FALL 2025

Penn College® MAGAZINE

FOUNDATIONS

STUDENT-BUILT HOMES OF THE 20TH CENTURY

SEE PAGE 14

Penn College Magazine, a publication of Pennsylvania College of Technology, is dedicated to sharing the educational development, goals and achievements of Penn College students, employees and alumni with one another and with the greater community.

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Wildcats made an early visit to their future home fields. The college's baseball and softball teams will play at Williamsport Lumber Yards, a facility being built by the Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce. The venue features six lighted synthetic turf youth baseball/girls-women's softball fields and a collegiate baseball field convertible to a youth baseball/girls-women's softball field. The complex is set to open in early 2026 between the railroad tracks on the south edge of Penn College's main campus and Interstate 180.

President's Message

Pennsylvania College of Technology continues to flourish. Read more from college President Michael J. Reed.

Remembering a champion for students

William Feddersen enacted a variety of changes at Penn College forerunner Williamsport Area Community College during his 1974-80 tenure as the institution's president.

Wild Catch

As the summer solstice arrives in Alaska's Bristol Bay, so do 48 million salmon, returning from the ocean to spawn. Returning, too, are Steve Kurian '98 and his fishing crew.

Gemological Adventures

In his work as a jeweler and forensic gemologist, Gary L. Smith '63 has visited African diamond mines, earned Guinness World Record recognition and appraised pieces for the Smithsonian.

Foundations to Futures

Between 1963 and 1977, students of Penn College's forerunners, Williamsport Technical Institute and Williamsport Area Community College, built six homes in Greater Williamsport. Community connections and hands-on learning remain at the college's core.

degrees that work.

ON THE COVER

Students join their instructor in reviewing plans for WACC V, a home built by students on Hillview Avenue in Old Lycoming Township. The house, completed in 1976, was the fifth built by Williamsport Technical Institute and Williamsport Area Community College students and sold to the public. See more on Page 14.

WHERE'S THE WILDCAT?

Hidden in this issue is a Wildcat like the one pictured here. When you find it, email us at **magazine@pct.edu** with the page number and photo where the Wildcat is located. Include your name and address. Your name will be entered into a drawing, and five winners will be selected Oct. 31.

ATTENTION, ALUMNI

Share your story and catch up with classmates online at **magazine.pct.edu/cn**

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

MISSION FORWARD

TOGETHER, WE HELP STUDENTS SUCCEED

To our valued alumni, industry partners and all those who invested in Pennsylvania College of Technology in the past year: As another fall semester begins, I pause to thank you. We continue fulfilling our educational mission in no small part because of your support.

Your impact on our operations continues to yield incredible opportunities for our students – and the rapidly evolving workforce.

With over 4,700 degree-seeking students scheduled, approximately 2,100 dual-enrollment high schoolers getting a head start on their college experience and around 5,400 individuals upskilling through Workforce Development at Penn College, access to our life-changing applied technology education continues to grow.

We remain focused on our core values to accomplish our mission, and with your support, we prepare the next generation of industry leaders with the real-world experience and innovative spirit needed to lead in their respective fields. Simply stated, our ongoing partnership strengthens tomorrow's workforce.

A new initiative – the Grow PA Scholarship Grant Program, coordinated by the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency – is providing valuable financial assistance to eligible Penn College students who live in Pennsylvania and agree to work within the state following graduation. The statute launching the Grow PA Scholarship Grant Program specifies that all discipline-specific associate and bachelor's degrees at Penn College pre-qualify – the only four-year college or university in Pennsylvania with this provision. It's a tribute to our workforce relevance.

Our unique, hands-on programs produce graduates who are ready to thrive in a wide range of essential, always-in-demand occupations, a fact reflected in our 98% graduate-placement rate and the persistent recruitment efforts made by our many business and industry partners. We are most grateful that the Legislature recognized this impact when establishing the criteria for "Grow PA."

In another significant validation, the Carnegie Classification designated Penn College as an "Opportunity College and University." This newly developed Student Access and Earnings Classification, published by the Carnegie Foundation and the American Council on Education, examines the extent to which institutions cultivate opportunities for success by measuring whether they enroll students reflective of the communities they serve, and how the earnings of those students compare to their peers. For 2025, Opportunity Colleges and Universities represent just 16% of U.S. colleges and universities in the Student Access and Earnings Classification. We are in good company.

I encourage you to visit the college's 2024-25 Impact Report at **www.pct.edu/impact-report**. Take a look at our collective accomplishments and how your advocacy and financial investments are at work at Penn College and beyond. You will see how your support of scholarships opens doors to our life-changing applied technology education to students like Morgan Bartholomew, who is embarking on a career in polymer engineering. How your support of academics empowers student-athletes like Colten Hajicek to compete nationally and travel globally, designing the careers of their dreams through amazing experiences. How your gifts of equipment ensure that our students are learning within industry-grade environments to spark future innovation.

It is worth repeating: Together, we continue to place students in the best possible position for long-term success. Your advocacy and financial investments strengthen Penn College, its students and the workforce of tomorrow.

Visit the 2024-25 Impact Report

Thank you.

Michael J. Reed
President

Students walk the footsteps of psychology's pioneers

PHOTO COURTESY OF ROB COOLEY

Faculty and students – many first-time fliers – celebrate their landing in Vienna.

Eleven students in a course that focuses on the history of psychology recently visited Austria and England, where they experienced the cultures and regions that gave birth to the science of the mind.

"It was an opportunity to see the culture behind the development of the discipline, looking at the founders and what formed their thought processes about why people do what they do," said Susan Koons Slamka, associate professor of psychology, who taught the course with Rob Cooley, professor of anthropology/environmental science.

In Vienna, they visited the homes of pioneering theorists Sigmund Freud and Viktor Frankl. In London, they toured the home of Charles Darwin, the Bethlem Royal Hospital Archives and Museum, the National Science Museum, and the Anna Freud Center.

College to expand dual enrollment via Innovation Grant award

Penn College received $1 million from the state's Dual Credit Innovation Grant Program to expand its dual enrollment course offerings to new partners, expand current secondary education partners' offerings to broaden access for new students, innovate and enhance educator professional development, and increase students' postsecondary pathways awareness.

Penn College Dual Enrollment enables academically qualified high school and career and technology education center students to take college-credit courses tuition-free during their regular school day. Through an EITC gift, Coterra covered the participation fees for all of the more than 70 Pennsylvania high schools and career and technical education partners in the Penn College Dual Enrollment Program for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 academic years.

Over 2,000 high school students earned more than 7,000 free Penn College credits in 2023-24.

Middle schoolers experience STEM at Penn College

About 160 middle school students recently experienced the promise of careers rooted in science, technology, engineering and math during Penn College's second annual STEMFest.

The students engaged in a series of hands-on activities, ranging from concrete science to robotics. Supported by a grant from the EQT Foundation, the workshops were led by Penn College faculty and staff.

"We think middle school is the sweet spot to introduce STEM because the students haven't really committed to anything," said Kathy D. Chesmel, assistant dean of materials science and engineering technology. "They haven't had tremendous peer influence or even unconscious bias by parents. We just want to give kids broad exposure and try to find that spark in them."

Workshops also featured fun activities in electronics, coding, civil engineering and polymer science.

Hudock Center Peer Hub connects mentors, students

Hanging out in the new Hudock Center Peer Hub are three of the peer mentors (from left): Elvis A. Garcia, Jacob A. Martinez, and Arrington M.L. Brown.

Penn College's peer mentors have a new, dedicated space in which to connect with fellow students: the Peer Hub, part of the college's Michael J. Hudock Sr. Center for Academic Excellence.

"Peer mentors are experienced students who serve as helpers to their fellow Wildcats," explained Melissa M. Stocum, coordinator of peer mentoring. The staff of mentors, she said, "are available to talk with students to help them make connections on campus, connect with resources, or just to listen and offer some problem-solving advice."

Reunion marks 60th anniversary of WACC's founding

In 1965, Williamsport Technical Institute, which was born from the groundbreaking adult education classes offered at Williamsport Area High School, became Williamsport Area Community College. The college celebrated the 60th anniversary of WACC's inception in April with a reunion of alumni from both WACC and WTI.

WACC was one of the first community colleges in Pennsylvania and the only one dedicated to hands-on technical education. The college was known as Williamsport Area Community College until 1989, when it affiliated with Penn State and became today's Pennsylvania College of Technology.

Find complete articles on **Penn College News**

To find more comprehensive versions of the articles in Campus News – and to read other news stories about Penn College – visit Penn College News, the college's news-and-information website, at **pct.edu/news**

May nondestructive testing graduate Elizabeth M. Tammaro is set for the next segment of her pioneering path: joining Trident Maritime Systems' custom alloy division. The global company specializes in fabrication, naval equipment production and precision engineering for maritime and defense projects.

FINDING A CALLING IN NDT

Initially sparked by welding during a summer camp, Elizabeth Tammaro found her calling in a related industry she hadn't heard of – until she spoke to welding instructor Michael J. Nau during a Penn College Open House.

Tammaro accepted a job in Trident Maritime Systems' custom alloy division weeks before graduating with an associate degree in non-destructive testing in May.

NDT encompasses noninvasive technologies that test the integrity of parts, components and assemblies integral for all aspects of society, ensuring they meet quality and safety requirements.

"NDT sounded fun," she said. "It's in demand, and you're not doing the physical work like in welding."

Tammaro is part of the major's second graduating class. Penn College has offered NDT courses since the mid-1980s and began the two-year major in Fall 2022. Students receive practical experience in a variety of NDT processes: radiographic, ultrasonic, phased-array ultrasonic, magnetic particle, liquid penetrant and visual inspection. Graduates earn essential classroom hours toward American Society of Non-Destructive Testing certification in both radiographic and ultrasonic testing, the two most common NDT procedures. ASNT certification is obtained following on-the-job training.

She's not only part of one of the first NDT graduating classes (and one of two women in the major), but she's also a first-generation college student and was one of the first girls in her area (Milford, New Jersey) to earn the Eagle Scout rank after girls became eligible in 2019. She had spent years accompanying her brother to Boy Scouts (now known as Scouting America) events. "I was too young to stay home alone, so I was kind of dragged along into it," she laughed.

At Penn College, Tammaro was inducted into Phi Theta Kappa, an international honor society for students in two-year majors.

"Elizabeth has the attributes required to excel in the NDT field," said Mark N. Hurd, instructor of non-destructive testing and welding. "She is very detail oriented and has excellent communication skills. This, coupled with the knowledge she has acquired during her time on campus, will no doubt set her up in the best way possible for the NDT career she is about to embark on.

Read about other members of the Penn College Family at **pct.edu/makers**

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Penn College advanced to the United East semifinals for the first time in program history. **Gavin Barrett '25** and **Livingston Cross '25** were named to the United East first team for the second straight season, and Cross, who led the country in double-doubles, earned D3Hoops.com all-region honors.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

The Wildcats reached the conference postseason for the third consecutive season after a 12-4 United East record. **Rachel Teats '25** earned her program-record third all-conference honor, while **Gigi Parlante '28** became the first player in the NCAA era to earn both first-team honors and the conference's Rookie of the Year.

WRESTLING

Penn College won its first Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference championship with an astounding eight individual champions. **Noah Hunt '25** became the second Wildcat in program history to earn a berth to the NCAA Division III Championship tournament after finishing third at the NCAA Division III Region 2 Championship. He was one of a program-record five wrestlers on the podium at regionals: **Carter Davis '28** earned fourth, **Isaac Cory '27** took fifth, **Nick Woodruff '27** finished sixth, and **TJ Martin '27** placed eighth.

MEN'S GOLF

Penn College three-peated as United East champions and had five players selected to the all-conference team. **Peyton Mussina '25, Will Orwig '25** and **Gunner Redmond '26** were named to the first team, while **Logan Gawlinski '27** and **Brady Handy '27** earned third-team honors. Mussina also picked up his second all-region award and made the cut at the NCAA Division III Championship for the second time before finishing 49th. He became the first Penn College student-athlete in any sport to earn NCAA All-American honors.

SOFTBALL

The Wildcats qualified for the NCAA Division III Regionals for the second straight season after finishing runner-up at the United East tournament. **Mackenzie Weaver '25** was named United East Pitcher of the Year for the second time in her career and earned a second-team all-region nod. **Madison Herriman '25** was named to the UE first team, while **Payton Crawford '28** and **Mackenzi Tice '28** earned second-team honors and **Grace Lorson '25** landed on the third team.

MEN'S LACROSSE

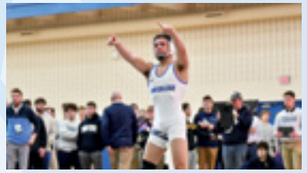
Penn College played in the United East championship game for the second straight season and finished runner-up. A program-record 12 players earned all-conference honors, led by **Elliott Dotson '28**, who was named both the Rookie of the Year and the Player of the Year. Dotson was joined by **Austin Callahan '26**, **Walt Heiser '25**, **Owen Kupsey '28**, **Aidan McFalls '27** and **Ryan Twist '27** on the first team. **Levi Borkowski '28**, **AJ Dotson '26**, **Will Ehret '27**, **Mason Nester '25**, **Jake Small '27** and **Ian Stambaugh '28** landed on the second team.

BASEBALL

The Wildcats reached the United East postseason for the eighth time since joining the conference in 2015. The Wildcats achieved five all-conference honors, with **Dallas Griess '27** and **Shawn Townsend '27** earning first-team honors. **Jaydon Goebel '27** and **Matt Munoz '27** were named to the second team, and **Levi Purnell '28** was named to the third team and the conference's Rookie of the Year. Townsend also earned all-region honors.

Livingston Cross '25

Gigi Parlante '28



Noah Hunt '25

Peyton Mussina '25

Madison Herriman '25

Mason Nester '25

Shawn Townsend '27

Lacrosse team members landscape the front yard of a Habitat for Humanity-built house before its homeowners move in. From left: Austin Callahan, Roman DeCenzo, Devin Page, Kevin Ronayne III, Leighton Acevedo, Nick McGowan, Andrew Tavarez, Tyler Hannan, John Dolezal and Nate Campisi.

WILDCATS SHOW THEY'RE MORE THAN 'JUST' ATHLETES

by Matt J. Blymier, assistant director of athletics for compliance and athletics communication

A KEY PART OF PENN COLLEGE ATHLETICS'

mission is providing students the opportunity for self-discovery through hands-on leadership and civic responsibility – to be more than just athletes.

Throughout the academic year, student-athletes actively participate in a wide array of community service, embodying the department's commitment to making a positive impact in the community. These events range from neighborhood clean-ups and youth sports clinics to volunteering for local nonprofits and organizing fundraising drives for charitable causes.

In 2024-25, athletic programs completed 2,701 hours of community service and raised a little over $21,000 for various charities. The men's lacrosse team led the charge with 17 initiatives and nearly $13,000 raised. The team's value on community service is so great that they take an entire day during their Spring Break trip to Virginia and North Carolina to volunteer their time with charities in those areas.

"Service is the first pillar of our program, and we put a huge emphasis on giving back," men's lacrosse head coach Jordan Williams explained. "If we have the capability to give, serve or volunteer, we want our men to do just that. Our Spring Break community service event is typically most guys' favorite memory of that trip, regardless of how tired they are from playing games and traveling.

"Getting to see the impact, whether in our local community, around campus, or when we serve in a different state, allows our men to see the value of service and how much of a difference we can make with our actions." ■

SETTING RECORDS

In addition to a record-setting 2024-25 year in competition – including three conference championships, two conference runners-up, 62 all-conference selections and eight all-region honors – Penn College student-athletes had their performances in the classroom recognized at an all-time level as well.

The department finished the academic year with a collective 3.28 cumulative grade point average, which included 264 dean's list selections and 115 perfect 4.0 GPAs combined between both the fall and spring semesters. Thirteen athletic programs finished the year with a 3.0 or higher GPA.

At the national level, five Wildcats earned their respective sport's top academic honor as Scholar All-Americans, while at the conference level, 178 student-athletes were named United East or Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference Scholar-Athletes.

A record four Penn College student-athletes earned one of the United East's top academic honors, the Elite 20 award. The award was created in 2022 and is presented to the student-athlete who holds the highest grade point average among the teams that qualified for the conference postseason. **Walt Heiser '25** was honored for men's lacrosse; **Peyton Mussina '25** received the honor for golf; **Landon Reeder '27** earned the honor in men's basketball; and **Alec Rees '25** earned the award in men's cross-country.

Kayleigh Miller '25, a two-time recipient of the Elite 20 award – for cross-country in 2024 and women's basketball in 2022-23 – was named the United East Senior Scholar-Athlete, which recognizes a senior who truly represents the student-athlete model by performing in competition, in the classroom and around the community.

Walt Heiser '25

Peyton Mussina '25

Landon Reeder '27

Alec Rees '25

Kayleigh Miller '25

Gemological Adventures

by Tom Speicher, writer/video producer

TUCKED AMONG THE QUAINT SHOPS and businesses that give Montoursville its distinctive small-town charm, a nondescript brick building, opened as a movie house in 1947, still hints at its origins as the Laura Theater that served the region for decades.

A concrete slab where the ticket booth sat bears the theater's name. Tall, art deco-style doors that separated real life from Hollywood make-believe still swing open. Interior glass blocks that added to the ambience of a night out continue to twinkle. Parallel red velvet ropes attached to stanchions in the entranceway wink at the past.

The building's legacy is appropriate, considering the owner and occupant for the past 40-or-so years has lived a life worthy of a screenplay. His accomplishments and adventures are rooted in his time as a student at Pennsylvania College of Technology predecessor Williamsport Technical Institute.

In his gem lab, Gary L. Smith, a 1963 electronics graduate, is surrounded by specialized equipment.

"I've always loved gemology and the fact that **you can find something beautiful and potentially valuable hidden in the rocks and dirt.**"

Gary L. Smith is the proprietor of Smith's Ltd., home to both Smith's Jewelers and the PA Gem Lab. The front portion of the building is dedicated to ample display cases showcasing unique pieces of fine jewelry crafted by Smith or offered on consignment. The store also specializes in the repair and restoration of antique and estate jewelry. Situated behind, through a maze of rooms, is the PA Gem Lab, a forensic appraisal area where Smith serves clients from throughout the world.

"I like to say the whole basis of this place started at WTI," Smith said.

A 1963 WTI electronics graduate, Smith is both a master goldsmith and gemologist, with certifications that consume an entire wall of the jewelry store. His favorite one is master gemologist appraiser from the American Society of Appraisers. "There are fewer than 50 or so of us in the world who maintain that designation," Smith said with obvious pride.

The fit and vibrant 81-year-old rises at 4:30 most mornings and works about 60 hours a week while allotting time for family (three daughters, nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren), lifting weights at the YMCA and co-pastoring a church with Helen, his beloved wife of nearly 60 years. "Retirement is not an option," he said.

Smith's accessories reflect his vocation. There's a 24-carat gold chain draped around his neck. His wrists are enveloped in gold: a Rolex on the left and a bracelet on the right. Among his rings is a 4-carat diamond, given to him as a thank you gift from a satisfied customer.

A large chunk of Smith's time is spent in a lab devoted to countless repair and restoration projects, requiring his unique blend of historical expertise, dexterity and technical savvy. This is where he spent 36 hours enameling to repair gold that had been crushed on one of the 57 surviving Fabergé jeweled eggs made between 1885 and 1917, created a commissioned replica of an ornate watch key owned by George Washington, and restored gold work on an emerald ring recovered from the 1622 Nuestra Señora de Atocha shipwreck off Key West.

"I enjoy restoring the most. I'll take something that one time was cherished and is almost ready to be destroyed, and I can bring it back to what it was like the day it was made," Smith said. "And that way, it can be passed down. That's my big joy, putting them back the way they were."

The lab is filled with techy tools befitting Tony Stark and his Iron Man persona. There is a trinocular microscope that captures miniscule details of jewelry. "We can zoom in on something so the customer can actually see what needs repaired," Smith smiled. To the right is a laser welder so precise he can apply three welds to fit within the diameter equivalent of a strand of hair. "When I acquired it, I think there were only three of them in the country," he said.

Behind him is an anvil with an elongated and sharp snout modeled after illustrations of the one belonging to Benvenuto Cellini, a renowned Italian goldsmith during the Renaissance. Nearby are watchmaker lathes and an electric casting machine. And the 150-plus pliers Smith has made or modified for diamond

Smith's Montoursville shop occupies a building that was once a movie theater.

setting are impossible to ignore.

"I don't have a single piece of equipment that I didn't have a part in fixing or creating," Smith said. "Almost everything I have, I've torn apart to change it and make it better."

Tinkering has been a way of life for Smith since he was a child living across the street from the state police barracks in Montoursville, where his father worked as a trooper and photographer. "My mom said we didn't have a clock in the house until I was about 14 because I was always taking them apart," he laughed.

Studying electronics at WTI became Smith's path after his uncle, an electronics engineer, gifted him a crystal radio kit. "When I turned it on and it actually worked, that was the hook," he said. "How can this piece of crystal and a couple wires do this? That was the start of it."

At WTI, Smith didn't study in high-tech, clean labs that would later become the hallmark of Penn College, but the faculty made the best of limited resources. "Every instructor that I had, you knew they cared about you. If you had questions, you didn't feel like you were a bother. You could go to them after class, and they would take the time," he recalled.

Smith learned well. Minneapolis-Honeywell Regulator Co. in St. Petersburg, Florida, hired him after graduation to work on guided missiles. About a year later, his WTI education and electronics background caught the eye of the U.S. Army Security Agency, which recruited him for overseas service during the Vietnam War.

Cue the "Mission: Impossible" theme.

It's only been about 10 years since the Army declassified some information about the ASA, which operated from 1945 to 1977. The agency specialized in cryptography and monitoring radio frequencies originating from Communist forces.

"Part of my job was to set up secure communications and use cryptography for the signal to go directly to the White House," Smith said. "I was in direct communication with the White House on what was happening on the ground in Vietnam."

In the mid-1960s, Smith served his nation at the Tan Son Nhut Air Base near Saigon before the ASA transferred him to Bad Aibling, Germany. There, he and his unit were stationed for a few years at an Air Force base, or as Smith described it – a "spy base" focusing on Eastern Bloc countries aligned with the Soviet Union.

During his downtime, Smith often ventured into town and eventually befriended a master goldsmith looking to pass on his knowledge. The elderly German found an eager apprentice.

"I've always loved gemology and the fact that you can find something beautiful and potentially valuable hidden in the rocks and dirt," Smith said. With a wry smile, he recounted breaking his ankle as a young teen when a mountain of rocks collapsed under him in a quarry outside of Montoursville. What was he doing on top of the rocks? Chipping away at a bright specimen that he spotted through binoculars.

Smith studied the "old school" repair and restoration techniques mastered by his German mentor for about three years. "I learned on traditional tools and antique jewelry because he wouldn't trust me with the new stuff," Smith chuckled.

Many of the pieces were from the Victorian period (1837-1901), which remains Smith's favorite era of jewelry. "The style features very fine workmanship. It's not heavy and clunky like other periods in history," he explained.

Following his discharge from the ASA in 1969, Smith returned to the Williamsport area, where he worked at Litton Industries Inc., a defense contractor. He also established Smith Jewelers in the basement of his home, offering personally made pieces and repair and restoration expertise learned in Germany.

"I did the diamond setting for all the local jewelers because nobody around here could set prongs," he said.

When it came to his own diamonds, Smith often went directly to the source, traveling multiple times to West Africa and other remote locales, where he would purchase raw diamonds from indigenous miners. "Why should l pay markup when I could actually, with my knowledge and abilities, go right to the mine site?" he reasoned.

The lawless nature on the roads outside the mines often put Smith at risk, but he relied on his military training and personal weaponry for protection. "Sometimes it was a shoot-your-way-out kind of a deal," he said, matter of factly. "One time we rented a new SUV, and by the time we brought it back a week later, there was no glass left, and there were bullet holes in it. The guy went ballistic."

Reminders from those excursions are displayed in his office today, like his trusty knife and a whip that would make Indiana Jones envious. "When you cracked the whip, it was a good way to scare small animals away in the jungle," Smith explained. Skin once belonging to a long snake extends on the side wall. African villagers gave it to him as a gift. "The snake was eating their goats," he said. Among other keepsakes are a poison blow gun obtained in Brazil and a sword found in Damascus, Syria. And behind his desk is a deactivated hand grenade.

He didn't have adequate space to display those and numerous other mementos from his escapades until he moved the jewelry business from his basement to its current location, which he purchased in 1982. In the ensuing years, he completed a slew of courses through the Gemological Institute of America and became a graduate gemologist before achieving "master" status and teaching classes for the GIA throughout North America.

"In goldsmithing, I can create, recreate, repair, restore, do just about anything. I don't care what it's made of. Gemology deals with gemstones, their properties and things of that nature. Coupling the two together is what started the PA Gem Lab, the forensic side of things," he said.

The PA Gem Lab began in 1997, but Smith's adventurous and entrepreneurial spirit led to many prior endeavors. He became a Pentecostal minister after crediting God for curing his infant daughter's visual impairment. (In 2001, he opened New Covenant Full Gospel Church in the back portion of his building. The church continues to host Sunday services and Wednesday night prayer meetings.) Smith also worked as a dental technician, creating and repairing crowns and bridges. Small business ventures included a security-alarm company, an early internet service provider and a collaboration with Sony Corp. on an integrated computer video imaging system for jewelers.

But it's the PA Gem Lab that's provided the most recognition for Smith. Through that entity, he offers litigation support, consulting and expert witness testimony for clients, often focusing on forensic reconstruction and valuation of missing jewelry. His expertise is sought from people throughout the country and the world.

"For example, I can get a piece in from an estate, and the person is wondering if it's original and the stone is natural. I can say, to the best of my opinion, the piece is original because the solder joints are a certain way, and it's from a certain period because of the cut of the stone."

A digital microscope that projects onto a huge flat-screen monitor allows Smith to pinpoint details to the hundredth of a millimeter on any stone. Another tool he employs is a toaster-size instrument called a PhosView, which shines an ultraviolet light to help distinguish between natural and lab-grown diamonds. If the diamond fluoresces a greenish color, it's a less valuable lab-grown version. Of course, Smith's 4-carat diamond ring glows a bit blue, not green.

Part of Smith's international renown stems from a Guinness World Record. A few years ago, he authenticated in the PA Gem Lab the largest collection of natural saltwater pearls: 2,392. In what could be a subplot to the next "Pirates of the Caribbean" installment, the pearls belonged to a man whose late grandfather, an archeologist, discovered them in a pot buried at the high-water mark along the shoreline of an island. The owner of the pearls contacted Smith at a gem show in Arizona and later traveled to Montoursville for him to examine a sampling.

"I was blown away," Smith said. "Those pearls are about as rare as they come."

The estimated value of the collection, which dates back over 500 years, tops $10 million.

Such expertise is why Smith has trademarked the terms "forensic gemologist" and "forensic jeweler" to differentiate himself from others who might take a class or two and are tempted to pass themselves off as authorities. After all, they haven't performed forensic services for the Smithsonian Natural History Museum like Smith has.

Through a friendship with Kimberly R. Cassel, college relations director, Smith has become reacquainted with the institution that jumpstarted his remarkable career. He's toured parts of the campus and met instructors such as Howard W. Troup, associate professor of automated manufacturing and machining.

"You can sense whenever you're on campus that every instructor will go out of their way for their students," said Smith, whose grandson Zach J. Fisher is an electrical construction major at the college. "It's a passion for them."

Troup, along with Bryan C. Schaefer, instructor of CNC machining and automation, made Smith two hardened-steel tapered ring mandrels.

"Gary's scope of accomplishments in such a specialized field are simply amazing," Troup said. "He has been a trailblazer for a little known but important profession. I can only hope that I am as sharp and active at the age of 81 as he is."

And that active lifestyle will continue for many more years, according to Smith. "I hope to make it until 110 unless a hang-gliding accident takes me out before then," he said.

That would be quite an end to a memorable "movie." ■

Remembering a champion for students

by Jennifer A. Cline, writer/magazine editor

Dr. Bill Feddersen, president of Williamsport Area Community College from 1974 to 1980.

Inspired by his high school principal, William Feddersen realized early in life that he wanted to be not only an educator, but a leader in education.

"I knew I wanted to be in a position where I could act as a change agent," said Feddersen, who served as the president of Pennsylvania College of Technology forerunner Williamsport Area Community College from 1974 to 1980.

Feddersen died on March 4 at his home in California. He was 84.

The former president, who was one of the youngest college presidents in the nation when he began his WACC tenure in 1974, grew up on a farm in northwest Illinois. He was raised by parents who wanted to go to college (his mother – like Feddersen – was valedictorian of her graduating class and received a college scholarship offer) but were denied the opportunity.

As Feddersen completed his bachelor's degree, the community college movement was gaining traction. He received a fellowship to attend the Community College Leadership Program, part of Columbia University's Teachers College.

The philosophy of community colleges reflected Feddersen's values.

"I strongly believe in equal educational opportunity," he said in a 2011 Penn College oral history interview, conducted by Tom Speicher, writer/video producer.

"I knew that education was the key to my own future, and education is the key to anybody's future," Feddersen said. "And the community colleges open that door widely to everyone."

Feddersen began his community college career as one of the founding leaders of Bucks County Community College, in southeastern Pennsylvania, when it was launched in 1965. He was hired as the director of admissions and records and became assistant to the president. Enrollment at the new college grew from 700 students the year it opened to 6,000 seven years later, when Feddersen left.

From Bucks, where he gained experience developing resources and overseeing construction projects, he became CEO of Iowa Western University's Clarinda campus.

Shortly after, he became one of 350 applicants for the president's position at WACC.

Feddersen was aware of WACC. Built on the foundation of Williamsport Technical Institute, the college was well-known for its unique hands-on programs and, with 20 sponsoring school districts in 10 counties, for serving the largest region of any community college in Pennsylvania.

"These were very attractive features for someone coming in, knowing that they already had this strength, and how can you take a college – maybe it's got some problems – but take them onto the next step of their evolution," he recalled.

He met a variety of challenges.

He was tasked with reuniting a campus that was dealing with hard feelings after a contentious faculty strike six months before his arrival. Many of the facilities used by the college were former industrial buildings in need of repair or replacement, and the college, like many others across the country, faced financial difficulties.

Feddersen moved quickly. He reorganized the college's administrative structure, set up committees to rewrite the college's mission statement and develop a 10-year long-range plan, and cut $200,000 from the 1974-75 budget.

"I had a vision, but I also knew that I needed to develop a shared vision for the college – that it couldn't be just my vision," he recalled.

"I knew the No. 1 job was to rebuild trust across campus – because without that trust, you can't do anything. So forget about the facility problems and forget about all the other things we want to do."

He appointed an ombudsman, Tom McNally, to hear grievances. He named mathematics faculty member Bob Bowers as assistant to the president for employee relations. He began the "President's Coffee House," visiting the cafeteria for an hour each week to hear about whatever students wanted to share with him.

He encouraged a forward-thinking attitude, renaming a newsletter "New Day News."

He also initiated facility upgrades – first in the George S. Klump Academic Center. For nearly 60 years, the building had been home to Williamsport Area High School, which moved to a new location in 1971-72.

The building was structurally sound but needed renovations and repairs. In the summer of 1974, students were hired to do much of the labor.

"We had students from all programs do that work," Feddersen said. "If you could hold a paintbrush, you could participate. … We had contractors, too, but we basically didn't have a lot of money, but we had a lot of enthusiasm."

At the time Feddersen left WACC, construction had begun on three new buildings – the Learning Resources Center (now part of the Henry G. Hager Lifelong Education Center) which moved the college library from an off-site building to a central on-campus location, the Lycoming Engines Metal Trades Center and the Kenneth E. Carl Building Technologies Center.

Among other developments during Feddersen's tenure was the implementation of developmental education, using a Title III grant, to help ensure students' success. Much like today's placement testing process, the college began assessing students' math, reading and writing skills and placing them in appropriate classes to develop those skills if needed.

"If you don't assess students and place them into the courses in which they're prepared to succeed, many will fail," Feddersen said. "I've heard the expression: 'Students have the right to fail.' And I say no, they have the right to succeed, and our job is to make them successful.

"If you want to summarize community college in two words: student success."

Feddersen received a variety of offers from other colleges during his tenure at WACC that he generally ignored – until an offer arrived from Napa Valley Community College. He had boyhood dreams of living in California, and the larger college was in not only an idyllic vacation destination, but an agricultural region that appealed to Feddersen's farming roots.

"The saddest time (at WACC) was leaving because I really wanted to see those plans through, but they were very good times," he said in 2011.

Feddersen retired in 2002 after serving 30 years as a college president. He served 11 years at Napa Valley College and 11 at Mount San Antonio College, also in California.

He received the Harry Buttimer Distinguished Administrator Award, the highest award given to a California community college president, from the Association of California Community College Administrators.

He returned to the Penn College campus in 2014 for its Centennial celebration. He also established the Dr. Bill Feddersen Leadership Scholarship Fund at Penn College. The endowed scholarship promotes and recognizes student leadership and community service. ■

"If you want to summarize community college in two words: student success."

Feddersen receives a donation for the automotive program. Watching the eyes of faculty and students light up as they used new tools was a highlight of his time at the college.

Feddersen chats with students in the cafeteria during a "President's Coffee House." He visited the cafeteria weekly to hear from students.

Feddersen offers encouragement to a horticulture student.

Foundations to Futures

The enduring legacy of Penn College's community connections

by Nicole S. Warner, librarian, archives and special collections

Referred to as "Tech I," the first student-built home was constructed on property owned by the Williamsport School District and auctioned to raise funds to buy a property for the next house.

A brochure proudly shows off a home built by Williamsport Technical Institute students. Completed in 1963, the Sherman Street home was the first of six built by WTI and Williamsport Area Community College students. The last was completed in 1977.

Students, bussed to the building site of WACC V in Old Lycoming Township, prep the site.

Brochures share details for homes built by the college's building trades students. Top: A pamphlet for the third home, completed in 1965 on Memorial Avenue, touts colonial-white brick on the first story and vertical aluminum siding on the second level. Bottom: A handout highlights the floor plans and details of WACC V, a one-story ranch "designed for comfort and convenience."

AT THE DEDICATION of Pennsylvania College of Technology's new architecture suite in the fall of 2024, one word resonated throughout the event: connection. President Michael J. Reed highlighted that "industry connections are the cornerstone of a Pennsylvania College of Technology education," while the student speaker, James McCollum, emphasized "a very valuable aspect of Penn College's architecture program is the connection with the outside firms in the region." As I listened to these reflections on the power of connections, I was reminded of my role as Penn College's archivist and the rich history I have the privilege to access. Over time, I've come to realize that connections – both with industry and the community – have played a pivotal role in the college's success, stretching back to the days of Williamsport Technical Institute, a Penn College forerunner.

As I considered this, I couldn't help but think of a specific piece of our history where community connections and hands-on learning – foundational aspects of our institution – were at the forefront. Soon after the dedication, I learned of the collaboration between Penn College and Greater Lycoming Habitat for Humanity to build a house. This provided a perfect moment to reflect on how this current project mirrors that piece of history from decades ago. Many people are unaware that several homes in the area were designed and built almost entirely by students from WTI and, later, Williamsport Area Community College (another Penn College forerunner). This practice, which spanned more than a decade, laid the groundwork for a rich legacy of learning by doing – and deepened the college's ties to the local community.

The brochure for the first house proudly stated: "The idea of building a modern home as a training project for students at Williamsport Technical Institute engaged in learning these various skills was a 'natural' for Tech." That sentiment rings just as true today for Penn College students working on the Habitat house as it did for WTI students more than 60 years ago. These projects, both then and now, have only been possible through the collaboration and dedication of numerous departments, hundreds of students and several experienced faculty members.

The first house, aptly named "The House That Tech Built," was approved by the Williamsport School Board (WTI was part of the school district) and constructed on a district-owned property at 1534 Sherman St. Much like today's Habitat house, this project – from concept to completion – required the collaboration of many WTI departments. Students in architectural drafting, under the guidance of instructor Robert Christensen, were tasked with developing and revising the plans, which were ultimately submitted to and approved by the Williamsport School Board. Masonry students carried out the surveying and staking, poured concrete floors, built the fireplace and decorative masonry planters, and installed the brick veneer, among other things. Heavy equipment students handled site excavation, while plumbing students ensured proper drainage and installed sewer pipes, rough plumbing and the heating plant.

Building construction and carpentry students played a significant role throughout the build. Notable responsibilities included the installation of floor joists, sill plates, framing and sub-flooring. Lastly, electrical students were responsible for ensuring safe wiring throughout the house. Of all the tasks required to complete the house, only the plastering was outsourced, as it was the only skill not taught at WTI. Even Williamsport High School students had the opportunity to gain real-world experience, as Doris Eames' home economics classes worked on interior design aspects such as color schemes and the selection of wallpaper, linoleum and kitchen countertops.

Because the property was already owned by the school district, and labor costs were minimal, the first house cost the institution a mere $12,926.46. After completion in 1963, the house was sold at auction, and the proceeds funded the acquisition of property and supplies for construction of the next house.

We know the second house was a ranch style built at West ▸▸

In the top three photos, students hone their skills on WACC IV, built on Rural Avenue in 1968. The bottom photo shows a peek at WACC V's 1976-vintage kitchen.

Royal Avenue and Valley Street in Newberry, and it was likely completed in 1964. Other details on that home are scarce, but a 1973 Spotlight student newspaper article mentions that the plans for this house were later revised and reused for the fifth house.

Tech Home No. 3, on Memorial Avenue, was also designed and built by WTI students; however, by the time it was completed in 1965, Williamsport Technical Institute had become Williamsport Area Community College, and the newly formed WACC sold this contemporary style home for $17,000.

WACC IV, the most elaborate house according to a Spotlight article, was completed in 1968 on Rural Avenue and sold for $48,000.

The fifth house, completed in 1976 on Hillview Avenue in Old Lycoming Township, was constructed for a total of $39,736.

The final house, WACC VI, built across the street from WACC V and completed in 1977, was described in the Spotlight as an "ultra-modern home with a unique design."

These subsequent homes required the continued collaboration of the heavy equipment, architecture, electrical and construction programs. They also saw the involvement of additional departments like technical illustration for brochure design and the printing department for printing and distribution of the brochures to the general public.

Each home was required to meet city building codes and pass inspections for electrical and plumbing work. Many of the homes were spacious, with added rooms such as family rooms, recreation rooms, workshops and garages. Some even had additional unfinished spaces that could be tailored to the new owners' preferences. The homes also featured modern amenities, including concrete patios, picture windows, modern appliances, custom cabinets, and mountain stone or brick fireplaces. Elements such as hardwood floors, ceramic tile and dimmable lighting provided the interior of the homes with both form and function.

The reasons why the home-building project ended with WACC VI remain unclear, but several factors shed light on the challenges faced. In 1977, correspondence between Edmond Watters, dean of postsecondary instructional service, and William Feddersen, WACC president, revealed plans for a conference facility in Morgan Valley. While one memo mentioned the desire to construct "one more facility of the WACC VI variety before relocating to the Morgan Valley property," WACC VII never came to fruition.

Logistical challenges were prevalent throughout the planning, coordination and scheduling of the construction process. Tight course schedules prevented some students from participating in the finish grading and landscaping and planting phases. Additionally, WACC V experienced further delays due to the lack of summer courses in finish carpentry. Other complications arose, including the need for transportation and security for the student workers. These challenges, among other reasons, likely influenced the decision to shift focus from homebuilding projects to the development of the Morgan Valley property.

While unfortunate, it's not surprising that there were logistical challenges with these projects, when you consider how many people were involved with each one. Throughout the building of the six houses, a number of faculty and administrators were part of the process, including Joseph Sick, Roger Apple and Michael Sedlak for excavation and landscaping; Paul McQuay, John Yahner, William Ealer and Robert Christensen with design and blueprints; Donald Young and Anthony Guravage in electrical technology and circuits; and William Bradshaw, Harold Winner, Robert Hutchinson, James Adams, George Krause, Frank Beatty, Fred Dochter, Frank Grenoble, Paul Heim, Joseph Martin, William Rummings and William Young Sr. in general construction, including woodwork, masonry, tile setting, plumbing and heating. In addition to faculty, George Krause, director of the building technologies division, and Watters were highly involved. Because of significant hurdles faced with WACC V, Watters assigned Krause sole responsibility for the scheduling and planning of WACC VI.

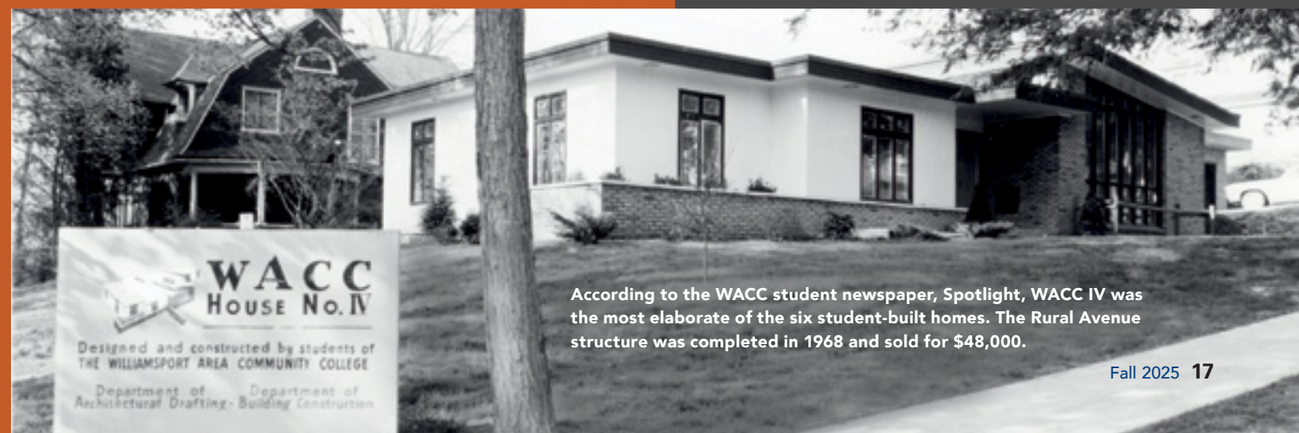
Despite setbacks faced by the students and faculty at that time, the houses built through WTI and WACC served as invaluable learning opportunities. More than six decades later, many of these homes still stand as a testament to the hard work and dedication of the alumni of our predecessor institutions.

While history repeating itself often carries a negative connotation, I am pleased to see it manifest in a positive way today. Penn College students are once again engaged in designing and constructing a house – a project remarkably similar to the houses built by WTI and WACC students. This continuity reinforces our enduring legacy of community connections and commitment to hands-on learning. The bond between Penn College and its community remains as strong today as ever, fueled by the same spirit of collaboration and practical education that has defined this institution for over a century. ■

Connections – both with industry and the community – have played a pivotal role in the college's success, stretching back to the days of Williamsport Technical Institute.

Built on Hillview Avenue in Old Lycoming Township, WACC V boasted brick veneer and aluminum and redwood siding, a sandstone patio wall, and a carport.

The final home, also built on Hillview Avenue, was described as an "ultra-modern home with a unique design."



According to the WACC student newspaper, Spotlight, WACC IV was the most elaborate of the six student-built homes. The Rural Avenue structure was completed in 1968 and sold for $48,000.

WILD CATCH

by Cindy Davis Meixel, retired writer/Penn College News editor

PHOTOS ON PAGES 18-19 COURTESY OF WILD FOR SALMON

Steve Kurian '98 (second from right) with his wife, Jenn (left), and their children aboard the Ava Jane, named for his daughter. For 40 days each summer, Kurian fishes the salmon that "run" through Alaska's Bristol Bay into one of the five rivers that adjoin it. Jenn and the children join him in the final week.

ON CUE, THE SALMON RUSH IN.

It's the summer solstice, and Steve Kurian and his crew will be fishing for 40 days, harvesting enough salmon to sustain a successful business, with extra money to give back to protect the bay that provides the bounty.

For 24 seasons now, Kurian has been caught by the magic that is Alaska's Bristol Bay, home of the world's largest sockeye salmon run.

The majesty and might of the salmon and the excitement of their annual migration are like magnets, influencing Kurian's return year after year.

The salmon life cycle captivates him: The fish are born in fresh water, spending one or two years in the river before migrating out to sea for up to three years and then returning to where they were born to spawn.

"And then, you hit the summer solstice, and miraculously, they just show up!" Kurian enthused.

Nearly 50 million salmon were predicted to return to Bristol Bay for the 2025 run, aiming for the Togiak, Nushagak, Naknek, Egegik and Ugashik rivers.

Kurian first showed up at Naknek in 2002, encouraged by his then-landlord in Idaho, where he was working in state forest service and private land management following a similar stint in Utah.

The Bloomsburg native had earned his associate degree in forest technology from Pennsylvania College of Technology in 1998 and later added a Penn State bachelor's degree in the same discipline. He spent weekends back home working his tree business to pay his way through college and continuing his boyhood passions of hunting, fishing and reveling in the great outdoors.

When his adventure-seeking Idaho mentor asked him if he could drive a boat, Kurian thought, "Well, I can drive a log skidder and a bulldozer; it can't be that different. Let's give it a try!"

The job came easy to him, but it's certainly not a lightweight gig.

"They put the boat in the water, and you're on it for the next 40 days. You don't come off. There are no docks. You just anchor up in the river. It's like a camping trip," he said.

Kurian pilots the Ava Jane, one of the 1,500 fishing vessels that make their way to Bristol Bay for the world's largest salmon run.

In his early days on Bristol Bay, Kurian's boat amenities were minimal, and the need to work on the motor was constant. Being covered in hydraulic oil and wiping fish blood off his face was the typical scene.

"My first 10 years, it was like we were just savages," he laughed.

When he built his own boat in 2014, he named it after his first-born child: Ava Jane. There are more amenities now, but the work is still rigorous.

"You're always fishing around the tides, and the tides keep shifting by an hour every day," Kurian shared. "There's a lot of times where we're working, you know, 20 hours a day with two naps filled in for two hours at a time.

"You have to love the raw adventure of it."

PHOTO COURTESY OF WILD FOR SALMON

Kurian at his Wild For Salmon Seafood Market & Café in Bloomsburg, where central Pennsylvania customers can purchase the wild sockeye salmon he catches in Alaska's Bristol Bay. It's also sold online (wildforsalmon.com) and in natural food stores, restaurants and farm markets across Pennsylvania – and beyond.

Bristol Bay Facts:

- The world's largest salmon run
- About 50 million salmon return each summer
- Up to 1,500 fishing boats work the annual salmon run
- Tides come in every 12 hours, twice a day
- At the peak of the run, 200,000 to 300,000 fish go through on a single high tide
- Sockeye salmon is the main species found at Bristol Bay; the other four species make up only 5% of the run: chinook (king) salmon, coho (silver), pink (humpy) and keta (chum)

"So, that's the intensity … and you have to love the raw adventure of it."

Competition between fishing boats is fierce. "It's super, super cutthroat," Kurian said. "Super competitive."

With U.S. Coast Guard monitoring and the modernity of cell phones, fishermen are no longer ramming their boats into each other, but it's still deemed by many as one of the remaining remnants of "The Wild West."

Bristol Bay drift permits range in price from $150,000 to $225,000, but the results can be lucrative.

In 2004, Kurian flew home from Alaska with three coolers of salmon and sold them at a Farmers Market in Benton. Since then, his enterprise has expanded to include wholesale and online sales.

Those 40 days fishing the waters of Bristol Bay provide the central stock for his thriving business: Wild for Salmon, which also operates a market and café in Bloomsburg, providing the wild caught Alaskan seafood to central Pennsylvania customers. Also under the Kurian Enterprises umbrella are Pride of Bristol Bay and Kurian Fisheries, as well as his original business – Susquehanna Tree Care – and a Cessna-rental side operation – Green Hornet Aviation.

Including Kurian and his childhood-sweetheart wife, Jenn, there are 33 full-time employees, nine part-timers and four summer deckhands.

Two of his part-time employees are his parents. Kurian's father was a custom butcher, so that part of the food-production task comes naturally.

A key component for Kurian is serving as a spokesperson for protecting Bristol Bay.

"Even though we can't see the Bristol Bay, it's such a significant resource for Americans," he said.

His business model gives back to Trout Unlimited to protect the bay from a pebble mine that sits at the headwaters of two of the rivers that feed into the bay.

Kurian has traveled to Washington, D.C., to advocate for environmental protections for the bay and was invited to a 2023 presidential speech at the White House rose garden.

"The wild protein, the wild sockeye, the beautiful red fish, is like a centerpiece that I can put on this table," Kurian related. "I don't care where you stand politically or what your environmental thoughts are, but we can have a conversation about it across that fish, and we'll both agree that this is worth saving.

"So, I try to use that to the advantage of protecting wild places and in bringing that awareness to our customers … about why we should be protecting clean water. And that's what I really enjoy the most out of all this. I love to eat salmon. I love to be in Alaska. But that natural resource piece is definitely … key for me."

While his career has taken him into a wide – and wild – range of pursuits, Kurian says he found his Penn College education to be "very valuable" during his formative years.

"I think what stands out most to me was the quality of the professors and how down-to-earth and real they were. They were with the industry that they were teaching on, and that was very relatable," he said. "They could put it in a fashion that, it wasn't just textbook learning. It was real, and that's what I value the most out of it: how real it was, the on-the-job knowledge being taught to you."

Having access to equipment, like that found at Penn College's Schneebeli Earth Science Center, where forestry classes are based, is something Kurian feels is lacking for today's youth, due to a focus on technology.

"I feel like that's one thing that society is missing, as we keep getting more advanced technology. … We know less people with tractors and chainsaws and vital equipment like that, … so today's kids don't have the opportunity to learn all the things that I think were valuable to me as a young kid and that give you a step up in the workplace."

Kurian's kids, Ava Jane, 11, and Tommy, 9, enjoy being hands-on in the family's businesses. With their mother, who fished alongside their father for his first eight years on Bristol Bay, they help close out his final week of salmon fishing, serving as mini deckhands. After some outdoor recreation and sightseeing, it's back to Pennsylvania and back to business.

As the cycle of life continues, Kurian is ever eying his next opportunity to nourish a dream:

"I think that's been my biggest lesson: Never saying 'No.' You always just do more. Take the opportunity. You have no idea what's going to come out of it. You just pour your energy into it and do good work." ■

SPACES

Collision Repair Lab

A line-up of antiques and classics, many entrusted by museums to students' care, provide hands-on experience to students in the one-year automotive restoration major, who master the art of restorative techniques, from basic painting and nonstructural repairs to advanced woodworking and upholstery installation.

John Shaffer Jr. completes the final sanding process on the roof of a 1935 Rolls-Royce 20/25 Saloon, part of the collection of the Rolls-Royce Foundation and Ownership Club of America. In March, when automotive restoration students traveled to Moda Miami to help show a 1948 Tucker they restored for the Swigart Museum, Shaffer saw the 1914 Mercer Type 35-J Raceabout that his great-grandfather had restored with his best friend. For the coach-built Rolls-Royce, Shaffer's team hand-fabricated a new roof panel. "It's a good feeling, being able to straighten something, fix it. It's an art," Shaffer said.

Kyle Bealer, of York, works on a complete refinish of the 1995 Chevrolet Camaro he's had since he was 17. (He also has a 1948 Chevy.) "I grew up going to drag races with my grandpa and his car club: Motor Menders Rod & Custom. They actually gave me a scholarship to come here," Bealer said. He previously worked in a restoration shop, and after his May graduation, he began work for a dealership. His Camaro – which he refinished using PPG Envirobase products (white tri-stage with orange pearl) – came with dents, scratches and peeling paint. He did all the repairs and refinish work during his second-year collision repair classes.

Partnerships with Nationwide Insurance and the Honda Professional Automotive Career Training program (Penn College is one of six Honda PACT collision repair programs in the U.S.) provide a stream of fresh vehicles for collision repair students to work on, allowing them to experience the latest in the automotive industry. The college offers a certificate and an associate degree in collision repair, which can be continued to a bachelor's in automotive technology management.

Collision Repair Lab, College Avenue Labs, Room 165

Among several campus gems in the former Hon Industries furniture factory along Third Street, this 49,000-square-foot lab houses an array of vehicles and specialized equipment for use in the college's collision repair and automotive restoration majors. Featuring three spray booths, six English wheels, a 52-inch sheer, box and pan brake, power hammer, shrinking and stretching equipment, eight frame straightening machines, two dual-car preparation stations – and one vehicle for every two students – the expansive lab provides space to train students on the variety of skill sets required in collision repair.

These three photos from the Penn College Archives show students hard at work building WACC IV and WACC V, Williamsport area homes that were later auctioned to the public. Can you help us identify who's doing what? Please email magazine@pct.edu or call 570-321-5527.

IN THE LAST ISSUE

Several readers shed light on the future architects pictured in the Spring 2025 Penn College Magazine. In the photo (at left) of two students, Dennis Hauser '70 identified his cousin, current Penn College architecture instructor Daniel L. Brooks '70 on the left, while Leslie Gignoux Fritz identified her husband, Scott Fritz '81, on the right. She says Brooks and Fritz were working on a model of St. George's Chapel at Windsor Castle as part of a class taught by William Ealer. (Fritz is now a landscape architect for Fritz & Gignoux Landscape Architects, based in Washington, D.C.) Also helping to identify Brooks and Fritz were Joanna K. Flynn, vice president for academic affairs/provost, and Kelly Durnkin-Lebo '81. Many thanks also to Heather Young '02, Stephanie Hoffman '76, Jim Long '85 and Dee Shaffer '76 for providing IDs for additional archive photos.

1960s

John D. Haller '63, mechanical drafting, retired from Lycoming Engines as the manager of manufacturing engineering in 1998. He served in the Air Force 1956-60. While still attending classes at WTI, he was hired by Ingersoll Rand. After two years there, he was hired by Avco (later Lycoming Engines) as a draftsman. He resides in Williamsport.

James E. Frey '65, architectural drafting, is a retired registered architect. He owned Frey Associates in Montoursville, where he resides with his wife, **Cecelia '73,** education-social work.

James W. Douty '66, technical illustration, is retired and resides in Mechanicsburg.

Fred "Joe" Walter '67, office machine technology, retired in 2012 as director of emergency management for Lucas County, Ohio. He was drafted in 1968 and served in Vietnam. He was discharged as a staff sergeant in 1970, then served 30 years in the Toledo (Ohio) Fire Department, retiring as assistant chief. He then served as director of safety for the City of Toledo. He holds a bachelor's in fire safety and engineering from University of Cincinnati. He resides in Toledo.

Robert R. Getz '68, business management, is retired and resides in Dushore.

Matthew J. Nichols '68, automotive technology, retired from Mack Trucks. He resides in Lehighton with his wife. They celebrated 53 years of marriage in April.

1970s

James C. Leone '70, civil engineering technology, is retired and resides in Lock Haven.

Richard Boop '71, industrial management, is general manager and sales manager for QCast Aluminum. He resides in Millmont.

Karl Gochnauer '71, business management, is retired and resides in Mountville.

Harold V. Brown '74, food service management, is retired and resides in Beaufort, S.C. He holds a master's in nursing education from Wilmington University.

Edward F. Donovan '74, diesel technology, retired in 2018 from Walmart Transportation, for which he was a truck driver. He received the 3 Million Mile Safe Driving Award from the American Trucking Association of Pennsylvania and the One Million Mile Safety Award from Walmart Transportation. He resides in Shenandoah with his wife and has two daughters, two grandchildren and a great-grandson.

Ernest E. McCurdy '75, building construction technology, retired from Conrail after 35 years as a bridge and building foreman. He resides in Derry.

Rodney Holter '76, business management, is president and owner of As One Consulting and a strategic partner/franchise owner of Schooley Mitchell, helping businesses to reduce overhead expenses. He holds a bachelor's in organizational management and leadership from Friends University (2002). He previously held executive positions in the aerospace industry. He resides in Towanda, Kan.

Joe J. Pearl '76, nursery management, is retired and resides in Janesville, Wis.

Jeffrey Rounsville '78, computer science technology, is a computer consultant for Dataquest Inc. He resides in Mechanicsburg.

Michael Weinhoffer '78, electronics technology, retired as a project manager from PPL Electric Utilities. He holds a Master of Business Administration from Temple University (1993) and a bachelor's in computer science from DeSales University (1991). He resides in Quakertown.

Kim Landis '79, mechanical drafting, retired from Lee County Electric in 2021 as a geographic information systems supervisor. He worked for the power company for 36 years. His initial job was to maintain the system data, adding – with ink pens on mylar paper – any new pole lines, transformers, lights, switches, customers, substations, etc. He resides in North Fort Myers, Fla.

1980s

Brian R. Bushick '82, electrical technology, is a senior systems manager for Clark Construction Group. He schedules, coordinates and manages the mechanical, electrical and plumbing trades on construction projects. He resides in Madison, Ala.

Keith E. Holtzman '82, service and operation of heavy construction equipment, is a solutions engineer architect for EOG Resources involved in oil well construction and drilling. He resides in Edmond, Okla.

Dr. Paul Tully '82, architectural technology, retired from private practice as a general dentist in Gettysburg. After completing his architectural technology degree, he worked as a computer-aided design draftsman for an international food service consulting firm while continuing his education. He graduated from the University of Maryland School of Dentistry in 1995. He resides in Gettysburg with his wife.

Scott Voigt '82, aviation maintenance technician, is an aviation maintenance technician for United Airlines, where he's worked since 1984. He resides in Gahanna, Ohio.

Jean (Miller) Plymette '83, broadcasting, is a medical assistant for Family Practice Center. She resides in Selinsgrove.

Lance R. Yonge '84, service and operation of heavy construction equipment, is the owner-operator of Lance Yonge Grading. He resides in Penn Yan, N.Y.

James J. Schilling '87, computer information systems, is a senior software developer for WarmHub Inc. He resides in Lisle, Ill.

Margaret (Bloom) Young '87, food and hospitality management, is a pharmacy technician for UPMC. She resides in Salladasburg.

Craig E. Ritter '88, business management, retired from Keystone Human Services as a program coordinator supervisor. He resides in Beavertown.

Douglas K. Snedden '89, construction carpentry, is vice president of commercial operations for Innovative Building Solutions. A 26-year journeyman in the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, he was selected for recognition as one of the union's top 300 workers and honored at the Carpenters International Training Center in Las Vegas. He resides in Freedom.

1990s

Keith D. Green '90, architectural technology, is an architect for Christ Church of the Valley/Next Idea Architects LLC. After 30-plus years as a project manager, he "finally" took the architectural license exam and received his Arizona architect license in January 2025. He resides in Litchfield Park, Ariz.

Kevin L. Stuck '90, computer information systems, is a workforce management technical architect for Geisinger. He resides in Lewistown.

Leslie W. Vogel '90, industrial drafting technology, is a network engineer for Cornell University. He's responsible for wireless network coverage design and planning for multiple campuses and upgrades to the university's data center in preparation for liquid cooling and the power capabilities for AI research. He resides in Horseheads, N.Y.

Ryan Brown '92, paramedic, is a cybersecurity technical analyst for Pereton. He holds associate and bachelor's degrees from Wayland Baptist University and a master's from Bellevue University. He resides in Jacksonville, N.C.

David B. Cline '92, building construction technology, runs M.D. Cline Metal Fabricating Inc., a small manufacturing company that has been in the family since the late 1960s. He resides in Blairsville.

Michelle A. (Leese) Ashley '94, dental hygiene, is the academic program director for dental assistant and an instructor of dental assisting and dental hygiene at Greenville Technical College. She holds a bachelor's degree from the Medical University of South Carolina. She resides in Simpsonville, S.C.

Kenneth F. Doyle Jr. '96, electrical trades, is an electrical trades teacher for Greater Altoona Career and Technology Center. He resides in Hollidaysburg.

Robert T. Santor '97, electronics technology: computer automation maintenance, is an assistant IT manager for Transcore. He oversees back-end operations for the Pennsylvania Turnpike Customer Service Center. He resides in Hummelstown.

2000s

Jeremiah Boyskey '00, toolmaking technology, is a process technician for Corning Inc. He develops and implements new processes for glass fixtures in the research phase. He resides in Tioga.

Kevin M. Cornelius '01, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is senior vice president-engineering for Tramec LLC. He resides in Kansas City, Mo.

Deborah S. Potter '01, office technology: medical emphasis, is a hospice medical assistant. She resides in Williamsport.

Ryan Rex '01, HVAC technology, is a master plumber and owner of Rex & Sons Plumbing & Heating Inc. He is married with two children, and has published two novels, "American Dysfunction: The Ballad of Alex Walker" (2023) and "American Dysfunction: The Adventures of Scott" (2025). He resides in North Wales.

Richard V. Baus III '02, construction management, is a construction specialist for Urban Engineers Inc. He plans to complete a Doctor of Education degree from Holy Family University in 2025. He resides in Levittown.

Kim (Dunn) Holmes '02, businesses management, handles list management for New Pig Corp. She resides in Tyrone.

Richard D. Boyer '03, graphic design, is a senior user experience engineer for Guardian Life Insurance. He holds a key role in modernizing the company's legacy systems and processes to increase the ease of doing business with Guardian. He resides in King of Prussia.

Nathan I. Courtney '03, aviation technology, is a maintenance manager for AirQuest Aviation, which handles small, single-engine piston aircraft through medium-size corporate turbine aircraft. He resides in Slippery Rock.

Matthew J. Burns '04, heavy construction equipment technology: operator, is a heavy equipment operating engineer for International Union of Operating Engineers Local 66. He's also a firefighter and second lieutenant with the Uniontown Fire Department. He resides in McClellandtown.

Bobbi Winn '05, occupational therapy assistant, is a certified licensed occupational therapy assistant for UPMC Inpatient Rehabilitation Institute. She resides in Lock Haven.

John Lafferty '06, culinary arts technology, owns Thomas Insurance Group, where he employs a staff of 10. He resides in Harleysville.

Timothy Schanken '06, welding and fabrication engineering technology, is a welding engineer for John Deere. He resides in East Moline, Ill.

Lauren Warner '06, early childhood education, is a prekindergarten teacher for Kindercare Learning Centers. She received a 2025 Educational Excellence Award and resides in Carlisle.

Brandon J. West '06, automotive technology, owns All Wheels Driven. He buys, sells and mechanically reconditions used automobiles. He resides in Mansfield.

Robert W. Brown '05, forest technology; **'07,** technology management, is a director of field service for S&C Electric Co. He completed a master's degree in project management from Penn State in 2013. He resides in Kissimmee, Fla., with his wife, **Gabriela Rizzo Rinke '07,** hospitality management.

Anthony Flint '07, business administration: management information systems, is the director of operations for Greensboro Country Club. He resides in Cornelius, N.C.

Tracey Lisi '07, nursing, is an emergency room registered nurse for Bucktail Medical Center. She resides in Renovo.

Amanda R. (Miller) Snyder '07, culinary arts technology and hospitality management, is a culinary/pastry teacher at Montgomery Area High School. She received a degree in education from Lock Haven University and is pursuing a master's in clinical nutrition from Sonoran University of Health Sciences. She resides in Montgomery.

Steve Bull '08, manufacturing engineering technology, is a manufacturing and production engineer for Schindler Elevator. He resides in Hanover with his wife and their two children.

Michelle (McNett) Cressley '08, physical fitness specialist, is a health and physical education and special education teacher in the Otto-Eldred School District. She resides in Bradford.

Selanda (Heather Butera-Howell) Embee '08, information technology: network specialist and security specialist, is a lead system analyst for Evernorth Health Services and resides in Berwick.

Justin D. Smith '08, construction management, is a senior project manager for Construction One. He resides in Shamokin Dam.

Bill Welsh '08, electrical technology, is a locomotive electrician for Norfolk Southern. He wires, tests and troubleshoots all locomotive components and installs computer/GPS software. He resides in Martinsburg.

Kyle Wieder '08, welding technology, is a welding instructor for Washburn Institute of Technology. He resides in Berryton, Kan.

Erin Yost '08, radiography, is a diagnostic clinical specialist for UPMC Susquehanna. She resides in Linden.

Lauren (Fuller) Beard '09, business management, is a senior program manager for Stellant Systems. She resides in Montoursville.

Michael Harris '09, welding and fabrication engineering technology, is a corporate welding engineer for Bechtel. He resides in Dalton.

Amber L. Leonard '09, nursing, is a nurse practitioner for CleanSlate Medical Group, where she works in addiction medicine. She resides in South Williamsport.

Meagan Morris '09, culinary arts technology and hospitality management, is a personal chef and caterer. She resides in Herndon, Va.

Allison (Toltesi) Reichard '09, radiography and applied health studies, is a clinical instructor for St. Luke's University Health Network. She resides in Northampton.

Brandon Seymore '09, information technology: network specialist, is an information security officer for Bucknell University. He completed a Master of Business Administration in 2018. He resides in Watsontown.

2010s

Nick Gibbons '11, construction management, is a project manager for Rodgers Builders. He resides in Garner, N.C., with wife **Hillary Fisher '12,** health arts: practical nursing.

Ryan L. Ventura '11, building construction technology, is the broker/owner of R.L. Ventura & Associates, a construction, real estate and property management company. He resides in Racine, Wis.

Frank Daugherty '12, electronics and computer engineering technology: robotics and automation emphasis, is the program operations manager and parts and service manager for Farason Corp., a custom machine builder. He resides in Morgantown.

Zachery G. Hess '12, forest technology, is a consultant forester for Keystone Timber & Forestry. He holds a bachelor's in forest resource management from West Virginia University (2014). He resides in Berwick.

Clint Hinton '12, aviation maintenance technology, is an aircraft technician for the Dallas Cowboys, inspecting, repairing and maintaining four team aircraft. He resides in The Colony, Texas.

Logan J. Kenyon '12, architectural technology, owns MK Bubble Drinks. He resides in Granville Summit with his wife, **Melyce '17**, culinary arts technology.

Christopher Silverstrim '12, electrical technology, is a PLC (programmable logic controller) support engineer for System Logistics. He resides in Coal Township.

Adam Urbano '12, welding and fabrication engineering technology, is a manufacturing process engineer for Blue Origin, a company developing reusable rockets for travel to space. He resides in Titusville, Fla.

James Daniels '13, residential construction technology and management, is a project manager/estimator for Barnhill Contracting Co. He bids and manages civil highway projects. He resides in Wilmington, N.C.

Kathrine (Dixon) Millinder '13, dental hygiene, is a dental hygienist for Dr. Jamie Long. She resides in Morrisdale.

Zachary Waggle '13, heavy construction equipment technology: operator, is a senior inside sales manager for Somerset Welding & Steel. He resides in Somerset.

Joshua A. Bonner '03, '14, web design and multimedia, is assistant vice president and chief marketing officer for Mount St. Mary's University, He received an Outstanding Merit Award from the university in 2019. He resides in Gettysburg with his wife, **Aurora (Di Rocco) '03,** advertising art.

Benjamin King '14, culinary arts and systems, is a sous chef for Universal Orlando Resort's Epic Universe. He resides in Winter Garden, Fla.

Victoria L. (Kostecki) King '14, baking and pastry arts, is a sous chef for Universal Orlando Resort's Epic Universe theme park. She resides in Winter Garden, Fla. She also holds a Penn College degree in applied management (2016).

Matt Clugston '15, residential construction technology and management, is a senior project manager for ISEC Inc. He resides in Severn, Md.

Caleb Dershem '15, electronics and computer engineering technology: robotics and automation emphasis, is a shop floor IT and data analyst for Scout Motors, a manufacturer of off-road capable electric vehicles. He completed a bachelor's from Indiana University East (2018), a Master of Business Administration from University of Iowa (2022) and is set to complete a Master of Science in business analytics from University of Iowa in 2025. He resides in Blythewood, S.C.

Shawn R. Gum '15, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is a business development engineer for Sekisui Kydex. He completed a master's degree in management in 2020 from University of Alabama. He resides in Bloomsburg.

Morgan T. Jennings '15, graphic design, is a lead multimedia designer for Old Dominion University, creating marketing materials to promote ODUGlobal. He resides in Williamsport.

Darren Layre '15, culinary arts and systems, is a culinary specialist for Gordon Food Service. He resides in Allison Park with his wife, **Jessica (Wiegand) '16,** business administration: marketing.

Amanda M. Steigerwalt '15, graphic design, is an office manager and graphic designer for CW Psychological Services. She resides in Norristown.

Annie (Wolf) Steppe '15, human services, is a family self-sufficiency coordinator for the Lycoming Housing Authority. She resides in Williamsport.

Graham Waters '15, culinary arts technology, is a cook for Stacks at Hershey Lodge. He resides in Mount Joy.

Robyn Beddow '16, occupational therapy assistant, is a technology specialist for Novus Surgical, a distributor of Arthrex medical device products and educational services. She resides in Lancaster.

Courtney K. (Brown) Bloom '16, baking and pastry arts, is the head chef for Children in Bloom, a child care center in New Oxford. She resides with her husband, **Kenneth '16,** information technology: network specialist, in McSherrystown.

Nathan E. Kline '16, automotive technology, is a property maintenance manager for CBRE, a real estate services firm. He provides property maintenance for 24 Latter Day Saints churches in Pennsylvania. He resides in Montoursville with his wife, nursing faculty member Tina Marie, and their two children, including **Sarah '24,** baking & pastry arts.

Christopher A. Patrick '16, information technology: network specialist, is a network administrator for CSR Enterprise Networks. He resides in Williamsport.

Brady B. Taylor '16, plastics and polymer engineering technology, is an applications engineer for Sekisui Kydex. In 2025, he is planning a wedding, expecting a child and renovating the family's future home. He resides in Bloomsburg.

Britni M. Fennell '17, manufacturing engineering technology, is a senior quality engineer for BAE Systems. Her work supports the company's Bradley Fighting Vehicle program and other programs. She resides in York with her wife, **Erin Bannon '16,** health information management.

Clark Fuller '17, engineering design technology, is a modeling and simulation lead for HopFlyt, which is working to develop next-generation electric and hybrid-electric vertical takeoff and landing aircraft. He resides in Salisbury, Md.

Robert G. Jackson III '17, residential construction technology and management, is a corporate estimator for Maronda Homes. He resides in Cabot.

Melyce Kenyon '17, culinary arts technology, owns MK Bubble Drinks. She resides in Granville Summit with her husband, **Logan '12,** architectural technology.

Paul D. Licht '17, welding and fabrication engineering technology, recently began a new job as a laser welding engineer for Conax Technologies LLC. He resides in West Seneca, N.Y., with his wife, **Alexa (Januchowski) '16,** graphic design.

Sherly (Charles) Lubin '17, health arts: practical nursing, is a licensed practical nurse for Maxim Healthcare. She resides in Jacksonville, Fla.

David P. Suchoza III '17, building science and sustainable design: architectural technology, is an architectural designer for Indovina Associates Architects. He completed a Master of Architecture from Carnegie Mellon in 2020 and is pursuing his architectural license. He resides in Pittsburgh.

Lacey M. (Watson) Faubion '18, business administration: sport and event management, is a human resource coordinator for Construction Specialties. She resides in New Columbia.

Madison (Januchowski) Lewis '18, emergency management technology, is a senior specialist buyer/planner for ConMed Corp. She resides in Montoursville.

Connor E. Route '18, civil engineering technology, is a civil engineer-bridges for PennDOT District 3-0. He resides in Mansfield.

Jane M. (Herman) Thompson '18, dental hygiene, is a hygienist for Hagerstown Family Dental. She resides in Greencastle.

Thomas C. Berkey '19, software development & information management and information technology sciences - gaming and simulation, is an applications developer for Geisinger. He resides in Williamsport.

Hailee Hartman '19, nursing, is a travel registered nurse for Aya Healthcare. She resides in Willow Street.

Patrick Lazar '19, health arts: practical nursing, is a registered nurse for Allegheny Health Network. He completed an associate degree in nursing from Westmoreland County Community College in 2024 and resides in North Huntingdon with his wife, **Courtney (Collins) '19,** nursing.

Nolan Lester '19, culinary arts and systems, is a chef for Evansburg Vineyards. He resides in Perkiomenville.

Stevie (Petrison) Mezzetti '19, business administration: sport and event management, is a project administrator for Trane. She resides in Charleston, S.C., with husband **Dylan '20,** building automation technology.

Jacqueline M. Westervelt '19, information technology: technical support technology; and applied management, is a senior associate in IT infrastructure for Prudential Financial. She resides in North Middletown, N.J.

Ryan M. Witmer '19, mechatronics engineering technology, is an automation controls specialist for Astro Machine Works. He resides in Lancaster.

2020s

Kaitlyn M. (Young) Clark '20, health information management, is a health information management specialist for Privia Health. She resides in Grottoes, Va., with her husband and twins.

Nate Lavallee '20, building automation technology, completed a Master of Education in higher education with an emphasis in online learning and technology in 2024 from Liberty University. He is a second-shift maintenance mechanic for Penn College. He resides in Loganton.

McKenna Sitch '20, radiography, is a travel interventional technologist for Skyline Med Staff. She resides in Saxton.

Kayla Gerhart '21, residential construction technology & management, is an estimator for Wagman Construction. She resides in New Freedom.

Kobe R. Reed '21, heavy construction equipment technology: technician emphasis, is a field service technician for United Rentals. He resides in Montgomery.

Donald J. Reisch '21, building science & sustainable design: architectural technology, is an architect for the Air Force Civilian Service. He resides in Mary Esther, Fla.

Andrew Young '21, web and interactive media, is an applications developer for Penn State. He resides in Davidsville.

Sydney M. Camut '22, engineering design technology, is a technical illustrator for Manitowoc Cranes. She resides in Waynesboro.

Caila N. Flanagan '22, business administration, is the assistant director of student leadership and engagement at University of South Carolina Aiken. She holds a Master of Education in higher education from Penn State. She resides in Summerville, S.C.

Nicholas W. Henning '22, human services & restorative justice, is an enrollment counselor for Penn College. He resides in Williamsport.

Austin J. Kohl '22, building science and sustainable design: architectural technology, is an architectural technician for NVR Inc., the parent company of Ryan Homes, NVHomes and Heartland Homes. He resides in Pittsburgh.

Nick Pisano '22, residential construction technology & management, is a field engineer for Warfel Construction. He resides in Lancaster.

Ethan C. Stump '22, information assurance & cyber security, is a system administrator for Clark Associates. He resides in Schuylkill Haven.

Daniel T. Wright '22, engineering design technology, is a product development specialist for Construction Specialties. He creates and tests custom products for expansion joint systems used in commercial construction. He resides in Milton.

Ryan S. McCrickerd '23, aviation maintenance technology, just started a new job: He is an aviation maintenance technician for United Airlines. He resides in West Des Moines, Iowa.

Keegan M. Nytz '23, construction management, is an estimator for Turner Construction Co. in the data center, sports, health care and higher education markets. He resides in Charlotte, N.C., and is part of the ACE (Architecture Construction Engineering) Mentor Program of Charlotte.

Cheyenne Stein '23, residential construction technology & management, is a project engineer for ISEC Inc. She resides in Nashville, Tenn.

Elexus J. Dunkleberger '24, nursing, is a registered nurse for Geisinger. She resides in Hughesville.

Alexia M. Kennedy '24, nursing, is a registered nurse for Geisinger. She resides in Williamsport.

Lena Marotto '24, dental hygiene, is a clinic instructor for Luzerne County Community College. She resides in Bear Creek Township.

Maximilian Pajak '24, heavy construction equipment technology: technician, is a mechanic's assistant for Independence Excavating. He resides in Canonsburg.

Jajuan J. Ramirez '24, business administration: marketing, is a member service representative for Propell Credit Union. He resides in Kennett Square.

Jason Rice '24, automotive technology, is a diesel technician for Penske. He resides in Orefield.

Alec Rivera '24, building science and sustainable design: architectural technology, is an architectural designer for Muhlenberg Greene Architects. He resides in Temple.

Alycia Shaffer '24, business administration: management, is a program manager for Stellant Systems. She resides in South Williamsport.

Tad A. Shellenberger '24, automation engineering technology: robotics & automation, is a vision engineer for West Pharmaceutical Services. He resides in Lock Haven.

Morgan Wood '24, automotive technology management, staffs the parts counter for Pillar Automotive Group. She resides in Greenville.

Shanya M. Allen '25, building construction technology, is a concrete repair technician for Durable Surfaces, repairing concrete in warehouses. She resides in Coatesville.

Jared E. Andrews '25, landscape/plant production technology, is a production supervisor for Feeney's Wholesale Nursery. He resides in Perkasie.

Caleb J. Arsenich '25, heavy construction equipment technology: Caterpillar emphasis, is a heavy equipment technician for Brubacher Excavating. He resides in Spring City.

Morgan Bartholomew '25, plastics & polymer engineering technology, is a manufacturing and product development engineer for TE Connectivity. She resides in Etters.

Ashton Bender '25, building automation engineering technology, is a field service technician for Schneider Electric. He resides in Warrington.

Ryan Boccella '25, construction management, is an assistant project manager for Pagoda Electrical. He resides in Hatboro.

Adam C. Boone '25, construction management, is an assistant project manager for Mingle Contracting Inc. He resides in Alexandria.

Matthew Byrnes '25, engineering design technology, is a mechanical design engineer for Victaulic, helping in the field of fire suppression, tooling, couplings and fluid control. He resides in Manahawkin, N.J.

Casey B. Campbell '25, engineering design technology, is a product testing engineer for Honda Powersports. He resides in Kennerdell.

Charles Cless '25, heating, ventilation & air conditioning technology, is a refrigeration technician for Remco. He resides in Gilbertsville.

Cheyenne L. Ebersole '25, nursing, is a registered nurse for Guthrie health care system. She resides in Dushore.

Gracie L. Gignac '25, culinary arts technology, is a cook for Foxdale Village. She resides in Newport.

Michael J. Giordano '25, construction management, is a transportation officer for the U.S. Army and a recipient of the Army ROTC George C. Marshall Award. He resides in Palmyra.

Noah Jumper '25, construction management, is a project engineer for The Whiting-Turner Contracting Co. He resides in Shippensburg.

Kenneth J. Lees '25, building construction technology, is a carpenter for Pennco Contracting. He resides in Tunkhannock.

Morgan (Foote) Max '25, forest technology, is an integrated pest management specialist for Walter's Nursery. She diagnoses, treats and manages residential landscapes and orchards for pests. She resides in Pipersville with her husband, **Aidan '25,** landscape/plant production technology.

Paige Mendenhall '25, dental hygiene, is a registered dental hygienist for Reardon Dental. She resides in Narvon.

Ethan D. Miller '25, welding & fabrication engineering technology, is a welding engineer for Precision Custom Components. He resides in Dallastown.

Kayleigh Miller '25, business administration, is pursuing a Master of Science in sport administration from St. Bonaventure University. She resides in Sayre.

Joshua T. Nobles '25, software development & information management, is a software engineer I for Textron Specialized Vehicles - E-Z-GO. He writes and maintains software applications for golf cart fleet management. He resides in Hephzibah, Ga.

Thomas J. Panyik '25, welding & fabrication engineering technology, is employed by Leonhardt Manufacturing. He resides in Columbia.

Alexis A. Pollick '25, automotive service sales & marketing, is a service writer for Blaise Alexander Family Dealerships. She resides in Madera.

Bailey M. Pyne '25, dental hygiene, is a dental hygienist for Wolter Advanced Dental Care. She resides in Chambersburg.

Christopher Scott '25, businesses management, is a protective security officer for MaxSent Security, a federal contractor with the Department of Homeland Security. He resides in Lock Haven and has twice received the U.S. Army Commendation Medal and Army Achievement Medal. He holds the U.S. Army Expert Infantryman Badge and Airborne Wings.

Kadin M. Virkaitis '25, aviation maintenance technology, is an airframe and powerplant mechanic for Sterling Helicopter. He resides in Bensalem.

Alexis E. Wagner '25, nursing, is employed by Geisinger Medical Center. She resides in Sunbury.

Jimmy T.H. Zagurskie '25, civil engineering technology, is a water and wastewater staff engineer 1 for HRG. He resides in Mifflintown.

Marriages & Births

Kate K. Vido '03, baking and pastry arts, married Chris Conley in April 2024 at Cold Saturday Farm in Baltimore. They recently moved to Durham, N.C.

Bill Welsh '08, electrical technology, and his wife, Jennifer, welcomed son Paxton in 2024. They reside in Martinsburg.

Kyle Wieder '08, welding technology, and wife Jessica welcomed their second child, Levi, in 2023. They reside in Berryton, Kan.

Morgan A. Olbrich '09, '13, automotive technology; welding and fabrication engineering technology, and his wife, Jordan, welcomed their first child, a son named Jaxon Eric, in October 2024. They reside in Newport News, Va.

James Daniels '13, residential construction technology and management, and his wife, Shawna, welcomed their second child, Harrison, in 2024. They reside in Wilmington, N.C.

Victoria L. Kostecki '14, baking and pastry arts, married **Benjamin A. King '14,** culinary arts and systems, on Oct. 1, 2023. They reside in Winter Garden, Fla.

Cassandra (Mohr) Enders '14, '15, dental hygiene; dental hygiene: health policy and administration, and her husband, **Ryan M. '12,** aviation technology; **'13,** technology management, welcomed their second child, Skylar, in June 2024. They reside in Mifflinburg.

Anthony Heimbach '17, health arts: practical nursing, welcomed a son, Jaiden, in February 2024. They reside in Reading.

Melyce Kenyon '17, culinary arts technology, and her husband, **Logan '12,** architectural technology, welcomed their third child, Natalie, in 2024. They reside in Granville Summit.

Jane M. (Herman) Thompson '18, dental hygiene, and husband Josh welcomed their second child, Titus, in 2024. They reside in Greencastle.

Jacqueline M. Westervelt '19, information technology: technical support technology; and applied management, married Moriah Lynn on Oct. 7, 2023. They reside in North Middletown, N.J.

Ryan M. Witmer '19, mechatronics engineering technology, married Caroline E. Folfas on Oct. 18, 2024. They reside in Lancaster.

Malakai L. Zilinski '25, welding & fabrication engineering technology, welcomed a son, Atlas, in 2025. They reside in Manheim.

In Memory

Frederick L. Bierly, former assistant professor of computer science and computer science department chairman, age 89, on Feb. 5.

David B. Clark, former associate professor of chemistry, age 84, on May 14.

William H. Feddersen, former president, age 84, on March 4. See more on Page 12.

Dale A. Metzker, retired associate professor of printing and publishing, age 84, on March 10.

Ruth C. Rudy, former member, Penn College Board of Directors, age 87, on March 28.

Jill M. Thomas, former part-time instructor of mathematics and test center proctor, age 68, on May 29.

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Complete the form at magazine.pct.edu/cn, or call toll-free 877-PCT-ALUM (877-728-2586)

Ralph Mills '58 showcases pieces of plumbing history in the Thomas T. Taber Museum in Williamsport.

Retired plumber shares 'Tools of the Trade'

Williamsport Technical Institute plumbing grad Ralph Mills '58 dreamed of showcasing the tools that were once essential to his work. The 92-year-old's dream came true in March when the Thomas T. Taber Museum in Williamsport installed two glass cases to show the tools of various Lycoming County tradespeople – beginning with Mills' pieces. Staff plan to rotate the professions displayed in the "Tools of the Trade" exhibit.

Mills' collection represents the era when lead was used in plumbing and includes manuals for plumbing work, including Mills' copy of Williamsport's "Rules and Regulations Governing Plumbing and House Draining," a small gasoline furnace for melting solder, a soldering iron, tools for applying heated solder around joints, and various tools for bending, shaping, and boring holes in lead pipes.

It was important to Mills to preserve this piece of the past: "It's just something that'll never come back," he said.

Mills was born in Towanda, where his grandfather owned Mills Perry Mills Plumbing on Main Street.

"You're not going to do this stuff like I did," Mills' father, Lewis, also a plumber with Mills Perry Mills, told him. "You're going to go to school."

"So that's what I did," Mills said. "And I am glad I did."

After attending WTI, Mills remained in Williamsport, taking a job with Bright Yost on Almond Street. When Bright Yost joined the Plumbers and Pipefitters Union, Mills did, too. He celebrated 63 years with Local 520, serving as the plumbing foreman for the construction of many northcentral Pennsylvania landmarks.

"It kept me busy," he smiled. ■

save the date

through Sept. 30	**Taha Ahmad: Drawn into two, which way home?** The Gallery at Penn College ǀ gallery.pct.edu
Sept. 19-21	**Wildcat Weekend** for alumni, families and friends ǀ www.pct.edu/wildcatweekend
Sept. 30, Oct. 1	**Career Fair** for Penn College alumni and students ǀ www.pct.edu/careerevents
Oct. 4	**Open House** for prospective students ǀ www.pct.edu/visit
Oct. 16-19	**Fall Break**
Oct. 23-Nov. 25	**Adrian Gor: Masses of the Undone** The Gallery at Penn College ǀ gallery.pct.edu
Nov. 2	**Open House** for prospective students ǀ www.pct.edu/visit
Nov. 26-Dec. 1	**Thanksgiving Break**
Dec. 8-12	**Finals Week**
Dec. 20	**Commencement**
Jan. 12	**Spring 2026 classes begin**
Jan. 13-Feb. 26	**Made by Hand: An Exhibition of Tomorrow Makers** The Gallery at Penn College ǀ gallery.pct.edu
Feb. 21	**Open House** for prospective students ǀ www.pct.edu/visit
March 3-4	**Career Fair** for Penn College alumni and students ǀ www.pct.edu/careerevents
March 8-14	**Spring Break**
April 12	**Accepted Student Day**
April 26	**Open House** for prospective students ǀ www.pct.edu/visit
April 30-May 8	**Graphic Design 2026: Student Portfolio Exhibition** The Gallery at Penn College ǀ gallery.pct.edu
May 4-8	**Finals Week**
May 15, 16	**Commencement**
June/July	**Penn College Summer Camps** Explore "degrees that work" and earn scholarships www.pct.edu/summercamps

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