Benfer) Plotts, ’05, floral design/interior plantscape, is a pest technician for Ecolab Pest Elimination, where she provides licensed commercial pest elimination services. She resides in Muncy.

Dusty J. (Brooks) Zeyn, ’05, legal assistant-paralegal studies, is an assistant director of housing at Mansfield University. She resides in Wellsboro.

Stefanie Beskoveyny, ’06, legal assistant-paralegal studies, is an assistant city attorney for the City of Port St. Lucie. She resides in Palm City, Fla.

Mallory L. (Shaw) Ditz, ’06, occupational therapy assistant, is a clinical use evaluation project assistant at Geisinger. She resides in Bloomsburg.

Joshua Fox, ’06, civil engineering technology, is a water and wastewater regional service group manager for Herbert, Rowland & Grubic Inc. Fox is a captain and the commanding officer for Pennsylvania Army National Guard, Company 3/103 AR in Lewisburg. His citations include the Bronze Star for meritorious service. He was accepted into Leadership Harrisburg Area’s Community Leadership Series. He resides in Susquehanna Township.

Tara L. Hiepler, ’06, construction management, ’04, architectural technology, is a pre-construction manager for I.B. Abel Inc., an electrical and communication contractor. She resides in Lancaster.

Eric Kahler, ’06, civil engineering technology and surveying technology, is a transportation construction inspector for PennDOT. He resides in Jersey Shore.

Sean M. Stabler, ’06, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a business development engineer for Arkema Inc., an international specialty chemicals company, and completed a Master of Science in materials science and engineering at Drexel University in 2011. He resides in Pottstown.

Anthony Flint, ’07, business administration: management information systems, is an event sales specialist for Quint Events, the direct partner of the NFL, NBA, Churchill Downs, Circuit of the Americas Formula One, and Formula One Worldwide Paddock Club Access. He works with executives looking to entertain their clients at the Super Bowl, the Pro Bowl, Formula One and the Kentucky Derby.

Eric Kramer, ’07, information technology: information technology security specialist, is a senior analyst at Blue Canopy, where he is a security contractor in the federal sector. He resides in Arlington, Va.

Kyle Evans, ’08, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a research and development chemist at Sylvin Technologies Inc. He resides in Red Lion.

Chris Lamberti, ’08, business administration: management; ’06, business management, is a schematic analyst at Ahold USA. He resides in Mechanicsburg.

Erin E. Brown, ’09, baking and pastry arts and culinary arts and systems, is a catering supervisor at Lycoming College in Williamsport. She is employed by Parkhurst Dining, which provides food service management to colleges, universities, businesses and special venues. She resides in Lock Haven.

Mark R. Capellazzi, ’09, culinary arts and systems, is an admissions representative at Penn College. He received a Master of Science in college student personnel administration from Canisius College in 2013. He resides in Williamsport.

Tom Garrett, ’09, information technology: information security specialist, is a software engineer for MSCI in Conshohocken. He resides in Jeffersonville.

Justin J. Kovaleski, ’09, construction management, is a director, business development for Eastern PCM. He resides in Harrisburg.

Rose (Larsen) Mumbauer, ’09, technology management; ’05, dietary manager technology and individual studies, was elected to serve as director of Charitable & Education Trust for the Sons of Italy Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. She resides in Montoursville and works in sales/purchasing for Air Parts of Lock Haven.

Tyler L. Tessier, ’09, ornamental horticulture: landscape technology, is a commercial maintenance manager at J.B. Kline Landscaping, where he handles sales, hour tracking, training, safety and crew management. He resides in Damascus, Md.

Justin P. Albert, ’10, culinary arts technology, is the owner/executive chef of Timeless Memories Catering and founded a landscaping company, Unique Horticultural Lawn Services. He resides in Winfield.

Charles M. Ashburn, ’10, welding and fabrication engineering technology, is a manager-welding engineering for UTLX Manufacturing. He resides in Pineville, La.

Lauren M. Edgell, ’10, applied health studies, is a coordinator of online learning for Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences. She received a Master of Science in Education from California State University East Bay in 2013. She resides in Elizabethtown.

Lindsey Fackler, ’10, nursing, is a registered nurse at Penn State Hershey Medical Center, where she is an intensive care unit nurse, charge nurse and skin resource nurse. She holds specialty certification in critical care nursing and is pursuing a Master of Science in nursing education from Millersville University. She resides in York Haven.

Amy S. Dibble, ’11, business administration: banking and finance, is a credit analyst for Chemung Canal Trust Co. and is pursuing a Master of Business Administration from Baker College. She resides in Tioga.

Rebecca (Lawell) Krzan, ’11, dental hygiene, is a registered dental hygienist at Dentistry for Kids. She resides in Moon Township.

Ty Rhinehart, ’11, welding and fabrication engineering technology, is a weld engineer for John Deere. He resides in Ottumwa, Iowa.

Maria (Bova) Strohl, ’11, dental hygiene: health policy and administration; ’07, dental hygiene, is a dental hygienist at Gentle Dental and a wellness educator and representative for JuicePlus+. She resides in Pompano Beach, Fla.

Bryce K. Bingaman, ’12, computer aided drafting technology, is a computer aided drafter for Wood-Metal Industries. He resides in Sunbury.

Brian M. Gottschall, ’12, business administration: human resource management, is a business manager for Fairfield Honda. He resides in Williamsport.

John M. Kriner, ’12, construction management, is a field engineer for Hensel Phelps. He resides in Frederick, Md.

Kevin Pannebakker, ’12, aviation maintenance technology, is an aircraft maintenance technician for Keystone Aerial Surveys in Philadelphia. He resides in Mont Clare.

Miranda L. Patt, ’12, occupational therapy assistant, is a licensed, certified occupational therapy assistant for Functional Pathways. She resides in Wellsboro.

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She resides in Williamsport.

Danielle N. Carr, ’13, graphic communications management, is a screen printer at In Stitches. She resides in Jersey Shore.

Alison R. Erb, ’13, surgical technology, is employed by Susquehanna Health as a certified surgical technologist at Muncy Valley Hospital. She resides in Williamsport.

Helen M. Frye-Lewis, ’13, nursing, is employed by Geisinger. She resides in Muncy.

Shiryl Keiser-McCarty, ’13, human services, is the community inclusion coordinator for Roads to Freedom. She resides in Williamsport.

Renee E. Kerns, ’13, health information technology, is a front desk coordinator at River Valley Regional YMCA-Jersey Shore Branch. She resides in Linden.

Allyson Lynch O’Malley, ’13, technology management, is an appraiser apprentice with EAC Valuations LLC, working toward her Certified General Appraiser License. She resides in King of Prussia.

Karen J. Miller, ’13, dental hygiene: health policy and administration, ’11, dental hygiene, is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in intercultural studies: international development at North Central University. She resides in Minneapolis.

Eric Speer, ’13, welding and fabrication engineering technology, is a welding engineer/sales representative for R.N. Goss Gas Products Co. He resides in Franklin.

Joshua A. Bonner, ’02, advertising art, and his wife, Aurora, welcomed a son, Julien A., on March 11, 2013. They reside in Tunkhannock.


Maureen P. Benfer, ’05, floral design/interior plantscape, married Justin Plotts in April 2012. The couple resides in Muncy. She may be reached at faerydustcollector@gmail.com.

Dusty J. (Brooks) Zeyn, ’05, legal assistant-paralegal studies, and her husband, Joshua, welcomed a child, Madison E., on Oct. 28, 2011. They reside in Wellsboro.


Alissa Hinkal, ’06, applied human services, welcomed a son, Shane, on May 29, 2012. She resides in Danville.

Eric Kahler, ’06, civil engineering technology and surveying technology, and his wife, Kayla, welcomed a son, Brady, on Sept. 10, 2013. They reside in Jersey Shore.

Jason LaPenna, ’06, electronics engineering technology, and his wife, Amanda, welcomed their second son, Anthony, on Dec. 24, 2011. They reside in Bristol.


Sean M. Stabler, ’06, plastics and polymer engineering technology, and his wife, Taryn, welcomed a son, Finn Calvin, on Aug. 12, 2013. The family resides in Pottstown.


Amber Bubb, ’08, surgical technology, married Christopher Snyder, ’09, paramedic technician, on Sept. 24, 2011. The couple resides in Montoursville.

Matt Friedhaber, ’08, HVAC technology, married Libby Haussener on June 22, 2013. The couple resides in Glenshaw.

Deandra M. Lupacchino, ’08, baking and pastry arts, and Francis D. Nevill, ’09, electronics engineering technology, welcomed a daughter, Amelia, on March 8, 2013. They reside in Lock Haven.

Derek S. Garner, ’09, civil engineering technology, married Lindsay R. Scheurer in April 2012. They reside in Jersey Shore.


Rebecca Lawell, ’11, dental hygiene, married Matthew Krzan, ’12, residential construction technology management, in September 2013. The couple resides in Moon Township.

Trisha M. Moser, ’11, nursing, married Vince S. Cahill in February 2013 and resides in Montgomery.

John M. Kriner, ’12, construction management, and his wife, Caitlin, welcomed a son, Matthew J., on May 10, 2013. They reside in Frederick, Md.

Kevin Pannebakker, ’12, aviation maintenance technology, married Sarah Boyd in May 2013. The couple resides in Mont Clare.
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