LIVING LANDMARK

College welds walls for Vatican project

SEE PAGE 12
Making Makers

Makers from all majors learn from one another as they bring ideas to life in The Dr. Welch Workshop: A Makerspace at Penn College.

Designer of Signs

Work is a thrill ride for industrial designer Cory D. Karges, ‘14, whose work for Sign Producers Inc. is seen by millions at theme parks Universal, Disney and others.

Trading Uniforms

With spring sports canceled and classes moved online, athletes trade jerseys for scrubs.

Living Landmark

A plant-laden open-air chapel, with walls fabricated by Penn College faculty and students, is bound for the World Heritage Site home of the patron saint of ecology.

Responding With Resolve

Penn College’s community of problem solvers rises to the challenges posed by COVID-19.
College to offer building performance training in western PA
Pennsylvania College of Technology’s National Sustainable Structures Center is adding a training site in Westmoreland County to enhance its delivery of building science and energy efficiency training for the U.S. Department of Energy’s Weatherization Assistance Program.

The leased 7,500-square-foot facility in Latrobe will enable the center to offer the same services provided in Williamsport. NSSC is contracted by the state Department of Community and Economic Development to provide certification training and testing to building performance professionals.

Learn more at www.pct.edu/nssc.

Veteran cultural arts, fundraising executive to head Community Arts Center
Following an extensive search, the Community Arts Center Board of Directors selected Chuck Still to become executive director of the center, a wholly owned subsidiary of Pennsylvania College of Technology that has served 1.5 million guests for more than 1,000 productions since opening in 1993.
Still comes to the Community Arts Center from the Midtown Arts & Theater Center Houston in Texas, where he oversaw the startup of the facility and helped complete a $25 million capital campaign as MATCH’s founding executive director.

From 2008-14, Still was founding executive director of the Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center (“The Kate”) in Old Saybrook, Connecticut. Prior to that, Still served as executive director of Riverside Theatre, Vero Beach, Florida.

IT student presents at conference
Sophomore Carson D. Seese co-presented “Hands-On Writing Malware in Go” at Security B-Sides DC, an annual regional open security conference for and by information security practitioners.

Seese, a Dean’s List student, is seeking a bachelor’s degree in information assurance and cyber security. He co-presented with Stuart McMurray of IronNet Cybersecurity, a worldwide leader in network traffic analysis. Seese worked with McMurray during his summer internship.

Seese wrote two of the software libraries referenced during the session and created most of the slides. The 30-minute presentation outlined the steps to write malware with Go, an open source programming language developed at Google.

Forestry grad facilitates equipment donation
Thanks to the resourcefulness of December graduate Michael S. Shreiner, now employed full time by his family’s business, Shreiner Tree Care, forest technology students at Penn College’s Schneebeli Earth Science Center will have access to a 150XP Bandit Tree Chipper that the alumnus solicited from the manufacturer.

“Industry donations like this are so important to the programs they serve, but what makes this donation special to us is that it was initiated by a student who saw a need for his program,” said Justin W. Beishline, assistant dean of diesel technology and natural resources. “Michael paved the way for future students to have what he thought would enhance the program. He, Stephenson Equipment and Bandit all went out of their way to make sure our forestry students have the opportunity to learn from one of the best chippers on the market.”

Over 500 students and more than 500 ceramic tiles in the making, another stunning example of Penn College art is complete and ready for rave reviews and views.

“It was my idea to have students make something to leave behind as part of a permanent art piece,” said David A. Stabely, instructor of ceramics and wood sculpture, who started the project with students in Fall 2013. “It’s an interesting idea of working on a group project over such a long period of time.”

The ceramics sensation adorns a wall in the north stairwell of the Bush Campus Center.

PHOTO COURTESY OF RICK MASON PHOTOGRAPHY
Penn College Army ROTC cadet Austin S. Weinrich (right), of Jenkintown, receives the RECONDO badge for displaying superior skills at Advanced Camp. Held at Fort Knox, Kentucky, Advanced Camp is considered ROTC’s most significant training experience, and successful completion is a requirement to earn a commission as an Army officer. Weinrich was one of 14 cadets out of approximately 600 in the 4th Regiment to receive the RECONDO Badge. Presenting the RECONDO badge is Brig. Gen. Antonio V. Munera.

“Every day I was faced with a new problem, and, as a leader, I quickly discovered that it was my duty to be the all-around problem-solver,” Weinrich said. “Overall, my Advanced Camp experience revealed to me that I want to be challenged in my future career and that I want to be assigned to the difficult tasks because I am confident in my abilities as a leader and problem-solver.”

Weinrich was among eight Bald Eagle Battalion Army ROTC cadets commissioned as second lieutenants in mid-May.

Members of the Penn College Family across the globe used their skills in a variety of ways to help others during the global pandemic, including graphic design alumna Eliza R. Whyman, ’17, a designer at MediaCom in Manchester, England. Whyman designed and illustrated six visually appealing brain teasers for Brits to enjoy during shelter-in-place orders. She and her MediaCom teammates produced the colorful creations for their client Plumbs, a 60-year-old reupholstery company in the United Kingdom. They were so popular, they were republished by large media outlets across the U.K. and in the Netherlands, Spain, Australia, Malaysia and Singapore.

“I was surprised it reached so far. … I was glad to see so many people having fun and engaging with my work,” she said.

A dual citizen of the U.K. and U.S., Whyman relocated to England shortly after graduating from Penn College and landed a job at MediaCom within a month. Whyman says her Penn College education “thoroughly prepared” her for a successful and rewarding career in the demanding graphic design profession.

“I like being a graphic designer because of how I can be creative and feel confident in my work, knowing I’ve followed the rules of design. It’s defined and ordered creativity,” she said.

See more “Penn College Family” profiles at family.pct.edu
It was an easy decision for two Pennsylvania College of Technology student-athletes, despite the mixed emotions following the cancellation of their sports seasons due to the coronavirus pandemic in early March. They would trade one uniform for another.

Sophomores Connor Burke and Gillian Sinnott returned home when Spring Break was extended, traded in their baseball and softball jerseys for scrubs, and immediately went to work in their respective health service fields, Burke as an emergency room technician in Pottsville, and Sinnott as an aide at a nursing home near her hometown of Sykesville, Maryland.

“I was in a position to help make a difference,” Burke, a nursing student, said. “It was an easy decision to help out during this difficult time.”

Sinnott, who is also majoring in nursing, had similar sentiments and left for work almost immediately after she returned home. Her father, who works at the same facility, told her that the nursing home already had some COVID-19 cases, and Sinnott dropped her belongings off at her house and went right to work.

“I want to be able to help people that can’t fully help themselves,” Sinnott explained. “I would want my parents to be cared for in that situation, so I want to help other people’s parents be cared for and stay safe.”

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Sinnott, who aids the staff in serving and caring for residents, had her work plans deterred when her mother, who works at a different nursing home, tested positive for COVID-19. All three Sinnotts quarantined themselves for 14 days. Her mother made a full recovery from mild symptoms, and Sinnott and her father tested negative for the virus.

Burke works three eight-hour shifts per week from 11 p.m.—7 a.m. He works alongside doctors and nurses completing basic, but critical, tasks such as preparing patients for operations, drawing blood and taking vital signs.

“It was pretty packed the first few days when I returned,” Burke said of the emergency room. “It was in the early stages of the virus, and we had the normal cases we generally see in the ER and people with COVID symptoms. Once quarantine was imposed and the overall numbers of people infected in the area came down, it’s been less busy.”

Both students had their sports seasons cut short in March when the decision was made to cancel the remainder of the spring season. Burke’s baseball team was off to a 5-5 start — including three straight wins during its Spring Break trip to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, while Sinnott’s softball team was 5-4 during the trip. The baseball team had already completed its week when it was told of the decision, while the softball team still had two games to play.

“Everyone was bummed,” Burke said of his team’s reaction. “We were off to a good start, put a lot of work in with practices and workouts and developed relationships among the team. We wanted to continue what we started, play for a conference championship and play together as a team.”

Sinnott and Burke both see the similarities in being a member of an athletics team and part of a team in the health field. Communication, teamwork, sacrifice and adaptability are skills reinforced by sports and transferred into the workforce.

“Working as a team is a huge thing in the health field,” Sinnott said. “Everything will not always go the way that you might expect, and you need to be able to rely on those around you. Knowing that you have a team behind you makes all the difference.”

ATHLETES SWAP CANCELED SPRING SPORTS FOR HEALTH CARE WORK

The Wildcats reached the North Eastern Athletic Conference postseason for the first time in program history. Ben Sosa closed his four-year career with 1,286 points, securing fourth place on the Penn College men’s scoring list. Sosa, who averaged 17.3 points and 7.7 rebounds per game in 29 games, also earned All-NEAC Second Team honors, which was the highest all-conference selection in program history. Elijah Vazquez, who transferred from the Community College of Rhode Island, concluded his overall collegiate career with 1,374 points – 634 of them in a Wildcat uniform.

SASSY Kuhns earned 12.2 points and eight rebounds per game, while Ja’Quela Dyer averaged 8.5 points and 9.2 rebounds. The team ended its first season under coach Britni Mohney with its most wins (seven) since 2014-15.

BASEBALL

Penn College was 5-5 before its season was halted by the coronavirus pandemic. Brittan Kittle earned NEAC Player of the Week honors in the Wildcats’ only week of the season.

PAUL Heritage was named Scholar-Athlete of the Year; Brittan Kittle (baseball) and Morgan Heritage (softball) earned Scholar-Athletes of the Year; and Ryan Bauer (wrestling) and Sloane Tressler (women’s soccer) were named Newcomers of the Year.
IN DR. WELCH WORKSHOP, STUDENTS SHARE WHAT THEY KNOW AND ABSORB WHAT THEY DON’T

by Tom Wilson, writer/editor-PC Today

Students Barbara J. LeGeyt, left, welding and fabrication engineering technology; Anthony F. O’Koren, center, applied technology studies; and Mason Peters, applied management and heating, ventilation & air conditioning technology, learn and lead using equipment in The Dr. Welch Workshop: A Makerspace at Penn College.

B lack walnut and cherry, milled just over the mountain at Pennsylvania College of Technology’s Schneebeli Earth Science Center, cascade to the floor in ribbon curls as Mason Peters wield his favorite gouge on the turning lathe.

At a nearby computer numerical control router that he assembled, Anthony F. O’Koren watches as programmed letters are cut into a slab of wood, forming a fitting mantra for his surroundings: “Learn the unknown. Make the unseen. Teach the unspeakable.”

On the other side of the wall, Barbara J. LeGeyt delivers a mandatory safety lecture before teaching metal inert gas welding to a pair of fellow students.

It’s a beehive of activity on any given day at The Dr. Welch Workshop: A Makerspace at Penn College, student-designed and dedicated in August 2018 as an impetus to collegewide innovation and collaboration.

This particular afternoon includes a parade of makers often gathers in the hall, and weekly themed sessions are offered to the campus at large on topics from rubber mold making to centuries-old Vietnamese embroidery technique.

“I have seen students waiting for it to open up, and there always seems to be activity. It has a good balance of crafty, friendly working areas and a heavy-duty fabrication shop,” says Thomas E. Ask, professor of industrial design and – like Gregory – an early proponent of bringing the maker movement to Penn College.

The makerspace is named in memory of Dr. Marshall Welch Jr., a local orthodontist with a knack for tinkering and a penchant for philanthropy. It is outfitted with equipment provided by a roster of patrons the boost of confidence to bring even the wildest ideas to life.

“Are you sure you’ve never done this?” her impressed instructor inquired – and swiveling her head to traffic.

In the process can be of greater importance than the object’s utility. The world of hands-on design teaches the heroics of the nail gun, the intimacy of the soldering iron, the magic of casting and the crunching sound of failure,” Ask wrote. “Makers know the dance of deep thinking and wonderful journeys.”

LeGeyt’s journey began on a backh hampered, Connecticut, horse farm and included a side trip to Davenport, Iowa, where she served a summer internship with John Deere. She learned to stick-weld during a course at her high school, overcoming the fear of burning down the shop and running a serviceable rookie bead on a lap joint.

“You have to be inspired to instruct others,” her impressed instructor inquired – and LeGeyt, she says, “became my thing.”

LeGeyt has combined her natural ability with her equestrian background for a crafty side hustle, repurposing worn horseshoes into wine racks, decorative four-leaf clover vases, welding favors – even a Christmas tree.

She and several classmates developed the makerspace welding curriculum, with...
a PowerPoint presentation on proper precautions before moving to small-group instruction in the dedicated space. Pursuing a bachelor’s degree in welding and fabrication engineering technology, she would like to teach when she’s done working in her chosen field.

She is, in a word, unfazed about meeting qualifications: “If I can coordinate a 5-year-old on a pony, I can handle college students.”

Equally at home in sharing his expertise is Peters, a 2018 graduate in heating, ventilation and air conditioning from Shickshinny, who is heating, ventilation and air conditioning expertise is Peters, a 2018 graduate in heating, ventilation and air conditioning from Shickshinny, who is...
It’s two days before Christmas. Pennsylvania College of Technology’s campus is still, save for the sparks illuminating the expansive welding facility and a “once in a lifetime” project.

Inside, a handful of faculty forgo the serenity of winter break to tackle a tight deadline. On this day, like many before and after, they meticulously measure and cut a seemingly endless supply of aluminum. The resulting pieces are arranged before one of thousands of welds joins them together, forming a geometric symphony of angles. The dedicated instructors are fabricating the foundation of a dream meant to enlighten for generations.

During a 10-week window, nine welding instructors and 15 students worked a collective 3,500-plus hours and used an aluminum supply that could be stretched for nearly a mile to birth the Living Chapel. The Penn College contingent built the four walls that make up the structural framework for the modular spiritual sanctuary, unveiled in May at the Botanical Garden of Rome and online at www.livingchapel.com as part of Global Catholic Climate Movement activities, United Nations World Environment Day celebrations and the U.N. Trillion Tree Campaign.

Made from recyclable and repurposed materials and integrating art, music, architecture and nature, the Living Chapel is a sacred space that encourages acts of ecological restoration. The project is inspired by the United Nations 2030 sustainable development agenda and Pope Francis’ 2015 encyclical “Laudato Si’,” the papal letter that calls safeguarding the planet an “urgent priority.”

Once COVID-19 pandemic social-distancing rules are relaxed, the Living Chapel will be placed at the Vatican before being moved to its permanent location in Assisi, Italy, the birthplace of St. Francis, whose small church provided the footprint for the Living Chapel.

“I don’t think it’s sunk in yet, what it’s going to mean to everybody,” said James N. Colton II, assistant professor of welding, who led the Penn College fabrication team. “It’s definitely a big deal.”

In the Living Chapel’s final form, more than half of the structural skeleton fabricated by Penn College is hidden. Three of the sections are covered with a mix of 3,000 evergreen leaves and flowers inserted into recycled fleece fabric stapled to PVC boards that are bolted to the aluminum walls. Most of the metal is exposed as a visual element for the fourth wall. It features discarded, small steel pans serving as “drums,” stamped steel automotive scrap repurposed into decorative metal screens, and suspended cross cutouts made of metal waste.

The section is called the “Chime Wall,” because the hung crosses chime when moved by the wind.

According to organizers, nature will engulf the senses of those who visit the open-air chapel. The swirling design of the flowers and light reflecting from the crosses will color their view. The aroma emanating from the perennials will encourage them to inhale life. Vertically stacked steel pan drums – struck by mallets powered by water – produce a

**The Living Chapel measures about 45 feet long by 30 feet wide, with heights ranging between 10 and 15 feet. The structure will remain at the Botanical Garden of Rome until social distancing rules permit a stay at the Vatican before being moved to its permanent location in Assisi, Italy.**

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together and move several times. The jigsaw puzzle of trying to figure out how that would work was intriguing.”

The uniqueness of the project led Denney to seek support from one of her Penn State mentors, James Kalsbeek, associate professor of architecture, who has been involved with the Department of Architecture’s study abroad program in Rome since 1991. In late summer, Kalsbeek hand-picked a small team, comprised mostly of graduate students and research assistants, to provide design support with the intent of fabricating and building the entire chapel at University Park.

“Those early sketches were a little rough,” Kalsbeek said. “I think the complexity, the design, the shadows, the layers, the metal work were not quite represented.”

The sketches morphed into a detailed, 250-page construction document that guided the work of Penn College welding faculty and students after Kalsbeek realized that Penn State didn’t possess the resources to fabricate the walls.

Penn College enjoys a long history with the architecture program at Penn State. Each year, Penn State Stuckeman School students — including Denney in 2002 — receive hands-on building experience by visiting the college’s masonry lab to cut stone and lay brick.

Kalsbeek’s request in September to extend the opportunity to Penn College’s welding and metal fabrication department was well-timed. The college recently opened its expanded $5,000-square-foot welding lab, believed to be the nation’s

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"No way, no how, did the chapel get built without them. Period. They were amazing.”

Gillean Denney, chief architectural designer

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Members of the Penn College and Penn State teams pose with the completed chapel in Penn State’s Laundry Building prior to its shipment to Rome in February.

natural melody that will nurture their soul. The experience should touch them spiritually and move them to join others in caring for the world.

“It’s just amazing to be like, ‘I have a couple welds on that,’” said Sara D. Stafford, a welding and fabrication engineering technology student from West Chester. “Penn College creating a huge structure and piece of art for Italy. Who would have thought?”

The four walls built by the college measure approximately 45 feet long by 10 feet wide with heights ranging between 10 and 15 feet. They are joined at various angles, with the exception of two portions that separate to form a space in the shape of a cross.

“The initial PDF that we saw didn’t show the complexity of the project,” Colton said with a smile. “We were definitely a little bit more overwhelmed once we got into it.”

The myriad pieces of aluminum that Colton and his crew connected to form the Living Chapel served as a metaphor for the disparate forces that joined to make the project a reality.

Penn College is linked with an Australian-Canadian music composer; a Toronto-based architect; faculty and students from the Department of Architecture within the Stuckeman School at Penn State; Vatican and U.N. officials; Italian landscape architects and botanists; as well as other individuals and entities.

“It’s a very multidimensional project,” said Julian Revie, creative director of the Living Chapel and associate director of music at the Center for Music and Liturgy of St. Thomas More Chapel at Yale University. “Once Penn State was involved, they told us, ‘The team to get this done is at Penn College. They have the capacity to take on something that is quite ambitious and large-scale on a tight time frame.’”

Revie, who has composed for two papal masses, presented the Vatican ecology division with an idea to employ instruments – made from recycled materials – to create a musical piece that would celebrate the “serene harmony between humanity and nature.” Those conversations led to the concept for the Living Chapel, a physical structure combining music with architecture and research assistants, to provide design support with the intent of fabricating and building the entire chapel at University Park. 

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largest. The facility provided ample space and fabrication equipment to get the job done, such as electric cold saws, portable band saws, grinders and MIG welding units.

It was also home to the most crucial components for success: the expertise and will of welding faculty and students. They embraced what Kalsbeek called a "mammoth, gargantuan task," despite a looming deadline.

"While I was waiting for him (Kalsbeek) to contact Penn College," Denny said.

"The faculty saw this as a huge opportunity for students and the institution," explained Bradley M. Webb, the college's dean of engineering technologies. "It would help students with their practical skills and, given the significance of the project, carry the Penn College name for generations. They would not let this fall."

"It was an obvious and brilliant solution (to contact Penn College)," Denny said. "While I was waiting for him (Kalsbeek) to make that call, I was sort of crossing my fingers going, 'Please say yes.'"

Denny got her wish after an October meeting at Penn College when the welding faculty suggested building the walls with aluminum rather than steel to cut the weight in half and eliminate the need to powder coat, a time-consuming process. That input foreshadowed the give-and-take between architect and builder throughout the ensuing weeks.

"Not only were they instrumental in actually fabricating it, but they helped us work through the design of it, to make changes, to make it easier and better to build, and stronger," Denny said. "They were incredibly creative."

Fabrication began in November when the first of many design modifications were sent to the college.

"It was definitely challenging because the structure was still evolving as we were fabricating it, so we would get the plans for Wall A, and while we were working on that wall, Gillies would finalize the plans for what Wall B would look like, and so on," Colton said.

Based on Denny's drawings, Jacob B. Holland, instructor of welding, led the effort to calculate the various lengths and angles of aluminum tubing required for each section and spent countless hours making the cuts. Colton, Cody W. Wolfe, instructor of welding; and a slew of other faculty and students applied nearly 5,500 1-inch welds to erect the structure.

"All of us had to go back and rethink about fabrication and how we fabricate things, especially in aluminum, because aluminum will move and distort," Colton said.

The learning extended to students, who assisted with the required cutting, welding and grinding.

"It was amazing that we got our hands on it," said Nolan Durecki, a welding and fabrication engineering technology student from South Lyon, Michigan. "I hadn't done a whole lot of MIG welding on aluminum, so it was good hands-on learning. I like to learn by getting thrown on something and trying to figure out the best way to do it."

"It was great to see our teachers so dedicated to the project," Stafford added. "They did an amazing job, and it was flattering and humbling to say that I worked with them on that."

Because of finals and winter break, students weren’t available during some weeks, which put the pressure on faculty to meet the late-January deadline. Ten-to-12-hour workdays became the norm.

"They literally were working miracles on that campus through Christmas break and into the new year," Denny said.

"But no way, no how, did the chapel get built without them. Period. They were amazing."

"Toward the end, we were wondering if we would make it on time," Colton admitted. "We were still welding on pieces as they were loading the truck. There was a lot of stress released when it was gone."

That truck delivered the walls to the Laundry Building at Penn State, where Kalsbeek’s team had spent months assisting Denny with various design aspects, focusing on the chime wall, the drums’ music function and the solar-powered irrigation system. More than 2.6 tons of water, housed in the walls’ bases, nurtures the plants and “plays” the steel drums.

Throughout the fall, Kalsbeek’s crew combed through 1,500 pounds of scrap donated by two automotive metal stamping plants to devise “framed” screen patterns to be fastened on the chime wall. They also inserted some of the 15-inch steel pan drums in the wall before all the sections were shipped by boat to Italy in early February.

The Penn State students were to assemble the Living Chapel in Rome during spring break and assist in its planned move to the Vatican in May. The COVID-19 pandemic eliminated those opportunities. A Rome-based architectural firm, Sequas, stepped in for the students, with Denny coaching them through the details of the assembly via email and Skype from Canada.

In this social-distancing time, the Living Chapel – surrounded by recycled oil barrels containing 2,500 saplings of 46 tree species from Central and Southern Europe – will remain at the Botanical Garden of Rome, waiting for its eventual move to the Vatican and Assisi.

Colton and other members of the Penn College team had planned to visit the Living Chapel in May at the Vatican. While disappointed, they are heartened that it will be assembled at the Vatican when the pandemic dissipates. They’re also honored it will be placed permanently near the grounds of the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels in Assisi, which was built around St. Francis’ chapel.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has designated the basilica as one of about 1,100 World Heritage Sites for its universal value.

"A lot of us looked at it as a project that we wanted to do for the school and for the program. It was something neat to be a part of," Colton said. "I don't think it's really sunk in until we see it up close and go, 'Hey, we helped build that.'"

Watch a video of the making of the Living Chapel at magazine.pct.edu/LL

THE PENN COLLEGE LIVING CHAPEL FABRICATION TEAM

From left, Jacob B. Holland, Cody W. Wolfe and James N. Colton II.

CORE FACULTY FABRICATION GROUP


FACULTY ASSISTANTS

From left: Philip N. Shipe, Johnsonburg; Ian M. Yan, Altoona; Gavin W. Young, Elkton, Md.; Kyle J. Weaver, Marris; Austin G. Hampton, Watertown; Jim A. Barker, Easton; Sara D. Stafford, West Chester; Nolan Durecki, South Lyon, Mich.; and Christian A. Novick, Hickory.

STUDENT ASSISTANTS


Watch a video of the making of the Living Chapel at magazine.pct.edu/LL
Designer of Signs

Alum’s work points way for millions at iconic resorts

by Tom Speicher, writer/video producer

The memory is timeless for Cory D. Karges. He and a couple of his Pennsylvania College of Technology classmates were clustered in a campus lab, working on a cooperative education project for the General Electric Co. As they imagined, his work today as an industrial designer is seen by millions.

"I never felt like I had homework assignments. ... You were always inventing something." - Cory D. Karges

Karges designed signage for Bigfire restaurant at Universal CityWalk Orlando.

Some illuminate at night; others sparkle in the sunlight. All fulfill Karges’ longtime desire to “make really cool stuff.”

"If you have a passion for something, you go for it, and you're going to get good at it, or else you'll find something else," he said.

Growing up in Whitemarsh Point, New York, Karges flirted with an information technology career at a local community college. He was good at IT but didn't possess the requisite passion. Several months of research and soul searching reminded him that he had always enjoyed taking things apart and putting them back together in a fresh way.

"I had glue-gun burns on my hands when I was 5 years old," he chuckled. Eventually, Karges discovered the perfect match for his inventive mind: industrial design, the practice of transforming ideas into designs of marketable projects and systems. A tour of transforming ideas into designs of marketable projects and systems. A tour of marketable projects and systems.

Flawless. The signs were made of materials chosen for their properties. Some of the signs consume several feet in both height and width; others are narrow and vertical. Some fit perfectly atop a low-rise building’s facade; others are fastened to structures high in the sky. Some illuminate at night; others sparkle in the sunlight. All fulfill Karges’ longtime desire to “make really cool stuff.”

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It's a thrilling ride. "Since I've started here, pretty much every single project that's happened at the park (Universal), we've been involved in," he said. "Not too many people can say that we worked on Harry Potter!"

When Karges strolls through the Universal Orlando Resort, he can point to a smorgasbord of signage made by Sign Producers for branding (the letters on the rotating Universal globe), rides (including Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts, Despicable Me Minion Mayhem and The Incredible Hulk Coaster) and restaurants (Red Oven Pizza Bakery and Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. among them).

Karges designed the signs greeting visitors at Universal’s Aventura Hotel and Surf Side Inn & Suites Endless Resort, adorning the restaurants Bigfire and Today Café, and promoting attractions such as Universal Cinemar and Central Park.

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When Karges strolls through the Universal Orlando Resort, he can point to a smorgasbord of signage made by Sign Producers for branding (the letters on the rotating Universal globe), rides (including Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts, Despicable Me Minion Mayhem and The Incredible Hulk Coaster) and restaurants (Red Oven Pizza Bakery and Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. among them).

Karges designed the signs greeting visitors at Universal’s Aventura Hotel and Surf Side Inn & Suites Endless Resort, adorning the restaurants Bigfire and Today Café, and promoting attractions such as Universal Cinemar and Central Park.
As the spread of coronavirus compelled communities across the globe to drastically change their approaches to daily life, the community of problem solvers at Pennsylvania College of Technology rose to the challenge, revealing new levels of compassion and ingenuity. “This unconventional form of education is the exact opposite of what our college’s hands-on based instruction requires,” said residential construction technology and management student Jack E. Stahley, “however, we have come together to adapt to these changes that have been forced upon us.”

In March, as the coronavirus emerged in Pennsylvania, Penn College extended Spring Break for a second week, asking students to remain at their permanent residences while faculty prepared to teach online for at least a few weeks. As the situation quickly progressed, Gov. Tom Wolf asked all non-life-sustaining businesses, including college campuses, to close their physical locations and told residents to stay home as much as possible. Within two weeks, the entire state was subject to a stay-at-home order.

Remote learning is a particular challenge for a college of technology that specializes in hands-on education. In fact, it was hands-on-industrial arts courses at Williamsport High School (now the college’s Klump Academic Center, the oldest building on campus) that grew into the Williamsport Technical Institute, which later transitioned to Williamsport Area Community College and then to today’s Penn College.

Fortunately, innovation and determination are also part of the college’s foundation. “Adaptability remains another Penn College trademark,” President Davie Jane Gilmour said, “However, many of us have converted our frustrations into novel and compassionate outlets in a means to adapt during this chaotic time,” he added.

As the situation continued to change in plans — and everyday life — was jarring. Jordan S. Wise, a health information technology student, had hoped to prove himself during his final season on the golf team. News that the North Eastern Athletic Conference was canceling all spring sports seasons made his heart sink.

“It was my last opportunity, and for that to be taken away like that — it hurt,” he said. “As a competitor, I want to go out and compete. That’s my favorite thing on the planet to do — compete.”

A personal disappointment for SGA President Patrick C. Ferguson was the cancellation of a summer internship. “Most would claim the most obvious ‘uncertainties’ are: Do I have the virus? Will I transmit the virus to my family? Is my protective equipment — gloves, face shields, gowns, etc. — protecting me? Is there enough personal protective equipment to sustain this rapidly unfolding virus? While those are the most current ‘uncertainties,’ there is the one unique ‘uncertainty’ of: Will I lose my job?”

While the work has always held inherent dangers, the new concerns are real, and are faced by EMS personnel on every call, Stavinski said. “And to top off these ‘uncertainties,’ providers are radically changing the way they confront patients during an emergency.”

Emergency management and homeland security student Brooke M. Strubel worked as an emergency medical technician in her Lancaster County hometown while taking remote classes. “I along with thousands of other EMTs, have signed up to take these risks, >>

A well-traveled Chris Warren, instructor of building construction technology, completes a drop-off to student Jack Stahley in a vacant parking lot during a 500-mile trip to deliver project materials to students.

Below: Brady T. Wolfe, who traveled with his mother from Myersville, Md., to Harrisburg, signals another successful transfer of materials.

Penn College employees load about 850 potted flowers and hanging baskets for delivery to UPMC hospitals in the Williamsport area for distribution to nurses during National Nurses Week in May. The flowers were originally cultivated at the college’s Schneebeli Earth Science Center for a sale in the center’s greenhouses and as a learning project for students in plant production courses.

Penn College student Kristien Quintanilla, fifth from left, is part of a Joint Force Medical Strike Team deployed by the Pennsylvania National Guard to assist at a nursing home in Delaware County.

Eric K. Albert, now retired associate professor of automated manufacturing, holds three of the eight ventilator splitters he made with his home 3D printer. On campus, he 3D-printed more than two dozen face shields.

A Geisinger employee demonstrates the use of an EMS airway hood. Franklin D. Gillis, ’13, ’18, a construction/building science instructional specialist for the college’s National Sustainable Structures Center, assembled the framework for five hoods for Geisinger Medical Center.

Eric K. Albert, now retired associate professor of automated manufacturing, holds three of the eight ventilator splitters he made with his home 3D printer. On campus, he 3D-printed more than two dozen face shields.
When the college transitioned to remote instruction, she returned to full-time EMT work at nursing homes. Kristien T. Quintanilla, enrolled in human services and restorative justice, said departmental transition and support students through it. "We, as Penn College students, are problem solvers, and this has been our biggest challenge yet," said Stahley. While the coronavirus disrupted everyone's plans, many found positives. "I feel pride in knowing that I am a student of crisis, so I came up with the idea of helping support the people and businesses in our community during this time of crisis," said Albert. "This is a great example of how we are working together as a team and conquering different than any other college, perfectly fits the bill of the tutorials posted that will help me as a student and in my future career path." And, as it always has, coursework continued to adapt in response to real-world cues. As nonessential businesses were ordered to close their physical sites and restaurants were to provide only takeout and delivery only, Spyke M. Krepskaw, instructor of web and interactive media, saw a community need that he and his students could help meet. "I strongly believe that we need to help support the people and businesses in our community during this time of crisis, so I came up with the idea of offering my services free of charge to help businesses start selling their goods online," Krepskaw explained. "Working through the Williamsport/ Lycoming Chamber of Commerce to promote the service, Krepskaw and seven students provided online ordering systems and other website-related services for 12 businesses in the Williamsport area. MORE COMMUNITY OUTREACH Early in the crisis, various departments collected supplies — originally intended for on-campus student and employee use — and distributed them to nursing homes. Donations included 14,000 vinyl gloves, 4,000 procedure masks, 170 isolation gowns, 125 face masks with fluid shields, 50 isolation masks, 20 personal protection kits (gown, gloves, boots, cap and mask), 20 bottles of hand sanitizer, about 470 N95 masks, 1,000 additional masks, and transparencies to be used at Geisinger Medical Center. The PVC frames can be covered with clear plastic to protect health care workers while working in the airways of potentially infected patients. STAYING POSITIVE While the coronavirus disrupted everyone’s plans, many found positives. Valerie J. Kovalick, simulation laboratory coordinator in the nursing program, is one of those who created video lessons for students. "Once you get used to working from home is that I have had time to investigate other tools and software and put what I have learned to good use," she said. "My hope is that other faculty will be able to benefit from the ability to make custom content … once we return to campus using these tools." Bletthen, who chose the Guard over active duty because it would enable him to serve his community, appreciates that "It's a classic case of technology solving problems," Albert said. "This is giving students a first-hand look at the important role technology, in this case additive manufacturing, can play in combating a crisis." Likewise, student Matthew A. Semmel, who in May earned a bachelor’s degree in engineering design technology and an associate degree in plastics and polymer technology, used the technology at his disposal while studying at home to create visors — or brackets — for face shields. Semmel modified a CNC router that he used the plumbing and pipe-fitting skills he learned in the Mechanical Systems I class in Fall 2021 to fabricate the framework for five EMS airway hoods to be used at Geisinger Medical Center. Gillis holds Penn College degrees in heating, ventilation and air conditioning technology (2013) and applied management (2018). The PVC frames can be covered with clear plastic to protect health care workers while working in the airways of potentially infected patients.
An expansion to welding instructional facilities added 35,000 square feet of hands-on learning space – room to enroll up to 60 more welding students annually and provide new technological capabilities, with nearly 100 pieces of equipment provided by corporations through entrustments, discounts and donations. The expansion, funded in part by a $2 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, caught the attention of news outlets both locally and nationally, with stories running on Fox News, in Welding Digest and in the U.S. Economic Development Administration newsletter. “The expanded center is coming online at a critical time, as the industry predicts a shortage of more than 200,000 skilled welding professionals this year,” the EDA newsletter noted.

To the left are a specialized welding room, where air pressure is kept higher than surrounding spaces to keep dust and particles away, and a nondestructive testing lab – with a dedicated classroom next door. Outfitted with phased array ultrasonic testing units and digital X-ray testing capabilities, the lab is used by associate and bachelor’s degree welding students. A minor in nondestructive testing is being launched in Fall 2020, and an associate degree is being considered.

A CTK 5-ton capacity overhead crane allows students to move heavy plate for larger fabrication projects. Training in crane and rigging operations will be valuable as they enter industry, where they can expect to work with such equipment. (A related certification is being considered for the future.)

A 120-ton Baykal CNC press brake provides programmable multi-axis control.

Inside an automation area that was part of the expansion, students gain experience on robotic welders and plasma cutters, including a CLOOS QRC 320 Upright, as well as a laser welding cell and an electron beam welder.

A printing press is among student projects. The press is used as a prop at the Community Arts Center and needs a new cart to make it easier to move around the stage.

Eroclina angle rolls and Lemas four roll plate bending rolls.

Eroclina tube, pipe and profile bending machine.

Oxyacetylene cutting torches

Pipe-threading machine

Hypertherm handheld plasma cutter

Scotchman cold saw, for cutting aluminum stock, angle iron and square tubing

A Hydmech S-20A fully automatic, pivot-style band saw features a touch-screen controller, a straight-cutting capacity of 18 inches wide and 13 inches high and up to 60-degree miter cuts.

Eroclina angle rolls and Lemas four roll plate bending rolls.

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Eroclina angle rolls and Lemas four roll plate bending rolls.
Gerald Alkire, ’60, electronics technician, retired from Westinghouse Electric Co. as a senior engineer. Other positions at Westinghouse included design engineer for large turbine generator components. He developed five patents for a large generator retiring from Westinghouse, he was a consulting engineer for Siemens Corp. for 20 years and finally stopped working in 2018. He earned a bachelor’s in engineering from University of Pittsburgh in 1974. He has been married for 58 years and resides in Winter Garden, Fla.

Howard W. Calhoun, ’60, welding, retired after nearly 30 years in shipbuilding/repair in Chester. He has been married for 50 years and is the grandfather of nine. He worked in southeastern Pennsylvania since the day he graduated from Westmoreland Technical Institute. He resides in Aston.

Gary L. Berlin, ’62, mechanical engineering, is retired. He is a life member of the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Engineers and resides in Marshheim.

Philip J. Knarr, ’69, aerospace engineering, is retired. He resides in Pueblo West, Colo.

Jae E. Gettig, ’76, aviation systems technology, is a retired aircraft maintenance supervisor for the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. He resides in Mill Hall.

Susan (Kindo) Wright, ’76, business management, is a realtor for Fish Real Estate, where she has received numerous awards. She resides in Mechanicsville and has three “beautiful, busy” grandchildren.

Charles H. Johnson II, ’70, civil engineering, is retired in December 2019 after working 30 years in the railroad industry and 17 years as a maintenance plan engineer. He resides in Pueblo West, Colo.

Tony J. Karvin, ’72, architectural technology, retired and resides in Bedford.

David R. Rowe, ’72, avionics technician maintenance, retired from Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. in 2009 after 33 years providing mechanical maintenance on pump station and pipeline equipment. He resides in Homer, Alaska, where he still flies his Piper Super Cub and restores trucks and cars, most of 1941.

Barbara Eck Tosi, ’73, education/social work, recently published her first book. The collection of short, fictional stories, written in four-line rhyming stanzas, is titled “Scary: An eerie collection that opens inside the brain.” She is a licensed marriage and family therapist and resides in Montoursville.

Les Lewis, ’74, landscape/horticulture, owns Lewis Landscapes. He is employed by the University of Kentucky and resides in Milford Center, Ohio.

James L. Smith, ’78, civil engineering technology, is a project engineer/associate for JMT, where he manages a team designing roadway engineering and land development projects. He is past president of the Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers. Lincoln Chapter and a coordinator for Mathcounts, a middle school mathematics competition. He resides in York.

Dorothy R. (Putman) Bane, ’80, nursing, is a medical-surgical nurse for Guthrie and head track coach for Troy High School. He was voted Northern Tier League Coach of the Year. He resides on Armenia Mountain, near Troy, in a self-built log home with his wife, Lori Machamer, ’88, dental hygienist, and their two sons.

Robert E. Ignat, ’93, automotive service technician, is a mechanic supervisor for the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, managing the maintenance shop and fleet for about 200 vehicles and other equipment. He resides in Greensville.

Dorothy J. (Smith) Frantz, ’92, nursing, is an assistant professor of nursing at Penn College. She holds a Doctor of Nursing Practice from Chatham University. She resides in Montoursville.

Lori M. (Torres) Spangler, ’93, civil engineering technology, is a paralegal for Lycoming Engines, having returned to Pennsylvania in January after her husband’s retirement. She is chair of the Florida Bar Association’s Florida Registered Paralegal Committee and founding president of the Orange County Bar Association’s Paralegal Section, among other service roles and awards. She resides in Williamsport.

Farid A. (Sciad) Sweid, ’95, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a senior manufacturing engineer for Berk-Tek. He resides in Lititz.

Jeff M. Blaniky, ’92, computer science, is the chief of data communications and networking. This year, he is celebrating 45 years of marriage, and she recently welcomed her fourth grandson. She resides in Lock Haven.

James J. Smith, ’98, nursing, is a medical-surgical nurse for Guthrie and head track coach for Troy High School. He was voted Northern Tier League Coach of the Year. He resides on Armenia Mountain, near Troy, in a self-built log home with his wife, Lori Machamer, ’88, dental hygienist, and their two sons.

Joseph M. Truskey, ’99, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a senior manufacturer for Westmoreland Mechanical. He holds a master’s degree in mechanical engineering for Tramec Sloan, leading the engineering and marketing team responsible for new product development, transportation-systems development, and critical systems. He resides in Jacksonville, Fla.

Michael H. Hirsa, ’01, civil engineering technology, is a project engineer/associate for JMT, where he manages a team designing roadway engineering and land development projects. He is past president of the Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers. Lincoln Chapter and a coordinator for Mathcounts, a middle school mathematics competition. He resides in York.

Laura (Hartley) Stroble, ’01, hospitality services, owns Laura’s Krewe of Bacchus and is a garden center manager for Landscape Co. She resides in Thomasville.

Michael J. Gibson, ’03, landscape/horticulture, has returned to Pennsylvania from Florida Bar Association’s Florida Registered Paralegal Committee and founding president of the Orange County Bar Association’s Paralegal Section, among other service roles and awards. She resides in Montoursville.

Lori N. (Cronk) Johnson, ’03, aviation systems technology, is a paralegal for Lycoming Engines, having returned to Pennsylvania in January after her husband’s retirement. She is chair of the Florida Bar Association’s Florida Registered Paralegal Committee and founding president of the Orange County Bar Association’s Paralegal Section, among other service roles and awards. She resides in Williamsport.

Randy McAuley, ’07, diesel technology, is the equipment manager for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, making sure mechanics and equipment are ready for winter and summer road work. He enlisted in the Army as a wheeled-vehicle mechanic for four years, then joined the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, retiring with 23 years of service. He has worked for PennDOT for 25 years and been married for 27 years. He has three sons and resides in Muncy.

Carl R. (Ted) Johnson, ’08, environmental technology, is the director of buildings and grounds for the Central Fulton School District. Under his direction, the district has received awards from the Keystone Athletic Field Managers Association and the Sports Turf Managers Association for Field of the Year and Field of Distinction. He resides in McConnellsburg.

Eric Johnson, ’09, electronics technician, is an electronics technician for the Pennsylvania State Police. He resides in Waynesboro, Pa.

Dorothy R. (Putman) Bane, ’80, nursing, is a medical-surgical nurse for Guthrie and head track coach for Troy High School. He was voted Northern Tier League Coach of the Year. He resides on Armenia Mountain, near Troy, in a self-built log home with his wife, Lori Machamer, ’88, dental hygienist, and their two sons.

Tim Dietz, ’03, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a quality consultant for Lodge Inc. He resides in Hanover.

Michael H. Hirsa, ’01, civil engineering technology, is a project engineer/associate for JMT, where he manages a team designing roadway engineering and land development projects. He is past president of the Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers. Lincoln Chapter and a coordinator for Mathcounts, a middle school mathematics competition. He resides in York.

Jason P. Zielwicki, ’99, paramedic, is pursuing a master’s in health studies, is director of workforce development for Penn College at Williamsport. He is past Instructor of the Year by the Lycoming Tiga Sullivan EMS District in 2016 and 2019. She holds a master’s degree in health service administration from University of Saint Francis and a Doctor of Health Sciences from Nova Southeastern University. He resides in Williamsport.

Kyle R. Rhoads, ’05, manufacturing engineering technology, is a site engineering engineer for TE Connectivity, managing individuals in two facilities and one value stream. He resides in Harrisburg.

Aaron C. McCoppin, ’06, information technology: network specialist, is a senior network engineer for Charles River Associates. He resides in Framingham, Mass.

Kirk M. Allen, ’07, business administration: management information systems, is a general manager for Regal Theatres. He received the Rising Star Award for excellence in management and Regal’s Community Showman Award for his volunteer efforts (over 700 hours at Whittaker Center for Science and the Arts). He resides in Birdsboro.

Kelly Bidiepscher, ’07, nursing, is a case manager in discharge planning for Regal Theatres. She is a member of Sigma Sigma Sigma. The Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers. Lincoln Chapter and a coordinator for Mathcounts, a middle school mathematics competition. He resides in Trout Run.

Jonah G. Howel, ’07, landscape/ nursery technology, is a public relations manager for Chief Oil & Gas. He resides in Montoursville.

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Jacilyn (Smith) Barros, ’10, accounting, is a rebate analyst for Bausch Health. She resides in Fords, N.J.

Christopher M. Gayman, ’10, aviation maintenance technology, is OEM sales manager for Lycoming Engines. He received the Penn College Alumni of the Year Award in 2020. Education Celebration hosted by the Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce and is a member of the college’s Aviation Technology Advisory Committee. He and wife, Nneka (Wellman), ’09, graphic design, reside in Montoursville.

Rebecca A. Kayes, ’10, surgical technology, is a certified surgical technician for Advocate Christ Heart Institute. She resides in Chicago.

Shannon (Stackhouse) Anderson, ’11, business administration: human resource management, is a program manager, physician recruitment and retention, for Guthrie Medical Group. She resides in Milan.

Brett K. Bracke, ’11, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a senior engineer for Lubrizol Life Science Health – CDMO (contract development and manufacturing organization). Division – also coaches baseball and plays golf, ultimate and roller derby. He resides in Bethlehem.

Megan (Hawn) Davis, ’11, business administration: management, is an assistant sales manager for The Armstrong Group LLC. She resides in Dearborn, Mich.

John E. Gudonis, ’11, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a sales representative for Paragon Machinery. He resides in Danville.

Taylor Kijak, ’11, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a sales representative for Paragon Machinery. He resides in Danville.

Crystal J. (Brosious) Rice, ’14, graphic design, is a library assistant for UPMC Divine. She resides for the Madigan Library at Penn College. She resides in Williamsport.

Mohamed Alnasser, ’13, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is the director of business development for TexFoF Non-Woven Industrial Fabrics Factory Co. He resides in Safwa, Saudi Arabia.

Kyle S. Mullin, ’13, welding and fabrication engineering technology, is a senior welding engineer for Evacuo Inc., overseeing global welding operations. He holds a Master of Business Administration from Seton Hill. He resides in Fairfield.

Erick D. Spees, ’13, welding and fabrication engineering technology, earned a master’s in engineering management from Gammon University in December 2019. He is an assistant operations manager and welding engineer for Custom Welding Co. He resides in Grove City.

Ashley M. Baker, ’12, welding technology, ’14, heavy construction equipment technology: operator, is a service technician for UGI and is pursuing an emergency medical technician certificate through Workforce Development College. She resides in South Williamsport.

Ryan W. Hoo, ’14, electromechanical maintenance technology, is an electrician for Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He resides in Blairsville.

Lindsay Musser, ’14, health information technology, is a clinic systems specialist for Evangelical Community Hospital. She resides in Milton.

Christopher E. Patterson, ’14, technology management, is an operations support leader for Lands Liquid Solutions LLC. He resides in Chambersburg.

Zach R. Riney, ’11, automotive technology management, is a letter carrier for the U.S. Postal Service. He resides in Columbia with his two children.

Henry J. Sorgen, ’12, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a technical development engineer for Polymer Resources. He resides in Cofix, N.C.

Mohammed Alnasser, ’13, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is the director of business development for TexFoF Non-Woven Industrial Fabrics Factory Co. He resides in Safwa, Saudi Arabia.

Brittany Delmo, ’15, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a manufacturing engineer. She resides in Toms River, N.J.

Allison Fowler, ’15, surgical technology, is a registered nurse for Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health. She obtained associate and bachelor’s degrees in nursing in 2018 and 2019 from Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences. She resides in East Berlin.

Zach D. McCurdy, ’15, automotive technology management, is a senior customer support representative for Gannon University in December 2019. He is an assistant operations manager and welding engineer for Custom Welding Co. He resides in Grove City.

Evan R. Houtz, ’15, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a web developer/quality assurance engineer at宾夕法尼亚大学. He resides in South Williamsport.

Andrea Whitley, ’16, surgical technology, is a certified surgical technology/ophthalmic technicia for Progressive Vision Institute, where she assists with vitrectomy, cataract and scleralplastic surgeries. She has served as a guest speaker for Penn College’s surgical technology program. She resides in Summit Hill.

Aislynn Bennett, ’17, graphic design, is a senior designer for Equator. She resides in Cincinnati.

Aziz Omari, ’17, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a product manager for the Ministry of Finance, where he was named Superior Employee of the Year. He resides in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Christopher M. Gayman, ’10, aviation maintenance technology, is a sales representative for Skills of Central PA. He resides in Chambersburg.

Matthew P. DeVirgilio, ’18, automotive technology management, is a diagnostic communications engineer for Penske Truck Leasing. He monitors a fleet of 325,000 trucks for fault codes and performs over-the-air programming, which allows him to remotely change maximum speed limits and update software in trucks. He resides in Fords, N.J.

Paul M. Lassell, ’18, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a process engineer for First Quality Products. He resides in Williamsport.

Daria Datsenko, ’19, nursing, is employed by Evangelical Community Hospital. She resides in Lewisburg.

Aaron C. Shaffer, ’17, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a process engineer for First Quality Products. She resides in Lebanon.

Brittany S. Shimer, ’17, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a sales representative for Paragon Machinery. She resides in Lebanon.

Zack R. Riney, ’11, automotive technology management, is a letter carrier for the U.S. Postal Service. He resides in Columbia with his two children.
2019. They reside in Williamsport.


Tyler Gross, '09, computer aided product design, and his wife welcomed their second child, a son, in February 2020. They reside in Hanover.

Jaclyn Smith, '10, accounting, married Joseph Barros, '09, automotive technology management, on Nov. 16, 2019. They reside in Pottstown, N.J.

Fadhil A. Aljishi, '12, plastics and polymer engineering technology, and his wife welcomed their second child, son Saud, in July 2018. They reside in Qatif, Saudi Arabia.

Erick D. Speer, '13, welding and fabrication engineering technology, married Nicole Grove on June 1, 2019. They reside in Grove City.

Lindsay Musser, '14, health information technology, and Jarred Taylor, '15, information technology: web & applications development, welcomed their second daughter, Vivian, in November 2019. They reside in Milton.

Max Bower, '16, heavy construction equipment technology: operator, married Caitlyn Chute in October 2019. They reside in Chambersburg.

Tonia Plocinski, '16, nursing, and husband, Cory Chilton, '12, collision repair technology, welcomed a daughter in May 2019. They reside in Williamsport.


Jessica R. (Larson) Lehman, '17, physician assistant, '09, business administration: marketing, and husband, Harry IV, '09, welding technology, welcomed daughter Vivian in December 2019. They reside in Dover, Del.

Brittany J. (Hoffman) Smith, '17, health information management, and husband, Ryan, '12, civil engineering technology, welcomed a son, Connor Lee, on Nov. 24, 2019. They reside in Williamsport.


In Memory

Lester L. “Jack” Lessig Jr., former Williamsport Area Community College Board of Directors chair, age 90, on April 27.

Irwin H. Siegel, retired professor of business administration/ business law, age 66, on April 12.


Kate (McCall) Stepnick, '07, applied human services, welcomed son John Jr. in September 2019. They reside in Millville.

Justin R. Holland, '08, civil engineering technology, married wife Ylora in April 2018, and they welcomed a daughter, Justyce, in March 2019. They reside in Royersford.

Matthew A. Marchiori, '08, automotive technology management, married Katherine Vlaco in Key West, Fla., in May 2019. They reside in Williamsport.

Irwin H. Siegel, retired professor of business administration/ business law, age 66, on April 12.

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Help for the Job Hunt

by Danielle M. Liddic, employer and industry relations manager, Penn College Career Services

As a result of the pandemic, there are a lot of unanswered questions when it comes to one’s employment status.

Here are some tips to consider when approaching your own job search:

1. Remember, you do not have to do this alone! Contact Penn College Career Services at careerservices@pct.edu for any questions regarding your job search or career development process. We are here to help!

2. Visit www.pct.edu/careerservices

3. Practice your video and phone interviewing skills. You can schedule an appointment with Career Services to do this very type of mock interview and get feedback on the entire process.

4. Develop new skills to enhance your qualifications through online learning such as LinkedIn Learning, Coursera, edX, Alison, Udacity, Skillshare, Codecademy or General Assembly.

5. Keep networking! If you have not yet created a LinkedIn account, consider doing so now. Using this professional networking platform is as important as ever.

6. Utilize Penn College Career Hub to actively search for newly posted positions. Create job search agents that run on their own based on criteria you set. Visit www.pct.edu/careerservices to link to the job search site.

7. Continue with your job search! There are organizations that have put their recruitment on hold; however, others are still hiring. Stay informed about who is hiring and who is not on sites such as Candor, LinkedIn and The Muse.

8. Update your resume. Highlight your unique accomplishments and transferable skills. Optimize your resume with keywords, and customize it each time you apply to a different position or company.

Pennsylvania College of Technology

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Emergency management students remain engaged, engaged

In Penn College’s emergency management and homeland security major, teaching courses online mirrors what’s happening in the field right now.

“Emergency operations coordination can be done remotely,” said David E. Borkman, instructor of emergency management/social science. “Many emergency management professionals have been teleworking through the activation of their virtual emergency operations centers, as well as by maintaining situational awareness using information-sharing platforms such as WebEOC, a web-enabled incident management software.

“We acquired WebEOC in December, and students have been using this platform on a weekly basis within our Incident Command System class during disaster exercises.”

“The transition to online learning this semester has been challenging; however, adapting to changing situations is an important skill for both the classroom and the real world, and I think we have adapted well, given the unusual circumstances,” said Joshua M. Walter, a junior from Spotsylvania, Virginia.

“The COVID-19 disaster has provided a great opportunity to discuss and follow the response of public and private agencies across the country.”

To learn more about the major, call 570-327-4521, or visit www.pct.edu/em.
Image courtesy of graphic design student Ali D. Petrizzi. Posters for the exhibition were designed by each graphic design student as a component of the Portfolio Design course.